

Whether He comes before a tribulation, after a tribulation, in the middle of a tribulation, at a time when half the world is enduring tribulation and the other half ~~is~~ things seems to be going peaceable, God has not revealed! The important thing is that we be ready when He comes.

The devil has often used terrible persecution, and he is using it today. But persecution often spreads Christianity. Persecution often separates the truth from the false. In 250 A.D. the church had had a period of 30-40 years with practically no persecution. Fine church buildings had been built in many parts of the Roman empire and great numbers of people had ~~is~~ joined the church, many of them true believers, but many for social reasons or because they were attracted by the lives of the Christians -- various things. Then in 250 A.D. that great Decian persecution broke out, and hundreds of people left the church and went and sacrifices. But some who seemed to be among the weaker Christians stood up bravely and suffered persecution and death for the cause of Christ. Persecution often shows who the ~~is~~ true Christians are. Tertullian said: The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church. This has often been the case. Persecution often spreads Christianity. When persecution came to Jerusalem the apostles stayed there but the rest of the disciples were scattered out, and the Word of God was carried to many places to which they might not have gone if the persecution had not come. 300 years ago in many places in Europe there was great persecution of true Christians and many people fleeing from the persecution came across thousands of miles of dangers ocean to an unsettled land here, and here in the U.S. there was established a country which with all its faults has probably stood more for the Word of God than any other country in the history of the world.