

Ruled by Love Not Fear



Gary Wilkerson November 23, 2020

Hard times are coming, and the next generation of young people need to know that the only thing they need to fear is *living in fear* — cowering and retreating from the glorious gospel that Jesus has equipped you to share with others.

The truth is, persecution will continue to grow worse because the gospel keeps frustrating those who walk in darkness. God continually subverts their anti-Christ efforts, and that just makes them angrier. Thus John writes, “Let the one who is doing harm continue to do harm; let the one who is vile continue to be vile; let the one who is righteous continue to live righteously; let the one who is holy continue to be holy” (Revelation 22:11).

John is prescribing our response to the world as it grows filthier and angrier toward us. His words echo those of Jesus: “God blesses those who are persecuted for doing right, for the kingdom of heaven is theirs” (Matthew 5:10).

Let your heart be ruled by the love of Jesus Christ. All our power rests in his love; indeed, the power of our witness is in preaching his Word with mercy, and in remaining holy amidst a corrupt generation.

Think of the horrific genocide that took place in Israel when Jesus was born. “A cry was heard in Ramah — weeping and great mourning” (Matthew 2:18). When Christ became a man he could have said, “Herod will pay for what he did. He killed all my Jewish brothers, so now I’ll bring him down.”

Of course, our Lord didn’t do that. Instead, he proclaimed good news, healed the sick and kept about his Father’s business. He even kept his focus when Herod sought to kill him (see Luke 13:31-33). He was saying, “I will keep on doing exactly as I’m doing and I won’t be distracted by persecution no matter how bad it gets. My Word will triumph over all and I will fulfill my purpose to set every captive free.”

May Jesus’ purpose fill our hearts fully as the world careens on its dark path. May we keep to his purpose, which is our hopeful calling. Hallelujah!

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