# Living Sold-Out for God

## *Living by the Spirit in contentious times* Acts 6:8-7:60

Bay Point Christian Church March 8, 2015

*(preached from the English Standard Version, 2011 update)*

## Introduction

***What evidence in your life shows you are filled with the Holy Spirit?***

***As a Spirit-filled believer, how do you deal with contentious people?***

**A. Full of Grace and Power (v6:8-13)**

**B. Focused on Christ and His Gospel (v6:14-7:53)**

**C. Prepared for any coming confrontation from the world**

1. **I Peter 3:15 *and* Luke 12:11-12, hand-in-hand**
2. **God’s reward to those who overcome by His Spirit:**

**Matthew 5:1-12 Rev. 2:10, 2:25-26 Phil. 3:8-11**

**Points to Ponder>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>**

* What specific reasons do you have for the hope that is in you?
* How can you invest your time/effort in being prepared to give an answer?
* How can you pray and be aware of persecuted believers around the world?

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Just a few more thoughts on today’s message:

I’ve always had a heart for the persecuted church. Their stories of bravery and faith in the midst of serious, deep threats to their welfare and lives humble me. Especially when I have a particular sense of self-pity because something didn’t go my way, or I didn’t get the thing I wanted, I recall that thousands are suffering simply because they believe in Jesus. I recognize my spoiled brat attitude and repent.

 God has a special comfort for those suffering persecution. Several of stories are told about believers in deep loneliness, pain, and suffering, experiencing a strange, warm presence of Christ in their prison cells. That presence, and reminders from God’s Word (memorized for times such as this), made all the difference while enduring suffering. These are the true heroes of our faith. They will be comforted and rewarded (Rev. 6:9-11) by the very precious Savior they died for. Their deaths are not in vain. And should we die in similar fashion, for reasons of faith and conviction, Jesus will be our Healer and Comfort as well.

 On a practical note, if you want to learn more about the persecuted church, a favorite resource I’ve found is ***Voice of the Martyrs***, at [www.persecution.com](http://www.persecution.com). They have an excellent Biblical record of caring for those in prison because of Christ, and ministering to their families. I’ve sent direct correspondence to persecuted believers through this ministry. I hope you will look up this fantastic resource and begin to get involved in the lives of these lovely brothers and sisters in Christ

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