



May 2018 "Sign of the Times!"

As we observe events happening around the world and in our own country: should we be alarmed at all of the chaos and evil we see happening? Should we be afraid that some of these things could happen in our own communities in the future? Should we wonder if going out in public anymore is a wise decision or not?

First, I believe that the answer to these questions and others is a yes since what happens to our neighbors is a concern for those who believe in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. Also, the answers to these questions and many others depends upon how God's relationship with you is in your life.

We have been studying the book of Revelation in adult Bible study and have come to realize much of what we are seeing and hearing is the Devil's plan to deceive Christians into doubting the promises and truths of God's Holy Word. I find myself asking questions surrounding some of the evil and chaos that has been happening in the world. Yes, I am human and think about these things. However, I hear God's Word continue to speak to me about the promises He has made to me and pray He strengthens my faith to cling to those promises along with helping me deal with my unbelief.

There are so many volatile issues surrounding Christians today, as they are all of humanity, that I am sure thoughts of what is going on plagues many of you today. So many questions but so few answers.

I would like to address one of these many issues today. The issue I am reflecting on is gun control. With all that has happened in the past several months I am sure many of you have thought about this issue. It is an issue that has caused many deaths in recent months and I am sure will continue to be a volatile issue in months to come.

This issue is not going to go away and we will have to continue to deal with it ongoing. There is talk from both sides as to why their side is right and talk from both sides why the others ideas are wrong. I believe that there is really no solution from either side that will solve this dilemma for the future. You may say "pastor, why do you believe this?" A very sound question.

The belief I have surrounding this issue and many others is people believe what they perceive as right or wrong is the only norm that is truth to them. It doesn't matter if the law says one thing, they will do whatever they feel is right in their minds and eyes. Just like someone traveling down a highway. The speed limit says 65 miles per hour, which is the law, but that someone says to themselves I can go as fast as I want and it is my right. The law is of no effect, and what becomes law lies within the conscience of the individual.

What do you think? Is there anything missing here? What is missing is a belief in a Supreme Being. That Supreme Being is God. In the issues spoken of here the central theme running through them is that God has been thrown out and individuals are the supreme beings called upon to see right and wrong. This is what is happening throughout the world today. Especially in our country. Many of you have strong emotions tied in with the issues seen throughout the world and taking place in our country.

Let me ask you. Within those strong emotions that fill you with anger, sadness, indifference, and others, are you able to reflect on the issues from a Biblical perspective or do you become consumed with the emotions tied to an issue?

You see Jesus speaks about these types of things taking place throughout His Word. That much of humanity will look to themselves, not God, to determine what is right and wrong in their opinions and eyes. God calls for Christians to look at these issues from a Biblical perspective. God has been reduced to someone who talks about love and being nice but doesn't have anything to do with the real moral and ethical issues of our day.

We do not love our neighbors as God has loved us so therefore if someone makes us mad we have every right to get even.

This is not a Christian's way. But how often do we Christians fall prey to Satan's deceit by condemning the issues of today without trying to understand them from God's Word. It is easy to let our emotions get the best of us but faith in God is not built upon emotions. It is built upon the truth and promises of God's Word to us in order that we may understand those truths and promises.

God says Satan will be active in this world but also has defeated Satan at the cross and through His resurrection. We know from God's Word that such issues as are addressed in this letter are going to happen, but how we respond as Christians, is going to be a huge factor how others will know we are Christians by our words and deeds. How can we, as Christians, talk about these issues knowing they are going to happen but understand we have a hope in an eternal life with God? These are signs of the times and how are you going to respond from a Christian faith that speaks into the lives of those who find themselves in search of something other than God? How do Christians make God real to those who do not see God as relevant in their lives and depend upon themselves for answers when God is the answer?

In Christ's Service & Love, *Pastor Rich*