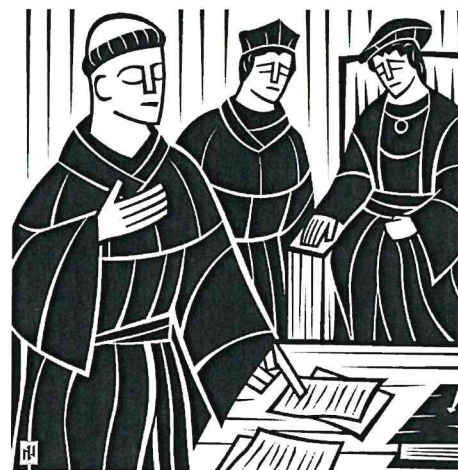


## Stand Firm in the Face of Opposition

- Vs. 22.** I think this kinda exctng time be Luthrn, esp if intrstd at all in Luth histry – bec in just last few yrs (and in yrs soon to come), we've got all these big 500-yr anns to celbrt. Exmpl: back in 2017, 500<sup>th</sup> ann of 95 Ths on 10/31/1517 – which really: event that sparked Luth Ref, and reason still obsrv Ref on 10/31 today. Maybe remem: huge worship servc in MKE, 1000s ppl – you make big deal out ann like that. Or another exmpl: next yr, spring 2021, 500<sup>th</sup> ann Diet/Worms; quick review: really imp mtg of pltcl/relgs ldrs in Germny (spring 1521) where L stood before all ldrs, was told: retract writings (offnsv to Cath Ch); if don't, you'll be condmnd. L: no, cannot, will not; here stand. Cover pic. Really imp event, not only ch histry, also wrld histry; so sure we'll make big deal it – and plenty other 500-yr anns in Luthrnism coming up in yrs ahead. Exciting time be Luthrn.
- But this, of course, this not sermon re ML. And as Luthrns we know: L is not our Sav. CJ is our Sav. And we praise God: thru L's prchnng/tchnng/work reformng ch, we can clearly see CJ as Sav. When pure Gos msg of salv by God's grace alone, thru faith Xp alone, faith grounded on Scrptr alone – when that saving truth was hidden behind wall of corrrptn & false doc, God used L bring that truth out into open for everyone see. In face great oppstn from pwrful RCC, L stood firm on GW. **Vs. 22.** That's what L did; and what J wants us do too – which why today in Gos J tchs: SF in face oppstn.
- Today looking at Mt 10, often called Msnry Discrs, bec here J sending out 12 Aps, all by selves, very 1<sup>st</sup> time, to pr/tch in Israel & be his msnrs. And thruout this chptr, he's telling them: you've got work cut out for you; this big job; you'll face big oppstn. **Vs. 16.** Notice, J actly compares discs to 3 diff anmls: sheep (weak, vulnrbl, on own not as strong as oppstn); so need be like snakes (shrewd/smart, use brains & Xian common sense); and doves (inncnt, fight vs sin, live upright/godly life). Well, in same way, you/I as discs/J, are like those same 3 anmls: we too are vulnrbl like sheep among wolves, so need be smart/snakes, inncnt/doves – bec J also sending us into wrld, where we too face great oppstn. We often talk re 3 great enemies of Xian: dvl, wrld, sinful flesh. Today in this rdng, J focuses on 2<sup>nd</sup> enemy: wrld. Says: you going face oppstn in wrld spcfcly from 3 sources; those 3 srcs are: ch, govt, & your fam. Talks re all 3.
- 1<sup>st</sup>, ch. **Vs. 17.** Synggs: Jewish chs; councils: rel leaders, like Sanhedrin. J saying to his discs: they going beat you up in ch; you'll face oppstn from ch, from fellow Jews, bec they'll reject your msg of salv thru Xp alone. L faced oppstn from ch, too. Excmnctd for saying can't buy frgvnss thru indlgncs; condmndd for tching savd not by good wrks but thru faith in Xp. And today, you'll face oppstn from ch, as well. Not this ch. But there are many chs that still distort truth. They teach: saved by wrks; have to earn way into hvn; have to pray to Mary/snts. Or, that you persnly need to accept Xp into hrt before can be consdrd Xian; in LS, bread/wine merely symbclcly reprsnt Xp's bdy/bld in Sacmnt; you should wait on baptism till old engh decide for self, bec it's smthng you do for God, not God for you. These & host other false tchngs come from within ch.
- 2<sup>nd</sup>, govt. **Vs. 18.** Seclr govt. Think J b4 Pilate on GF, or Paul b4 Felix/Festus, end Acts. Think Xian martyrs in early ch, drggd from homes by Rom soldrs, forced to denounce faith in Xp, othrws fed to lions in Collsm. Heb 11: **"Wrld was not worthy of them" (38).** L too faced oppstn from seclr govt. Empr Chrls V of Grmny declrd L outlaw. God kept L safe in Wittnbg. But after death, govt waged war vs Lthrn terrtrs. And today, your Xian faith will face oppstn from seclr govt, as well. Of course, I thank God I'm citzn of USA, where we have freedom/rel, where can cast our vote to elect ldrs (as cntry will do this wk) – many ppl in many other cntrys not so blessed as we. But I doubt I have to give exmpls of forces in govt that stand in oppstn to our faith. And while we may nvr face (pray!) same phycl prsctn early ch faced, nvrthlss Xians living in this wrld will face oppstn from govt.





- 3<sup>rd</sup>, even fam. **Vs. 21.** Oppstn from fam. Horrbl to hear about; but true: relgn can divide fams. Did in 1<sup>st</sup> cent: some Jews belvd J, others in fam rejctd. Did during Ref: some Germans belvd pure Gos, others in fam rejctd it. And still today, relgn dividvs fams. I bet all you here today can think of fam mem who does not share your faith.
- So what are we to do, as Xians, when we face such fierce oppstn to our Xian faith – and from all sides: ch, govt, fam? What are we to do when we really do feel like sheep among wolves. J: **vs. 22.** So, my fellow bels in Xp, SF in face oppstn. That’s what J tches us do. And not only here, but thruout Scrptr, in many places. Before Isrlts crssd Red Sea, Moses, **“Do not be afraid. SF and you will see the delvrnc the Lord will bring you today” (Ex 14:30).** Ps 20: **“Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the Lord our God. They are brought to their knees and fall, but we rise up and SF” (7-8).** Is 7 actly says: **“If you do not SF in your faith, you will not stand at all” (9).** In Eph 6, Paul talks re SF by putting on armor/God (shld/faith, hlmt/salv, swrd/Spirit) **“so that when the day of evil [oppstn] comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done evrythng, to stand. SF then” (13-14).** SF like Dan in lion’s den, 1<sup>st</sup> Lsn. **“SF, then, and do not let yrselvs be brndnd again by a yoke/slvry” (Gal 5:1),** like 2<sup>nd</sup> Lsn. 1 Cor 15: **“Therfor, my dear bros/siss, SF. Let nothing move you” (58).** 1 Cor 16: **“Be on your guard; SF in the faith; be courageous, be strong” (13).** And finly 2 Thes 2: **“So then, bros/siss, SF and hold fast to the tchns we passed on to you” (15).**
- So, in face oppstn, SF – which in all these passgs means same thing: SF in faith; always trust in Xp as Sav; base your faith on what God says in his word; do not let temptn, sin, Stn, wolves, wrld, false tchns in ch, persctn from govt, division among fam – do not let any of these things knock you down or shake your faith. As a Xian (Luth Xian), you’re stndng on solid ground, bec you’re stndng on Xp & his word – Xp who was crucifd & rose fr dead for you, so that all your sins’d be covered, and so that you’d be saved & go hvn – not bec of how firmly you stand but bec on whom you stand – not bec of anything you’ve done, but solely bec of what Xp has done for you, bec loves you. That: Gos; that: truth upon which you SF. **Vs. 22** – saved by God’s grace alone; thru faith; grounded Scrptr.
- So fellow Luth Xians, SF in face oppstn. SF in your faith/Xp, w/ same stalwart convctn of apstls & refrmrs. For Xp is your Sav; GW is your armor; Gos is your truth; and hvn is your home. SF on that.

  
*The one who*  
**STANDS FIRM**  
*to the end*  
**WILL BE SAVED**  


#### **Matthew 10:16-23**

<sup>16</sup> “I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves. <sup>17</sup> Be on your guard; you will be handed over to the local councils and be flogged in the synagogues.

<sup>18</sup> On my account you will be brought before governors and kings as witnesses to them and to the Gentiles.

<sup>19</sup> But when they arrest you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say, <sup>20</sup> for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.

<sup>21</sup> “Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; children will rebel against their parents and have them put to death. <sup>22</sup> You will be hated by everyone because of me, but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved. <sup>23</sup> When you are persecuted in one place, flee to another. Truly I tell you, you will not finish going through the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes.