

Opportunities and Threats, week 5: Church is essential

September 6th, 2020 by Kasey Crawford

Today's Passages: Hebrews 10:39, Romans 13:1-5, Rev. 13:16-14:10

We are in the midst of a cultural earthquake...

But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who have faith and preserve their souls. Hebrews 10:39

Rather than shrink back, this is a time to rise up, to dig in to the goodness of God and then advance the Kingdom of God (in us and through us) to our families, our city, our state and nation.

Today's Threat: Church doesn't matter, it certainly isn't "essential."

When the church is faced with the message that it doesn't matter, is that the time to lower the sales in _____ or is it a time to push back?

"The church must be reminded that it is not the master or the servant of the state, but rather the conscience of the state. It must be the guide and the critic of the state, and never its tool. If the church does not recapture its prophetic zeal, it will become an irrelevant social club without moral or spiritual authority."
-Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Now is such a time in regards to church. If we don't push back against the "church isn't essential" message, where are we going to end up as a society?

But...what about... **Romans 13:1-4?** Governing authority IS God's design. But what happens when God's design is ____ followed by those in authority. What happens when rulers become a "terror" to good conduct? What if the sword is brought down upon those who are following God? This very circumstance is written about in **Revelation 13-14.**

"If anyone worships the beast and its image and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand, ¹⁰ he also will drink the wine of God's wrath."
Revelation 14:9-10

So should we submit to this governing authority?

No. In _____ case, submission to this governing authority is to your own destruction.

When Peter and John are arrested for preaching the gospel and the governing authorities command them to never preach the name of Jesus again, what do they say? Yes sirs, we submit to your authority! No. **But Peter and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than men".**
Acts 5:29

The biblical precedent is: When the earthly authorities violate the heavenly authorities, we _____ God.

The apostle Paul lived this out for his entire ministry career. For the vast majority of Paul's three decades of ministry, he lived as a _____ on the run from the governing authorities.

In fact, you could make a clear and compelling case that some of our country's best qualities emerged from a daring little church that chose to _____ the king of England and seek the opportunity to freely worship God without government persecution.

Responding to God...

In what ways, if any, do you see that our governing authorities have "lost their way" when it comes to how they view the role of church in society?

Do you feel that now is a time to push back, resist, stand up for the essentiality of church? What does that look like?

Answers: compliance, not, this, follow, fugitive, defy