

What Believers Must Be Willing to Do in These Perilous Times

In watching many believers, they don't seem to be ready for what is coming.

Now please understand, I am not a doom and gloom guy by any means. But I do recognize turbulence seems to be increasing in these days. Resistance to the kingdom of God is intensifying, and it will not be long before being a Christian in our culture will be heavily opposed.

So what do we do to prepare for what's ahead?

The answers are actually quite simple, because it involves facing three things that many people today are not dealing with. You can ignore them for so long, but eventually you have to face them.

In preparing for what's ahead, you need to be equipped to stand confidently while many are crumbling under darkness, stress, discouragement, isolation and hopelessness. Dealing with these three areas will best prepare you to be a vessel of hope in the worst of times:

1. Face your fears instead of avoiding them or justifying them. The Bible teaches that in the last days, men's hearts will fail because of fear (Luke 21:26.) The intensity of the times will wipe people out because they do not carry a realm of peace within from God that overcomes storms.

Most people are giving in to their fears and setting their life decisions around their fears. This needs to change, because it is not going to get any easier.

It's time right now to stop justifying our fears as a part of

our personality, a valid concern and just the way we are. We need to renounce and turn from our fears and towards a love relationship with Father God, so that we can walk in a greater boldness, taking risks where we once jumped to the easiest road with the least resistance. This means facing our relational fears and the fears we have of financial loss and even loss of comfort.

2. Quit being so easily offended and forgive daily. Our culture is training us to avoid offending someone at all costs, causing everyone to tiptoe around relationships, and no real change takes place. No one is being real with each other because offense drives the world of relationships today. Once offense comes in, bitter roots rise up to defile.

No relationship is going to go to a deeper level if one or both of the people involved are easily offended. Communication will get off track, motives will be misunderstood and division will take over. If we can have a heart that is “un-offendable” then we can have solid relationships and get the job done for the kingdom of God. In the days ahead, we will have very little time to entertain offense in relationships. In fact, churches that play to everyone’s offense will crumble, for they will play into people pleasing and lose the ability to release the pure Word of the Lord with power.

3. Learn to love people like you have never loved them before. Jesus also said that in the last days the love of many will grow cold. A clear mark of the last days is actually relational breakdown—where people will not be able to have effective relationships and become very easily prone to hardness of the heart. Passionate love will wane as brothers and sisters do not know how to love one another with a forbearing love that endures.

I believe God is calling the church to walk in a higher level of love than it ever has. This has nothing to do with watering any message down, but loving people with an intensity that

demonstrates the goodness of God. We never have to water down truth or compromise core values of the kingdom of God.

The world would tell us that the only way to love is to agree with everything and accept everything people do. That's not love, for the love of God comes with an invitation for relationship, despite the sin that is present. As love is received, the character and nature of God comes to transform us into the image He created us to be. The more we are able to carry His love for people, the greater atmosphere we will carry for a transformative culture. His goodness leads us to repent.

The only solution to the pain and bondage going on in the world is the love of God flowing through human beings who are willing to love people at a greater level than they did before. We must be willing to love those who don't love us back. We have to move from just loving people who agree with us to loving people even when their lives are filled with struggle and junk that make us want to get away or even reject them.

Our ability to love people truly as Christ demonstrated, needs an upgrade. For as they hated Him, the world will hate us. But may we carry a love that is so tangible and potent, that our very identity as Christians would be marked with it. {eoa}

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