

A Fear of Love

It seems like our society lives in constant fear. It is a pitiful existence and the natural inclination is to reach out for some kind of security. Immediately after the twin towers fell, stat compilers tell us that US citizens got religion and church attendance shot up. It was short lived, of course, but indicates that persecution is not all bad (James 1:2-3). Nevertheless, we are a fickle bunch and forget even the recent past in a flash. Further, when trials do come, it is amazing to whom and for what we will reach out.

The children of Israel learned a hard lesson when God called them to repentance and they ignored His pleas. Jeremiah, impervious to ill treatment, spoke boldly and frequently concerning repentance and their need to return to God. The Jews seemed oblivious and when it was forced upon their attention, they rebelled and rejected, sealing their fate; it happened first with Assyria, then with Babylon and finally with Rome.

As Jeremiah stood over the heap that was once the City of David, he lamented, “Still our eyes failed us, watching vainly for our help; In our watching we watched for a nation that could not save us” (Lamentations 4:17). They had foolishly looked around, beyond, and over God for solutions; none came. Alternatives to God’s solutions are always lethal. Now, scattered to the four winds in the bondage of harsh taskmasters, their failures dawned on them.

Faithful preachers today trumpet warnings concerning the moral decadence and godless direction we have chosen. Its end is destruction and its consequence, carnage; a testimony against us. Yet, such men are styled as radicals, alarmists, and exaggerators. Surely it is not as bad as it is being portrayed, they say, and with great pride we lift ourselves up as invincible. From Babel to Biden, the maxim still holds: “Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people” (Proverbs 14:34).

The answers to our predicament will not be found in current cultural wisdom. Too many today are “lookin’ for love in all the wrong places.” God is love and until we embrace the love of God, there will be only a downward spiral from hopelessness to destruction. From the individual level to the national level, God’s definition of love, its application, and its consequence will only and forever contain the answer to the fears we harbor. “Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love” (1 John 4:17-18).

We can loose our fear by embracing God’s love; then we will “fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell” (Matthew 10:28).

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