

Don't Allow Fear To Direct Your Life

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Good morning, my friends. I am so happy you are all here. I am exceedingly happy because so many of the brethren in the greater churches of God are not keeping the feast this year, or at least not properly.

The reason I am sitting down up here is because of my cancer, and I get shaky inside. And I did not want to be shaky. And I thought if Mark and Mr. Ritenbaugh could do it, I could sit up here too. The humble pie is not all that bad. It is okay.

I will tell you how shaky I get. Some mornings I get up, and I decide I am going to make out some [greeting or get-well] cards. And so I go to the table and I start to make them out, and I cannot write. I am all over the card. I am all shaky. So I get on the phone and I call my daughter, Michelle who lives over one house from me. I ask her to send Sophia over. Well, some mornings my daughter says she is doing her school work. Some morning, she says, she is doing her Bible study, and some mornings she has chores to do, and other mornings, she says she is just a brat today and she is out in the yard pulling weeds.

But sooner or later, Sofia always comes over, and she sits next to me at the table and I dictate to her and she writes out the cards and I just have to sign them, and it works out great. She helped me with this sermon. I sit by the computer, tell her what I want to say, and she types everything out.

Now there is a couple of real pluses in that she can spell about 1,000 times better than I can. She is 10 years old, but I can use bigger words than I normally use. And I can make people think I am a lot smarter than I am! So there is plus is in all this.

I am going to brag a little bit about my grandkids. My kids say you love to brag, and I say, "Yeah, you're right; I love to brag about my grandkids." All

three of my grandkids are tops in their classes. They are all straight A students. In fact, Noah, who is 15, when he was 13, he was doing trigonometry. I cannot even spell trigonometry. Sofia is in the gifted and talented class, and Ian is top of his class.

And my grandkids all went to school for the right purposes. They go to school to learn reading, writing, arithmetic, and how to spell. I went to school to find a wife. Big difference. And I found my wife when I was in the eighth grade, and she was in the seventh grade and I accomplished what I wanted. I got a really good wife. We were married 51 years. She loved everything I loved. She loved hot rod cars. I love hot rod cars. We loved to water ski. We served together. We camped together. We did everything together. Then on top of that, I got a couple of bonuses. She was a great cook, and I am a great eater, and she kept my house very clean. And I am a fanatic about my house. In fact, my daughters have asked me, why do I not get a house cleaner with my cancer? And I said, no, they do not put everything back the way I want it. They dust it, but they do not put it back right. So I am out on that now.

This sermon, brethren, is about one thing. It is about fear and what it is doing to us in the church. It is making us compromise the words of God; it is dividing the church; and it is bringing friction among us in all the greater churches of God.

Well, what did you think of this crazy year? It is a crazy year.

I am not going to say anything that anybody else has not said already. In fact, you know at the feast, there is usually a thread that runs through the messages. There is no thread this year. It is a rope. We are all kind of speaking on the same thing.

This year 2020 has been a crazy year with a lot of turmoil, especially in Oregon, where I live. We now have leaders, and I use the word "leader" loosely, that lean more towards rioters, looters and criminals, rather than law abiding citizens; leaders like our Oregon governor, Kate Brown, and the Portland mayor, Tom Wheeler.

Mindsets, attitudes, and thinking have changed drastically in the last few years. Nothing is the same anymore. Nothing is the same, and it is changing society—the way people live, and the way people think.

In 2016, we had 564,708 homeless people that lived on the street. I know that number has grown in the past four years. It has had to. We see it in Portland like crazy. Growing up in L. A. I never saw a homeless person. I am not kidding. You never saw a homeless person, or anyone begging for money. See? These things were all going on, and everything else is being added in on top.

Today in America, 17.3 million people live in poverty, and 93.6 million people live very close to poverty. That is almost one-third of the population. Things also really started to turn down financially under President Obama. In 2009 when Mr. Obama became our president, we were 10.26 trillion dollars upside down. When Mr. Trump took the reins from Mr. Obama in 2017, we were \$19.9 trillion upside down. So Mr. Obama added over \$9 trillion to the country's deficit—over nine trillion in eight years. That is a bunch!

Now in 2020 Mr. Trump has added another 6.6 trillion to the country's deficit in just four years, beating Mr. Obama as the biggest spender ever. *Ever*. Can you or I run our homes or our businesses that way? Absolutely not. All these things are going to come into play, brethren. If we are scared now, wait for what is coming. Wait.

It also seems like Mother Nature is against us. Now, we as God's people know that there is no such thing as Mother Nature. That is a bunch of bull. God controls the weather plain and simple. Let us turn to Genesis 7 where it talks about the Flood.

Genesis 7:4 “For after seven more days I will cause it to rain on the earth forty days and forty nights, and I will destroy from off the face of the earth all living things that I have made.”

God controls the rain and the weather right down to the very day, yet humans believe in global warming or, as they call it, climate change. Let us turn to do Deuteronomy 11. God promises to give us rain in due season if we would only keep His commandments—that is the key to everything.

Deuteronomy 11:13 'And it shall be that if you earnestly obey My commandments which I command you today, to love the LORD your God and serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul, . . .

See? Why do the nations of this world have problems with weather? Because they do not do what verse 13 says. To them, it is Mother Nature's fault. I have never met Mother Nature, have you?

Deuteronomy 11:14 . . . 'Then I will give you the rain for your land in its season, the early rain and the latter rain, that you may gather in your grain, your new wine, and your oil.'

That is what God promises us. God would bless the nations of this world with good weather, like it says here in verse 14, if they would only keep all of His commandments. The problem is the nations do not do what God tells them to do.

Bad weather is really starting to get very expensive. Bad weather costs somebody money and a lot of it, every time it happens. With three devastating hurricanes, extreme wildfires mostly in the western part of the country, hailstorms, floods in a lot of states, tornadoes, and drought in the last few years—now here comes the cost—the United States tallied a record high bill last year of \$306 billion for weather related disasters.

The United States had 16 disasters last year with damage exceeding \$1 billion each. That ties 2011 for the number of billion-dollar disasters, but that blew past the previous record set in 2005 of \$215 billion. It is climbing; it is going up. All these things are going to come into play. If you think covid is a problem, which it is, wait till you see what is coming. Three of the five most expensive hurricanes in U. S. history hit last year.

Then where I live in Oregon, Antifa fanned out into the rural areas and started fires after they had already rioted for over 100 days in downtown Portland. Nobody even goes to downtown Portland anymore. It is a ghost town. I feel for those merchants.

Where I live, the smoke from those fires was extremely thick, and it blotted out the sun, which gave the air in orange glow. Ash was falling from the sky, and three or four cities were evacuated on Wednesday, the ninth, due to the fires—structures and homes were burned.

There was also looting going on in evacuated areas. Now, social media said a number of people had been arrested for arson. Social media also said the Oregon governor, Kate Brown, had sent the state's newest fighting helicopters to the Middle East. We have got tons of fires and you are sending our equipment away? But I do not know if that is true.

Now we are all living in times that are not normal. Everything now seems to be political and upside down. Neither side seems to care about the people of the country anymore. All of this and much more like abortion (See? The other problems have not gone away), abortion, drugs, alcohol abuse, adultery, divorce (You know, divorce destroys the nation, brethren. It brings the nation down, finally), lying, stealing, murder—which are all sins in God's eyes—brings about chaos, destruction, and death.

On top of that, many people want to defund the police. Go figure! You and I are witnessing a spiritual war with human beings, being conducted in Israel—in America.

Let us turn to Ephesians 6. This war is a religious war, and Richard [Ritenbaugh] talked about it in his opening night sermon, and he was spot on.

Ephesians 6:12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.

That is what we are up against. This is what we are now facing in America. Violent crime will soon reach epidemic levels in America. Jeff Landry, the attorney general for the state of Louisiana, says that the violent crime is going to reach epidemic levels in the United States very soon. He warns the crime will get worse before it gets better. And we are going to reach a tipping point very soon. He says the worst is yet to come.

I disagree with part of what Jeff Landry says. That is, I believe we are now living at the end of the age and nothing is going to get better. He thinks it will get better. Things might become calm for a while, but something else will come along that I think will be worse and a harder force to deal with than what we are going through right now or what we have just gone through this year.

Let us turn to Isaiah 1. I want you to think about this. See if you think these verses fit America today.

Isaiah 1:2 Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth! For the LORD has spoken: "I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against Me."

Does this not sound like America, the most blessed nation on earth? God has given us everything. God has given us this country and unbelievable wealth and resources.

Isaiah 1:3 "The ox knows its owner and the donkey its master's crib; but Israel does not know, My people do not consider."

Do Americans as a whole know and worship God? That is a question you get to make the determination on that.

Isaiah 1:4 Alas, sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a brood of evildoers, children who are corrupters! They have forsaken the LORD, they have provoked to anger the Holy One of Israel, they have turned away backward.

What can you say about this? America has become a very corrupt and sinful nation. Our government, at least in Oregon, cares for and gives more rights to criminals than law abiding citizens. And that is not a joke, brethren. You could go to jail for defending yourself and your home in Oregon.

Isaiah 1:5 Why should you be stricken again? You will revolt more and more. The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faints.

This verse is saying that the government—all our leaders—are sick, corrupt, and do not make good decisions. And if you lived in Oregon, you would see it, as plain as day.

Isaiah 1:6 From the sole of the foot even to the head, there is no soundness in it, but wounds and bruises and putrefying sores; they have not been closed or bound up, or soothed with ointment.

Do not these verses sound like the times we are now living in? They do, brethren.

I am going to spend a lot of time now going blow-by-blow over what me and my family have seen and witnessed and heard from social media, friends, and things that scared people to death in Oregon.

Now I hope what I am going to tell you gives you a sense of urgency when it comes to God, daily prayer, daily Bible study, and living by every Word of God.

On Sunday, September 6th, when I left Michelle and Nick's home around 10 PM that night, the wind was blowing with gusts probably around 40 miles an hour, and I thought, "Wow, this is really not normal at this time of the year." The next day, being Monday, the wind was blowing with gusts up to 60 mph. Now, there were already fires burning all over Oregon. And at first, they were just fires that were started from stupidity, I will say. But the wind was spreading these fires all over. Antifa was not involved yet. The following day, we started getting smoke into the Oregon City area where I live, and we knew that there were fires all around us, and all around the state.

There are fires on the coast, which is one hundred miles from my house, and fires all the way down to Eugene, which is one hundred miles south of my home. There are also more fires farther south in Oregon, near the California border, and both California and Washington had their fair share of fires.

On Wednesday, Molalla, a city about ten miles from where I live, had been evacuated. People with RVs, trailers, motor homes, they were pulling horse trailers, they had their horses. They had hot rod cars on flatbed trailers. They had pickups with motorcycles, boats, and anything that they thought they could save. They were trying to save their junk, you know. They were scared—scared to death. And those people were allowed to stay in three locations in Oregon City: the high school parking lot, the community college parking lot, and in Albertson's parking lot. And it was full, full of people.

So I decided to go down to the high school to see if any of those people needed food and water, and I went space by space and talked all these people, and asked him if they needed food or water, saying, "Hey, I can run errands for you. I go buy your hamburgers. I can do anything you guys want."

Well, they all said they were good (okay), but they were all extremely concerned that their houses were not going to be standing. They were afraid. A number of women were very teary-eyed. One family that I talked to had four little kids, probably 11 or 12 years old and younger. The mother started to cry—she was really crying—and told me that their kids were really upset because they thought they were going to lose their toys, and all the things they own. And, you know, I told that family and several others that I had spoken with that I hope their houses had not burned; that is what they were really concerned about.

Now think of this too. The fear factor going up. In Oregon, everybody is really compliant about wearing masks. And I carry a mask with me because you cannot get in the stores and the banks without a mask because we have mask-police at the doors. So you have to wear a mask, and everybody wears them. You see people in cars with nobody else in their cars, and their windows up, and they have got a mask on. So they are very compliant.

Now in the parking lot there, guess what? Nobody had on a mask! All the people I talked to were not afraid of covid. They were afraid their houses were going to be burnt to the ground. The fear factor had gone up a notch. “Forget covid. I don’t care about that. I need my house, and my junk.” You know, that is what they needed.

All of these people have been evacuated from their homes, and they were all concerned not knowing if their homes had burned down or not. So that is when I decided to check this thing out for myself. I drove out behind my house, where the news said that the fires were. I drove ten miles south from my house on Beaver Creek Road.

The previous day, I received a call from a woman in the United Church of God, an old friend of mine, who asked me to pray for two families who attend church with her, that we know very well. They live in the little town of Colton, and she was told that the fires were right up behind their homes, and they thought their homes were going to be burned. And she said, “Ask your family and the brethren to pray for them. And I said, “Absolutely.” And we did that.

These people had also been evacuated, just like the people from Molalla. When I drove through Colton, there are no fires, no burned-out areas, only thick smoke. I checked out the brethren’s homes. They were still standing.

As I travel along Beaver Creek Road, I saw nothing burned, no fires of any kind at all, only thick smoke. As I continued on down Beaver Creek Road, there were flashing signs and roadblocks that said all roads closed beyond this point.

Well, I thought, “Yeah, forget this.” I drove around the signs, and I drove around the roadblocks, and I continued down Beaver Creek Road to the end. Where it ends, you could go one way to Molalla, or you could go the other way to Estacada, and there were fires in Estacada too, but I thought I will go towards Molalla because all the people who were evacuated to Oregon City were from Molalla.

In the ten or fifteen miles that I drove, I saw no fires, no burned-out areas, no flames, only dense smoke. So I decided to drive this loop. You know, when I

got to the city of Molalla, there were no burned-out areas, no fires, no flames, as far as I could see. No buildings burned. But Molalla was a ghost town, an absolute ghost town.

Nobody was there except for me and three police officers. The police officers had flashlights, that is how dense the smoke was. And they were walking and checking out the buildings and trying doors and all that stuff, because they knew Antifa was out there, well and alive, doing their thing.

On Tuesday, the news media reported a huge fire in the town of Mulino, another town out behind us. They said a car had hit a power pole, and started this great blaze. As I drove out of Molalla on Highway 213 headed for Mulino, I saw no fire, no burned out areas, and no flames anywhere. When I got to the town of Mulino, I saw where a car had hit the power pole, and there was a burned building. Maybe only an acre was burned, but they evacuated everybody, and the news made it sound like it was the end of the world.

The lying media sensationalized the power pole fire, and scared a lot of people, and evacuated the city. Now those people are scared. I then finished driving my 25-to-30-mile loop, and I saw again no fires, no burned out areas, and no flames, only dense smoke. And all that morning my high dollar flip phone was buzzing, and flashing evacuation warnings, and it was saying, evacuate, evacuate, evacuate immediately. I did not even know phones could do that, but it was doing that, and it was even saying, "Don't go home, Evacuate." And I thought, "Yeah, right."

But there was more hype by the news media. When I got back home, Oregon City was placed under an evacuation order. I saw my neighbors in panic. All kinds of my neighbors were putting stuff into their vehicles. One neighbor even loaded up a chain saw, so he could cut up the trees that we are going to fall across the road and get people through. I drove around my neighborhood and I told my neighbors that there was no imminent danger of fires. "Guys," I said, "I just drove it. The fires are a minimum of fifteen miles away."

That night, being Thursday night, only me and my neighbor across the street stayed in the neighborhood. His name is Joe. I told him, "Joe, don't leave," I said, "There's no reason to." I said, "Sleep in your bed. Be comfortable."

And so he decided to stay. But his family did not. His wife, their two girls, and grandma evacuated. We did not see them for four days.

Then around 8:30 that night I was watching TV, and my grandson walked into my house to give me some Pyrex storage bowls Michelle had bought for me. Now, Michelle and Nick, were going to leave because of the smoke, because it was bothering her, and instead she went to Costco and bought me Pyrex. I asked Noah, “Why are you guys home, why did you come back home?” And he said, “Well, Papa, there were no hotel rooms available because they were full of people that had evacuated.” So they came home.

That night, police officers went door to door in my neighborhood and told everyone who had not evacuated that they should evacuate immediately. Nick and Michelle refused to leave, and so did my neighbor, Joe, across the street.

So the police knocked on my door, but I could not hear them, because I am deaf and I had my TV on “Mach 10.” Since I did not respond to their knocking on my door, they spray painted a big zero in white paint at the bottom of my driveway, and all the other homes showing these residents had been evacuated. They thought I was not there. The police spray painted in front of Joe’s driveway on the street, and Nick and Michelle's driveway, an “R” to show that they refused to evacuate. They told Michelle and Nick, “Don't call us, we will not respond. If you don't want to evacuate, you're on your own.”

On Wednesday, social media was reporting that there was looting and fire set by Antifa. When the police came to Nick and Michelle's home on Thursday evening, Nick asked the police officer if the looting and arson by Antifa—was it rumors or was it true? The officer told Nick they were true. He said that there was looting and arson going on. There were reports on social media that said twelve to fifteen Antifa members had been arrested for arson and looting that night. On Friday, the official news media, reported that there had been no arson or looting by Antifa. None. There were several different police departments also reporting the same thing: no arrests, no looting and no one, especially Antifa starting any fire. Think about that, brethren.

After the evacuation order was given on Thursday, and I had made my 30-mile loop, I drove to my youngest daughter's home in Salem to take my grandson home, because she was concerned. I said, "Don't be concerned, I'll bring him home." So I drove the sixty miles and I did not go down the freeway. I went through the farming communities; the back way sixty miles; because I wanted to see what was burned, and what was going on. I did not see anything burned. All I saw was black, thick smoke, but the smoke at her house sixty miles away, was just as thick as it was in Oregon City.

Now, when I when I drove home, I saw thousands and thousands of campers, motorhomes, trucks pulling trailers, horse trailers, U-Haul trailers, and hot rod cars. They were bumper to bumper, and they were not moving at all for miles. I was thinking, "I'm glad I'm not caught up in this." I was going the opposite way. I could go down to 25 miles an hour, the posted speed limit. Or I could have gone a 100 mph. There was nobody going in. Everybody was coming out. People were scared and very frightened due to the news.

My son J.B. called me when I got home, and he said the two-lane road that he lives on was full of vehicles as far as he could see leaving Oregon City. And I said, "Are you going to evacuate?" He said, "Are you crazy?" So I told him to set up a card table at the end of his driveway, and make burritos, and he sell them to the people evacuating their homes, because they were not moving, stuck in the traffic for hours trying to get out of Oregon City, and they would probably get hungry, and he could make a pocket full of money. Well, he laughed at that, of course.

Now back to Antifa and the looting and arson: A high school friend of Michelle's sent her a video of her brother's home that had been burned Saturday morning before church services. I had to cancel church services in the hotel that we keep because there was no place to park, and it was full of evacuees. So we decided we would you stay in the evacuated area where we live. Nobody was there, and we could have church services. Well, this girl sent her this video. It was her brother's home. He had a very nice home on acreage that was well kept. He has two great big, huge horse barns. I have been in them, I have been in his house. This man had security cameras on his property.

On Saturday. Michelle's friend sent her this video of the house burning to the ground. I mean, the flames right on the video. Michelle's friend said that she had video from the security cameras showing three men in a red pickup pulling onto the property and setting fire to the house. The nearest fire to their house was six miles away. Nothing else was burned; the barns; nothing, only the house burnt to the ground. Yet the news media said Antifa was not burning anything.

Later on Saturday, after church, we received another video from another friend of Michele's showing a friend's wife holding a man at gunpoint, spread eagle on the ground, who she had caught trying to set fire to their property. This man's wife only weighs 95 pounds soaking wet. I loved it. I laughed. I thought, "Here you go, tough guy. Here's a 95-pound woman and she's got you spread eagle in the street with a nine millimeter pointed to your head." Oh, and the guy had a book of matches in his hand as he laid there. You could see it right on the video.

On Thursday, J.B. told me that the pallet company near where he worked was also set on fire by Antifa, also caught on security camera. Now we are now at war with each other and we have become very divided in Oregon, especially.

I am going to add a few other things. J.B.'s neighbor Tom, he is an old guy like me, was out there patrolling his house, and he had a 357 Magnum tucked in his belt, and he was walking back and forth, and he went over and told J.B. on Thursday and said, "Don't worry about it when you go to work tomorrow. If anybody comes up and tries to do anything around your house, or set fire or anything," he said, "they will be dead on your front porch when you get home." And I mean, this was the attitude of people. J.B. said, "Okay, Tom, you know, whatever."

Everybody was scared, even the homeless people. A homeless man was up in J.B.'s yard, and he was milling around. Now J.B. has like forty cars in his yard on his acre, because he buys and sells cars, junk cars, and this guy was out there. So J.B. went out there to see what was up and this guy said, "You got to sell me a car, you got to sell me a car!" He said, "I got to get out of here. I got to get out of here." Well, a week before JB had bought two cars from an old woman, and one car was a Dodge minivan. It had moss on it, an

inch thick. It ran like a top. But, it stunk so bad inside, it had half eaten food, and I mean, you could hardly stand to get in the thing. We did not get a title with it, and it costs about \$360 bucks just to get a title.

So J.B. said, “You want a car, huh? He said, “You see that minivan?” (It was still in the driveway because we just brought it home.) He said, “You can have that car for \$450 bucks. You get no title, you get no bill of sale, you get keys, and you get out of here.” And the guy said, “Deal! Give me the car.” So he gave the 450 bucks. The guy got in line with everybody else, scared. This is the homeless guy. Probably more money than he made in a year.

The next day, J.B. called me on the phone, all upset. I said, “What's wrong?” He does not like to be inconvenienced, my kid. And he said, “The bum left his car in my driveway and he took the van.” Well, his car, we call them cars because all the bums have them, was a shopping cart from the grocery store, and he had thrown all his junk in the van and left the shopping cart. J.B. said, “Now I've got to get the pickup out, and I got a load that thing, and I got to take it to the grocery store.” Inconvenience to him, you know? Anyway, I laughed at him.

There is a lot more that I could share with you that would concern you, even scare you guys who do not even live where I live. If you think this cannot happen in your state, you might want to think again. Brethren, God's people, or at least some of them, are struggling with a lack of faith.

That is what it is, make no doubt about it, over COVID-19. It is a lack of faith. COVID-19 is creating division within the body of Christ, within the churches. If COVID-19 is doing this to God's people within His church right now, how will God's people react to riots, looting, and arson—what we just experienced in Oregon last month—because covid went by the wayside when this stuff started; it was over for these people. They did not care anymore. They were worried about everything else.

People in Oregon were very scared and fearful. Lots and lots of Oregonians were armed and scared to leave their homes because of looting and arson.

Now, a friend of mine that lives out in the country said that he and his neighbors had formed a group that were armed and patrolling the areas

where they live because they live on twenty acre parcels. And that is the places Antifa would go. You know, the houses were far apart. They go at nighttime.

Here is how they do it: They go up and they knock on the door at night starting at 11:00 or so. If you answered the door, they say, “Hey, I’m looking for work, you know? Do you have anything I can do?” And if you say no or whatever—you are home—they leave. If you are not home, they burn your house, or they loot, or they do whatever they are going to do. So that is how they work it.

If we as God's people are already refusing to keep the Sabbath—do you know there are people that have not gone to church in six months already? They have not gone to Sabbath service in six months—Sabbath is not an option, brethren. Neither is the Feast. What will they do in the future? What are we going to do in the future? Do we trust God? Things are only going to get worse.

Matthew 10:23 When they persecute you . . .

Brethren, we are we are not being persecuted yet, but some of us are failing to keep the Word of God already out of fear over covid. Let us go on.

Matthew 10:23 “When they persecute you in this city, flee to another. For assuredly, I say to you, you will not have gone through the cities of Israel before the Son of Man comes.”

This verse is telling us what is coming, brethren; what this verse is saying sounds to me like what is coming is going to be much worse and harder for us to deal with than covid has ever been.

Matthew 24:3 (AMP) While Jesus was seated on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, and said, “Tell us, when will this [destruction of the temple] take place, and what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end (completion, consummation) of the age?”

Matthew 24:6 “And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.”

God is telling us that we are going to see and experience all kinds of crazy things, worse things than covid, and the fires and all the rest, the riots and looting and arson that went on in in Oregon City, where I live.

Then God tells us not to be frightened or troubled. The wars and rumors of wars can take place, some of it at least, right here in America. We think that those wars and rumors will be somewhere else. How do you know they are not going to be here? Maybe in Pittsburgh? Two days later, there would be rumors of wars in St. Louis. Then a few days later in Los Angeles. I do not know. It is coming, brethren!

Matthew 24:8 (AMP) But all these things are merely the beginning of birth pangs [of the intolerable anguish and the time of unprecedented trouble].

Brother, there is going to be anguish. It is going to get hard.

Matthew 24:9 “Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and put you to death . . .

You are afraid of covid? They are going to put you to death, some of us.

Matthew 24:9 . . .and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake.”

This has not happened yet, but it is coming. Yet some of God's people are already refusing to keep God's Word because of covid and assemble themselves on the Sabbath and on the holy days, and to keep the feast, brethren.

Matthew 24:10 And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. [the feast is mandatory.]

Brethren, we are living at the end of the age. I have no idea what that means in terms of years. I cannot tell you. I wish I could. I do not know. Is it ten years from now? Fifteen? Five? I do not know.

But if I am right about living at the end of the age, this verse in Luke that we all know well should really concern us greatly.

Luke 18:8 "I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?"

He is talking about us. A lot of you are going to be alive. Are you going to have enough faith? He is asking, "Is there going to be any?" This verse is kind of unsettling to me, especially when you put it with Matthew 17:20. And I will read this out of the Amplified:

Matthew 17:20 (AMP) He said to them, "Because of the littleness of your faith [that is, your lack of firmly relying trust]; for truly I say to you, if you have faith [that is living] like a grain of mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to yonder place,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible to you.

I cannot move mountains. I cannot do it. I can hardly move my furniture around for Days of Unleavened Bread, let alone move mountains. Can you move mountains? Can anybody in here move mountains?

If not, then we all need to work on our faith. We need to build our faith by hearing the Word of God and by living by every Word of God and overcoming our fears.

Romans 10:17 (AMP) So faith comes by hearing [what is told], and what is heard comes by the preaching [of the message that came from the lips] of Christ (the Messiah Himself).

If we want to grow in faith, we must study God's Word daily. That is what it takes; that is hearing the words of God. That is what study is. God gives us the faith, brethren. You cannot conjure it up, but you have got to do your

part. We must pray daily so we can understand the Word of God. If we do our part, God will give us the faith we need to please Him, and things will be well with us if we will have the faith to put one foot in front of the other—little baby steps and He will be with us; He will take care of the things—take care of this; take care of that; take care of this other thing. We will move forward.

If we do not do that, and we refuse to keep His laws because we are scared or frightened, we will never please Him, brethren. Remember, half of the virgins do not have enough oil. They do not have enough faith at the end.

Let us turn to Hebrews 10. I will read from the Living New Testament:

Hebrews 10:38 (LNT) Those whose faith has made them good in God's sight must live by faith, trusting Him in everything.

We have got to have trust, brethren. Otherwise, if we shrink back, God will have no pleasure in us. A lot of us have shrunk back this year over the feast. We must have the faith to do what the Word of God says, no matter what. We are now living in crazy times, and they are only going to get crazier.

I Peter 3:17 (AMP) For [it is] better to suffer [unjustly] for doing right, if that should be God's will, than to suffer [justly] for doing wrong.

It is God's will that we all keep the feast. That is His will. If we are healthy enough to make the trip, we should be here. Now, I am not talking about people who are sick and cannot make the trip, not at all.

Now I have a question for all of us: If all of us baptized members got COVID-19 this year at the feast—everyone—and we went home and died, is that a bad thing? If we gain the Kingdom of God, would that be a bad thing?

Let me ask you another question. I am going to use myself as an example. I am 73 years old, so I am an old goat, okay? How many more years do I have to live? Let us get crazy. I have got cancer. Let us say twenty more years (I

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do not think that is going to happen). Put yourself in this. Would I trade twenty more years of life by not keeping the feast, not going to church, and not getting Covid-19, but losing out on the Kingdom of God and eternity?

Am I willing to trade? Or are you willing to trade however many years you think you have to live (I do not care if you are young and you have sixty years left), are you willing to trade that for the Kingdom of God? I am not. I do not know about you guys. My answer is no.

But some of God's people are scared of catching covid, and it outweighs the Word of God.

Ephesians 5:15-16 (LNT) So be careful how you act. These are difficult days. [Those were difficult days, and these are difficult days.] Don't be fools. Be wise. Make the most of every opportunity you have for doing good.

Keeping the feast is good for all of us.

Ephesians 5:17 (LNT) Don't act thoughtlessly, but try to find out and do whatever the eternal wants you to do.

It is His will that you and I keep the feast.

Proverbs 29:18 Where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint; but happy is he who keeps the law.

We have got to keep the law, brethren. It is vital.

I Samuel 13:13 And Samuel said to Saul, "You have done foolishly. You have not kept the commandment of the LORD your God, which He commanded you. For now the LORD would have established your kingdom over Israel forever.

You see, there are consequences for not living by every word of God. And King Saul paid a heavy price for his decision. We need to stop and think about all that we do.

Now I am going to tell you about my lack of faith. You think I am standing up here telling you, "I'm just full of faith"? No, I am not.

I will tell you what happened. I talked to my neighbor next door. When I went around the neighborhood and was telling all these people, my neighbor was not home, but his wife was. And she is always in a panic. I told her what was going on and I said, "Janet, don't leave." I said, "There are no fires out there. Don't be afraid. I just drove out there, and checked it out." And my neighbor Joe's wife was there [too] and I talked to them both. Well, Janet said, "I'm leaving. We're getting out of here. The minute Bruce gets home we're gone." I said, "Well, I'll be home and I'll watch your house. She started saying, "You'll watch my house?" I said, "Absolutely!" She must have said it three or four times. "You'll watch my house? You'll watch my house?" She kept going on about. She was afraid her house was going to be burned, looted, all the rest of it. So she drove off into the sunset.

Now, I am really easy. It is really easy for me to convince Kim (myself) of what he should do. I can justify stuff and I can make Kim do what I want him to do, you know? So I justified everything and I thought, "Nobody's home but me and Joe; she wants me to protect her house; I have got to protect Nick and Michelle's house."

So I went in the house I went downstairs. I have guns. I have inherited most of them. I do not use them. I am not a hunter, they are in a big safe that I have. It is not a gun safe, because I never bought a gun safe. It is a big money safe, and I am having a hard time filling up with money so I got room in there to put the guns.

I went in there and I pulled out a 12-gauge shotgun, a box of shells, loaded the shotgun, went outside, put a folding chair in my driveway, set the shotgun up against my front door, put the shells there, went upstairs, ate dinner, then started watching TV. I told myself, "Self, you've got to go out there around 10:00 when it gets dark, and if anybody comes in the neighborhood, you need to shoot him. You need to just blow them in two." That is what I told myself.

Then I sat on the couch watching TV, and I started thinking, “What in the world is wrong with you? Are you a moron?” I said, “You’re going to protect the neighborhood?” I thought, “You of little faith.”

So I went down, I unloaded my shotgun, took the shells and put them away, put everything back, went upstairs, went into my room where I prayed, and I had to repent, and ask God to forgive me, me of little faith. Brethren, that is all God wants us to do.

I am not on the people that are not here. I am not telling them they are going straight to hell. It does not mean that I do not love them, I do. I want them here. They need to repent, and make changes because things are going to get harder.

See, I might have the faith to come here because I am not afraid of covid, but I had little faith about what was going on in my neighborhood, and I was armed and ready to shoot somebody. I was lacking as much faith as the brethren that are not here.

We have got to overcome our fears is what I am telling you.

Now with the Day of Atonement, we break the fast with a family from United Church of God. And this year we went to their house and she had the meal catered, and it was delicious.

Anyway, we had dinner, and Karen told us, “If there’s a reason you can’t get to the feast (she was going to rent a house in St. George, Utah, a United feast site.), drive over and you can stay with us.” We said, “Okay.” We would do that if we could not get here. We got here.

At the end of the night, when we were leaving Will (a friend) came over. He is one of the guys that owned the house in Colton. Across the street from him his brother-in-law owns the other house.

These are two people in the church where the flames were supposed to be up right behind their house. I told them, “Will, the other day I went and checked out your house and there were no flames or anything. Donna had called me

and asked me and my family to pray for your house.” He said, “Kim, the flames were right there.” I said, “I didn’t see anything burned or anything.” He said, “Which way did you come in?” I said, “I came in on Unger Road.” He said, “No, if you would have come in on Spring Water, you would have seen where the flames were. They were right there. I was evacuated for two weeks.”

You know what was interesting? After the prayer went out to pray about their homes, he said the fireman could not get the flames under control. They were spreading like crazy because of 60 mile an hour winds. He said, “Once everybody prayed, it was crazy, the wind went away instantly, and they were able to form a fire line, and they saved our homes.” He smiled at me and said, “If God is with you, who could be against you?” And I said, “Exactly.”

Then I asked him, “Where you going to go to the feast?” He said, “Kim, I’m struggling with the Feast this year. But I have it worked out. I was going to go to Bend, Oregon,” which is a hundred miles from our house. He would drive his car to the feast a hundred miles away.

He said they were still going to have a small feast in Bend, but they are going to meet every other day, depending on your last name. And he said he could not do that. He looked at other places, and because they were going to wear masks and they were not going to sing, and they are going to put boxes in front of the door where you came in and you dropped your holy day offerings in the box instead of passing the basket, he said he could not live with any of that.

I said, “So what are you going to do?” He said, “I am going to Daytona Beach, Florida. He *was* going to go a hundred miles. Now, he was going to go 2,500 miles.

He was going to probably buy, maybe fourteen gallons of gas to get there and go home. Now, he was going to spend \$1,000 an airline tickets, and rent a car. But he did not care. He wanted to go and worship God in the way he felt or he deemed to be necessary.

Anyway, we told each other each other to have a good feast. And we left to come here.

Hebrews 10:23 (AMP) So let us seize {and} hold fast {and} retain without wavering the hope we cherish {and} confess {and} our acknowledgement of it, for He Who promised is reliable (sure) {and} faithful to His word.

Brethren, we do not have anything to worry about.

Remember this. If you want to save your life, you are going to lose it. That is what the Bible says. The only person that can save us from what is coming is God and Jesus Christ. You cannot save yourself, and even in that, some of us are still going to be martyred. They are probably going to be the ones that are really faithful.

But you cannot save yourself. God is going to save us, brethren. God is going to do whatever He can to get all of us into His Kingdom. God's will is for you and me to be in His Kingdom. He is reliable. He is sure and faithful to His Word. We need to be the same to our covenant we agreed to at our baptism.

Now I would like to put this sermon kind of in a nutshell real quick.

First off, this sermon was not intended to make little of covid. Covid is real, brethren. We should be concerned. If I did not have to get on an airplane to come here, I would not have done it. I did not want to do it. I *had* to.

I thought, "Maybe if I walked to the feast." The feast is 2,200 miles from my house. I thought, "Maybe I'll drive." Then I thought, "Oh, that is five days one way, and five days back." I thought, "That isn't going to work." So I had to get on a plane.

Covid is real, and it does kill some people. There is no doubt about that. Our fear factor is different in all of us. That is a given. There is nothing wrong with being cautious, and having a little fear. You are going to have it, brethren. Fear over covid, riots, burning, looting, and many other things. But we must overcome the fear and live by every word of God. We must keep the Sabbath, the holy days, including the Feast of Tabernacles no matter what—no matter what.

Now I went over what we experienced in Oregon, and how afraid and fearful most people were. And they were scared, extremely scared. As we move forward, the fear factor is going to increase for all of us. For me, you, all of us. I do not care about “out there,” but you know with us, we have got to keep the fear factor under check; that does not release us from God's Word in His commandments.

What we should do is figure out how to keep the Word of God even though we are afraid. We have got to figure out how to do that, no matter what. Now, if you are here at the feast this year, and you want to wear a face mask, by all means do it. It is okay. If you do not want to shake hands, do not do it, brethren. Nobody is going to condemn you for that. If you want to wear gloves, wear them, if that makes you comfortable.

You are here. That is what matters. If you feel like you need to buy a diving suit, or a suit of armor to get here to the feast, do it. Do whatever it takes to keep the words in the commandments of God.

Now, if I saw somebody coming in here in a diving suit, I would applaud them. I would literally applaud them. I would be happy. They are scared to death, but they are doing what God wanted them to do. That would be great.

Here is the problem that is going on in the church's brethren. This is the problem, and it is going on now.

Those of us who do not feel that we need to wear a mask, or anything else, cannot feel superior, like we have more faith than they do. But in some of the churches, they do. It is like, if you are wearing a mask and you want to stand back, and you will not shake my hand, you have no faith. I have got all the faith, see? That is going on, brethren, and I see it in Portland. We should be glad and happy that our more fearful brothers and sisters are here with us and keeping God's Word.

On the other hand, those of us that that want to wear a face mask or not shake hands should not feel like we are more loving. And that is going on too.

See? I am more loving. I am more concerned about you because I am wearing a mask. I am protecting you. That attitude is going on, too. It is not a joke.

We should not judge each other on these things. We should try to help and encourage one another. Help each other to keep the Word of God, no matter what.

And we cannot condemn people that did not come. Okay? You were fearful. So was I. I pulled out my shotgun. I was ready to shoot somebody. I had to repent, but so do people that did not come to the feast. We got to get back in line. We got to get our fear factors under control.

We cannot help Satan to divide us. Are we going to let Satan divide the church and put us at each other's throats? It is happening in the church already.

I think our fear factor will increase as time goes on. So we must keep our fear factor in check and do whatever it takes no matter what to live by every Word of God.

Remember this: He who tries to save his life will lose it. Only God can protect us, so do not be afraid, do what God says to do, and let God do His job.