

Franklin Graham: God Is Speaking, but Are You Listening?

A searchlight scans the globe, revealing world crises everywhere from the border to the deadly Ebola virus that terrorizes West Africa. From Russian attacks on Ukraine to a Malaysian airplane that mysteriously disappears. Turmoil that has simmered in the Middle East since the beginning of time now escalates. Iraq and Syria are disintegrating in sectarian violence: Muslims killing Muslims, Muslims killing Christians.

While the world grapples with implications of the Israeli-Gaza conflict, a 6.1 earthquake cracks and rattles the mountainous region of Yunnan province in China, killing 400 and injuring nearly 2,000. Economic mayhem is causing governments and businesses to crumble. Family values are being assaulted, moral laws torn asunder.

What is the answer to the chaos? Before one crisis can be calmed, another rains down. From coast to coast, continent to continent, terror strikes the nations. News anchors and political personalities often shake their heads and ask, "What in the world is going on?"

Who can save us? From nation to nation, we search for someone to lead us out of the stranglehold. God's Laser Beam points to the truth: "And there will be signs ... on the earth, distress of nations, with perplexity, ... men's hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken" (Luke 21:25-26).

Society expects solutions from educators, politicians and cutting-edge technology. The world chases after the latest device that can pump out information faster than it can be

downloaded, while ignoring the only answer to why the world is perplexed, unhinged, off course.□

The Bible identifies man's trouble from beginning to end—the fall of the human race—and lays out what is to come. We do not have to ask what in the world is going on. God has already told us what is going on in the world. His Word radiates with answers. God is speaking, but few are listening.

The world is caught up in the frenzy of war, natural disaster and man-made chaos. Today's headlines are not much different from ancient times. Earthquakes and flood waters bring havoc; famine and disease kill multitudes; refugees flee homelands; continual wars ravage the nations. With the passing of time, one would think that the human race would heed the warnings of God. Instead of turning our hearts to Him to acknowledge our sinfulness and inadequacy, we turn on our televisions and mobile devices, only to see the cities of antiquity still headlining the news, from Damascus to Gaza, from Jerusalem to Mosul (ancient Nineveh).

I find myself opening the Bible to read the psalmist's question: "Why do the nations rage against God?" (Psalm 2:1). Throughout Scripture the answer is given: The heart of man is evil and wicked (Jer. 17:9). Turning to the Lord is man's only hope.

This is why the Lord permits events such as we witness to continue—to draw people to Him. He desires His creation to repent of wickedness and rebellion against Him. Out of His great love and grace He says: "Return to Me, with all your heart" (Joel 2:12). The Bible—the operating manual for life—can guide one to always do the right thing in the eyes of God. Instead, God's Word is relegated to the library of antiquity. Why? Political powers vie for dominance. Man's heart wants to triumph over God instead of bowing before Him and doing His will.

“‘Behold, the days are coming,’ says the Lord God, ‘that I will send a famine on the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord. They shall wander from sea to sea, and from north to east; they shall run to and fro, seeking the word of the Lord, but shall not find it’” (Amos 8:11-12).

The Bible tells us what to do when we see these events unfold: “Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near” (Luke 21:28). The return of the Lord Jesus is coming, and those who follow Christ should be in a perpetual state of expectation, obediently declaring that Jesus came to save the world from the dominance of Satan’s hold on human hearts. To wring our hands in despair will not lead anyone out of this world’s bondage and into the peace that God desires for His people.

While preparing to preach a series of evangelistic meetings in Pittsburgh last month, I read an article in the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* titled, “If Rockets Rained on Pittsburgh.” It reveals that people everywhere live in dread of what is to come. Man’s greatest terror is the sin that rages within his own heart. Jesus Christ is the only One who can bring peace to the world, and He will do what He promises.

But we do not have to wait until that time to know God’s peace even in the midst of world turmoil. The Bible says, “There is no other God besides Me, a just God and a Savior. There is none besides Me. Look to Me, and be saved, all you ends of the earth!” (Is. 45:21-22).

Salvation is offered to every person who will believe by faith that Jesus Christ will save them out of their sin and put His Spirit within them. There is hope in times of war, famine and great peril. Don’t look to governments for the answers. Don’t depend on technology to help you maneuver through life’s uncertainties. Look to Jesus, and know that the signs of the times should lead us to Him.

“Let all the earth fear the Lord; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him ... The Lord brings the counsel of the nations to nothing; He makes the plans of the peoples of no effect. The counsel of the Lord stands forever ... blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord” (Ps. 33:8-12).

Franklin Graham, *son of iconic evangelist Billy Graham, is the president and CEO of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association and Samaritan's Purse.*

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