

“If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God...” (1 Peter 4:11).

A FATHER'S ABC'S

Always trust your children to God's care.

Bring them to church.

Challenge them to high goals.

Delight in their achievements.

Exalt the Lord in their presence.

Frown on evil.

Give them love.

Hear their problems.

Ignore not their childish fears.

Joyfully accept their apologies.

Keep their confidence.

Live a good example before them.

Make them your friends.

Never ignore their endless questions.

Open your heart to their love.

Pray for them by name.

Quicken your interest in their spirituality.

Remember their needs.

Show them the way of salvation.

Teach them to work.

Understand they are still young.

Verify your statements.

Wean them from bad company.

Xpect them to obey.

Yearn for God's best for them.

Zealously guide them in Bible truth.

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ARE YOU WILLING TO PAY THE PRICE?

John Edwards

God's people have always faced opposition (Neh. 4:1-5). The Lord never said being a Christian would be easy. In Matthew 10, the twelve disciples were sent forth *“as sheep in the midst of wolves”* (v. 16), would be delivered up and scourged (v. 17), *“hated of all men”* (v. 22) and the like. Paul encouraged Timothy to *“...endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ”* (2 Tim. 2:3). Again Paul said, *“Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution”* (2 Tim. 3:12). There is a price to pay for living as the Bible teaches. Are you willing to pay the price?

EVIL SPEAKING. First Peter, written during a wave of persecution, finds the Lord's people being faced with evil speaking. *“Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation”* (2:11-12). *“Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ”* (3:16). *“Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you”* (4:4). *“If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified”* (4:14). The Lord said, *“Blessed are ye, when men shall...say all manner of evil against you falsely...”* (Mt. 5:11).

HATE. Jesus said, *“And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake...”* (Mt. 10:22). Again the Lord declared, *“If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you”* (Jn. 15:18). John wrote, *“Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you”* (1 Jn. 3:13). You may make some enemies

just because you are trying to do what is right (Gal. 4:16; Lk. 6:22).

NAME CALLING. It is written, *“The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household?”* (Mt. 10:24-25). “Beelzebub” is Satan himself! Remember, in Mark 3:22, where *“the scribes which came down from Jerusalem said, He hath Beelzebub, and by the prince of the devils casteth he out devils.”* So, Jesus was called names. And we can expect the same treatment.

THREATS. Ever been or felt threatened? In Acts 4, the apostles faced a council who conferred, *“... let us straitly threaten them, that they speak henceforth to no man in this name”* (v. 17). When let go to their own company, prayer was made on this wise: *“And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word”* (v. 29). Acts 9:1 finds Saul of Tarsus *“...breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord...”*

IMPRISONMENT. Acts 5 finds the apostles put *“...in the common prison”* (v. 18). *“As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison”* (Acts 8:3). In Acts 26:10 he said, *“... and many of the saints did I shut up in prison...”* Peter *“...was kept in prison...”* (Acts 12:5). It is recorded of Paul and Silas, *“...they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely: Who, having received such a charge, thrust them*

into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks” (Acts 16:23-24).

BEATINGS. The apostles took a beating! *“...and when they had called the apostles, and beaten them...”* (Acts 5:40). Saul *“...beat in every synagogue them that believed...”* (Acts 22:19). Paul said, *“Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods...”* (2 Cor. 11:24-25).

STONING. How would you like to be stoned? *“...they stoned Stephen...”* (Acts 7:59). Acts 14 records concerning Paul: *“And there came thither certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded the people, and, having stoned Paul, drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead”* (v. 19). Can you imagine what shape he was in at that time?

EXPELLED OUT. *“But the Jews stirred up the devout and honourable women, and the chief men of the city, and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts”* (Acts 13:50). Suppose you were taken outside the city limits and told you are not welcome here any more!

DEATH. Herod killed James with the sword (Acts 12:2). No telling how many Christians, in the first century, lost their lives keeping the faith! Can you say with Paul, *“...I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die...for the name of the Lord Jesus”* (Acts 21:13)?

Paul was willing to pay the price (2 Cor. 11:23-28). Are you? Heaven will surely be worth it all (2 Tim. 4:6-8; Rev. 2:10)!

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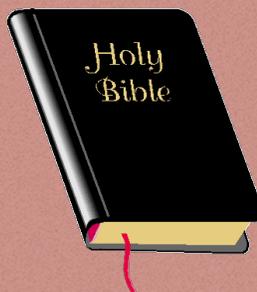
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