

right where He wants us

The People of God in Times Like These

Intentionally United

²⁷ Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel, ²⁸ and not frightened in anything by your opponents. This is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation, and that from God. ²⁹ For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake, ³⁰ engaged in the same conflict that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

2 So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, ² complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.

Philippians 1:27-2:2

Our context:

Rising secularization and its many effects ...

“Consider the fact that religious liberty is now described as religious privilege. By definition, a privilege is not a right. It can be revoked or redefined as circumstances may dictate. It can be withdrawn or subverted by the courts in the name of liberation and justice. And, in our day, privilege is suspect in the first place—an embarrassment to be identified and corrected.

In 2016 the chairman of the United States Commission on Civil Rights, Martin R. Castro, stated in an official report of the Commission: “The phrases ‘religious liberty’ and ‘religious freedom’ will stand for nothing except hypocrisy so long as they remain code words for discrimination, intolerance, racism, sexism, homophobia, Islamophobia, Christian supremacy or any form of intolerance.””

Mohler, *The Gathering Storm* (p. 166).

Example: The Equality Act

“The Equality Act, now passed by the United States House of Representatives, amends the 1964 Civil Rights Act by including sexual orientation and gender identity as protected classes. In short, the Equality Act explicitly codifies the Christian worldview as hatred, bigotry, and no longer valid as seen by the American legal system. As a consequence, those views have no place in American public life and must only find expression in the most private places of an individual’s life—at least for now.”

Mohler, *The Gathering Storm* (p. 171).

Constitution of the United States, Amendment I

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

“It pains me to say this, but in certain quarters, religious liberty is fast becoming a disfavored, right. And that marks a surprising turn of events. Consider where things stood in the 1990s. And to me, at least that does not seem like the Jurassic age. When a Supreme Court decision called employment division versus Smith, cut back sharply on the protection provided by the Free Exercise Clause of the First Amendment. Congress was quick to respond. It passed the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA). To ensure broad protection for religious liberty. The law had almost universal support. In the house, the vote was unanimous. In the Senate, it was merely 97 to three, and the bill was enthusiastically signed by President Clinton today that widespread support has vanished.”

- Justice Samuel Alito (Keynote Address to the Federalist Society, 11/12/2020)

Our challenge:

_____ like Christ would live if He were living _____ through us.

This legitimizes our Gospel message.

_____ together. This requires ...

_____ the reality all around us.

_____ giving Biblical ground for the sake of _____ or freedom from _____.

_____ so that no one feels isolated, alone, or unsupported.

This will demonstrate the _____ and _____ of our message.

_____ if need be, knowing that ...

Suffering is a _____ from God, not an indication He has abandoned us,

Suffering has been the mark of the _____ throughout its existence.

Our motivations: (Philippians 2:1-2)

“encouragement in Christ”

“comfort from love”

“participation in the Spirit”

“affection and sympathy”

Notice that all 4 motivations are _____ and not _____.

The hoped-for results:

“same mind/one mind”

“same love”

“full accord”

Next message:

right where He wants us – Actively Obedient