

You're in Good Company

By Justin Morton

Have you ever had a bad experience with someone solely because of something you taught from the Bible? As a preacher and teacher, this happens more often than most people realize. When someone starts a personal attack on one who publicly teaches the truths of God's Word, it generally stems from the fact that they do not like what is being taught.

Remember the prophets of old? Their message was never popular. Most of them were persecuted and some even killed because of the message they delivered.

- 1) Elijah had to run for his life from the wicked queen Jezebel (1 Kings 19:1-8).
- 2) Most scholars believe Isaiah was sawn in two (Heb. 11:36-38).
- 3) Jeremiah was beaten, cursed and thrown in prison by his own people (Jer. 11:18-12:6; 20:1-6; 32:1-3; 38:1-13).
- 4) John the Baptist was beheaded by Herod (Matt. 14:1-12).
- 5) All of the apostles are believed to have died for their faith with the exception of the beloved apostle John.

Although most people I know, including myself, have never been persecuted to the extent of the prophets mentioned above, standing for the truth and presenting that truth sometimes comes with a price (2 Tim. 3:12). Some people will personally attack you and your family when you teach on a topic that hits too close to home (divorce, homosexuality, abortion, etc.).

Paul said, *"I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and His kingdom: preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching"* (2 Tim. 4:1-2).

It is a given, people who publicly teach God's Word will often be ostracized because of the message they present. Instead of backing down or stopping all together, our job is to endure the suffering and criticism that comes and continue to preach the truths of God's Word. Jesus said, *"Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you"* (Matt. 5:10-12). Remember, next time you are attacked because you teach God's Word, you're in good company.