

Pastor Clifford  
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## Buy From Me Gold (Part 8): **Do Not Abandon Your Faith**

**John 15:26-16:4** "But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me. **27** And you also will bear witness, because you have been with me from the beginning.

**16** I have told you these things so that you won't abandon your faith. **2** For you will be expelled from the synagogues, and the time is coming when those who kill you will think they are doing a holy service for God. **3** This is because they have never known the Father or me. **4** Yes, I'm telling you these things now, so that when they happen, you will remember my warning. I didn't tell you earlier because I was going to be with you for a while longer."

The essence of the gospel is the realization of our need for GOD! The Holy Spirit is the answer to that need as we live our lives on earth. The power and presence of the Holy Spirit enables us to carry out the desires of the Father's heart.

- **"I have told you these things so that you won't abandon your faith."** (**John 16:1**)

**Colossians 1:21-23** "And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, **22** he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him, **23** if indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard,

which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister.”

**1 Peter 1:3-9** “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, **4** to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, **5** who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. **6** In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, **7** so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. **8** Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, **9** obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.”

- **“The hour is coming when whoever kills you will think he is offering service to God.” (John 16:2)**

Much of Jesus' teaching flew in the face of legalists like the Pharisees (Matthew 5:20). His words were not, at all, contradictory to the Word of God (Matthew 5:17-19)—but religious leaders were not enthusiastic about His message (John 11:53). Jesus is preparing His followers to maintain faith in the face of persecution (Matthew 5:10-12; John 16:1). Instead of reacting in fear or panic, believers should respond to hardship by remembering that God knows exactly what is happening. In the most immediate sense, those who followed Christ were subject to excommunication by their fellow Jews (John 9:22; Acts 8:1-3). In a broader sense, the full gospel is offensive to the arrogant, fallen human mind (Matthew 11:6; 1 Corinthians 1:18). People rejected the messages of John the Baptist (Matthew 11:18) and Jesus (Matthew

11:19), for entirely opposite reasons. In the same way, self-labelled "religious" people may dismiss biblical Christians as too strict, or too loose, and "put [them] out" as a result.

The most extreme version of this persecution is death. Some will be so opposed to the gospel, and so blinded by false religion, that they will see the murder of Christians as an act of righteousness. That might involve a literal deity, as with Islamic persecution of believers. The Greek phrase here is *laterian prospherein*—literally meaning "an offering of service." The root word *lateria* is the same one used in Romans 12:1 to describe "service of worship" (NASB).

The passion that leads people to kill Christians can also be a false god, such as the Nazi or Communist ideals which have also led to the deaths of many Christians. Regardless of specific motives, Jesus is warning that opposition to His truth (John 14:6) can be both deadly and driven by intense emotion.