

Spirit-Filled Pastor Urges Believers to ‘Shed Cowardice and Stand Courageously’

Picture the scene: One of the most influential and brilliant leaders in history sat shackled and shivering in a dark dungeon during this, his second imprisonment. He knew the sands in the hourglass would soon run out as he pondered his upcoming execution.

One of his final acts would be leaving a lasting legacy of faithfulness to his son in the faith, Timothy.

Awaiting his death, he wrote his final letter that reverberates through the tunnel of time containing nuggets of divinely revealed insight that challenge us to this very day.

“For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, and I have kept the faith. From now on a crown of righteousness is laid up for me, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me on that Day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved His appearing” (2 Tim.4:6-8).

Bible teacher Derek Prince once said, “There is no way to finish your course and keep the faith unless you fight the good fight.”

Paul previously told this young man that “God has not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and love, and self-control” (2 Tim.1:7). The word “fear” is best translated “cowardice” and appears only one other time in the New Testament, and that is in Revelation 21:8. There, God tells us of those who “shall have their portion in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone.” Scripture identifies the woeful candidates: “the

unbelieving, the abominable, the murderers, the sexually immoral, the sorcerers, the idolaters, and all liars,” but first on the list of the rogues gallery is “the cowardly.”

Having set the table in this commentary with what is intended to be a call to be courageous in these increasingly tension-filled times, let me introduce you to one of my closest friends for over 40 years whom I believe is modeling courage and boldness in a season when it is desperately needed.

Courageous Christian Activist, Che Ahn

Dr. Che Ahn, senior leader of Harvest Rock Church in Pasadena, California, is founder of the Harvest International Ministry with 70 churches in the nations and 162 churches in California. He also serves as the international chancellor of Wagner University training leaders worldwide.

Earlier this year, Ahn united with Mat Staver of Liberty Counsel, a Christian ministry protecting Christians’ legal rights, to confront Gov. Gavin Newsom of California who put forth restrictions prohibiting, among other things, Christians singing in church services and hosting Bible studies and fellowship gatherings in homes. Knowing this had implications for Christians across America, Ahn prayed, sought counsel and knew it was time to be “bold as a lion” (Prov. 28:1) and stand up courageously to the former leftist mayor of San Francisco.

Lean in and listen attentively as Ahn lays out on the podcasts embedded in this commentary exactly what happened before, during and after this chilling development. This is undoubtedly a horrendous example of overreach and violation of constitutional rights.

It also represents a foreshadowing of what other far-left political leaders are doing to stamp out the church’s influence and presence in our American society.

As a public policy adviser with Liberty Counsel, I’ll defer to Staver in describing what’s happening and why Ahn seeks to

awaken pastors across America.

"All home-based small group Bible studies and private worship among friends and family were deemed illegal for 80% of the California population! The same order that banned religious gatherings in private homes allowed and even encouraged the insane anarchist riots, blocking highways and destroying city blocks ... In California you could stand shoulder to shoulder with Marxists singing about killing cops, but you couldn't worship with freedom in your own home."

In the podcasts, Ahn explains in shocking detail how even their local mayor of Pasadena threatened to arrest him and church members. Church was branded "nonessential," yet abortion clinics, liquor stores and marijuana dispensaries were all A-OK and allowed to be open for business.

Criminals and rapists in California are released from jail in the name of "social justice" and fighting "systemic racism," yet God-fearing, respectful and patriotic Christians are stigmatized and stopped from practicing, "freedom of religion," our very First Amendment constitutional right.

Ahn mobilized intercessors and worked with other courageous leaders until the case actually went before the United States Supreme Court. They won an initial victory, but the case isn't over with other legal rulings forthcoming to try and thwart the victory.

But Staver counters with this: "The Supreme Court has already issued its constitutional roadmap for places of worship that leads to the inevitable conclusion: Gov. Gavin Newsom's executive edicts violate the First Amendment. The high court has ruled and therefore all lower courts must obey that decision to allow churches their First Amendment freedom."

Courage is Contagious

Although Billy Graham ministered in a time when our Judeo-Christian values were honored and even celebrated, he took a

righteous stand against racial discrimination and told us that “courage is contagious.” Before he died, he aligned with his son Franklin in a public affirmation of the biblical design for one man/woman marriage as opposed to same-sex marriage promoted by Barack Obama, the Democrat party, Hollywood and an overwhelmingly leftist media.

Ahn communicates clearly, and I concur unequivocally, that our religious liberties are under assault and that the 2020 election was one of the worst scandals in United States history. We believe the presidency was stolen and the election was characterized by horrific fraud and corruption.

Acquiescing, staying silent or taking a fatalistic approach during this pivotal time is contrary to our commission as “salt” stopping decay and “light” exposing deception.

Standing for righteousness will cost us (for me personally it was called a “deal breaker” in a church when I produced a video on biblical versus gay marriage).

The choice remains: Will we cower in trepidation, forgetting “the fear of man brings a snare” (Prov. 29:25a) or will we emulate David, who, for his generation, “served the purpose of God” (Acts 13:36, ESV), slaying any Goliath standing in our way? That translates into shedding cowardice and standing courageously in a culture increasingly hostile to Almighty God and Kingdom advancement.

The ways of God are becoming so plain and clear that only the obedient can follow.

Here’s the Deal: Ahn and I as longtime friends agree that “the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God” (1 Pet. 4:17a, MEV) and radical obedience to King Jesus must now be the norm. No more “man pleasing.” The soul of our nation is at stake, and our children’s and grandchildren’s wellbeing hangs in the balance.

“For am I now seeking the approval of men or of God? Or am I trying to please men? For if I were still trying to please men, I would not be the servant of Christ” (Gal. 1:10). {eoa}