

What Are You Holding On To?



By Rob Pue

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What are you holding on to, that's holding you back from being the bold, courageous, Christian soldier the Lord has called you to be? I've stated many times that we will all be tested and face many trials and tribulations in this world – especially now, when every precept of God and His Word is being tossed aside and trampled underfoot, while the world grows darker and more sinister by the day.

There ARE those who have stood strong in the face of these fiery trials. Men and women of God who have remained steadfast and faithful – in speaking the truth, fighting for justice and doing spiritual battle against the dark forces that seek to destroy our lives and capture our very souls. A pastor friend of mine was arrested by the FBI lasdt week – for simply being present in DC on January 6, 2021 – and for the content of one of his sermons. He's a bold, courageous pastor, and he's led his church to push back against strip clubs in his town, against abortion, against the lies of the "transgender" movement and the LGBTQP+ agenda. But he's also a humble man, a non-violent man. He's never hurt a fly or encouraged anyone to engage in violence. He simply speaks the truth, and for that, he has been "swatted" by the FBI.

I'm honored to call this man my friend. Several other friends have already been visited by our now-weaponized FBI and questioned, for various things. We can also see what's happened to faithful pastors like Tony Spell from Louisiana, or Pastor Art Pawlowski in Canada as they've fought unjust

tyranny and continued to minister the Word of God – even when government officials have told them to be silent, preach no more, and close their ministries down.

I'm reminded of Peter and John, having been arrested by the religious rulers. In Acts 4, we read, *"And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John answered and said unto them, 'Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.'* So when they had further threatened them, they let them go, finding nothing how they might punish them, because of the people: for all men glorified God for that which was done."

Then we have, as an example, the apostle Paul, who was sent to prison at least seven times, but that didn't stop him either. From prison, he wrote much of our New Testament. These men, who gave up so much to preach the Word of God and salvation through Christ, remained steadfast in their service to the Lord, even though it cost them everything – and eventually their lives.

How completely different Christianity has become today. The situation we find ourselves in now didn't happen overnight. Whether you want to believe it or not, our nation was founded on Christian, Biblical principles. The martyrs of Scripture were examples to countless thousands of others who fought the good fight, ran the race well, and gave their all down through the centuries, for the sake of the Gospel – in service to their Lord and Savior.

But over the past few generations, the people of America and the world have chosen darkness rather than light. They've chosen luxury and ease over engaging the wicked culture around us. No one needs to wonder why our country and our world is writhing in despair today. There's no question why so many have been driven to madness and suicide, why so many now

question even their own gender, why there's so much violence, hatred and injustice. God Almighty gave us a choice between darkness and light, between life and death, and we've chosen death.

Even our modern churches offer nothing of any significance. The people in the pews may worship God with their lips, but their hearts are far from Him. Their hearts are set on the things of this world. Things they don't want to let go of or lose. They cling to the things of this world so tightly, that THINGS have become their "god." While church-goers may well have five or ten copies of the Bible in their homes, the vast majority of them are never opened. Prayer has become a "last resort" after they've tried every other earthly thing they can think of in their times of desperation.

Romans 12:2 reminds us, *"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect."* How many professing Christians actively pursue that advice from Paul today? No, sadly, most are, indeed, conformed to this world; so much so that they cling to it tightly, as if they have no hope other than the stuff they possess.

Most Americans have become victims of their possessions. Those things they covet so much and cling so tightly to, which they feel make their lives better, easier, more comfortable and luxurious are, in most cases, holding them as prisoners. A secular song from the 1970s had these words: "So many times it happens, that we live our life in chains, and we never even know we have the key." Indeed.

In 1 John 2, we have this: *"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world."*

And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."

Still we cling to our luxuries. Our nice homes filled with fancy furniture, our cars and trucks, our big screen TVs, our computers, tablets, smart phones and other similar devices; many cling to snowmobiles, four-wheelers, campers and boats – all things that occupy our hearts and minds and suck away our time that could and should be used more wisely in doing exploits for the Kingdom of God, in service to the One we call our "Savior."

A dear friend of mine, Coach Dave Daubenmire, heads up the Salt and Light Brigade. I'm honored to have ministered alongside and under the direction of Coach's leading in doing street ministry. He taught me, and thousands of others how to do street ministry, by taking us there – showing us how. And showing us we have nothing to fear as we preach the Gospel to the lost and perishing, as we seek to save babies being led away to slaughter, as we uphold a righteous Godly standard, even in the midst of hundreds of thousands of lost souls participating in "pride" parades. Coach has been my "Paul," and I've been his "Timothy."

Besides street ministry though, the Salt and Light Brigade, which now has chapters in nearly every state, also responds to natural disasters. Brigade members volunteer their time to do "disaster relief" after storms, tornadoes and hurricanes. They go to these places, in the name of Jesus, and they get their hands dirty helping with cleanup. They also feed hot meals to hungry people who have lost everything. And they've re-built countless homes that have been utterly destroyed. They do all this at no cost to the people they serve, because what they do, they do "as unto the Lord."

A couple of things Coach Dave has noticed in these disaster areas is, first of all, the local churches almost never open their doors to help people in their own neighborhoods. While

Brigade members come from all parts of the country, some driving 24 hours or more to get there at their own personal expense, churches a block or two away from where they're working remain closed, offering no help and no hope.

The other thing that really impacted Coach while doing disaster relief is how people view all their "stuff" after disaster strikes. Prior to a hurricane, they hold onto it tightly, they value it highly, they protect it all and consider it all precious. But after a hurricane, storm or tornado, when everything is destroyed, all they want to do is get rid of it all, but so many just can't find a way to do that. With trees uprooted and roofs badly damaged, all the furniture from these homes is soaked with smelly, filthy water; cars are wrecked, electronics destroyed, and all the boats, campers and other recreational vehicles have become heaps of rubbish. What they once held so precious has all now become a curse that they can't get rid of.

Friends, this is when people are most able to see clearly those things that matter most. This is when they're able to understand that the desires of the flesh, the desires of the eyes and the pride in possessions – is not from God, but of the world, and in the end, it's all just meaningless, and even worse, a curse.

This is when Colossians 3:2 begins to make some sense: *"Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth."*

After the recent devastation in Florida from Hurricane Ian, I dare say that many are finding that out today. I suppose with enough insurance coverage, all the "stuff" can be replaced. But how much better it would be if people would realize that all the "stuff" just doesn't really matter in the end. Survivors of disasters like these are grateful to be alive. So considering again, then, the choice God has presented us all with: life or death, I'm sure most would choose life.

But life in this world is so insignificant to the eternal life that only Jesus can provide. Only when we turn to Him in humble repentance and faith can we be assured of that life. And when we earnestly seek Him and study His precious Word, He will reveal Himself to us – and fill us with His Holy Spirit, Who will be our Counselor and our Friend. It's only those who truly have Christ as their Lord and Savior who can stand in the midst of mounds of ruined "stuff" and maintain peace that passes all understanding.

Nothing is more important for us than to pursue God and Jesus Christ with all our hearts, minds and lives. No luxuries, no conveniences, no form of entertainment can ever possibly measure up to the joy we can have by knowing we're walking in the will of God and serving Him – indeed, doing EXPL0ITS for His Kingdom – in this life.

So what is it that you hold most dear in this world? Many will say their spouse or their children or grandchildren. Yes, in this world, that would be the correct answer. But an even better answer would be the MISSION that God has for *you*... and we all have a mission we were created to carry out for the Lord. If you don't know what your particular mission for God is, then draw close to Him. Pursue Him, and He'll show you what your job is supposed to be. It's not simply attending a church and then living like the rest of the world the rest of the time. It's not just doing "good deeds" either, though once you're truly saved that will become more and more important to you, because it's the fruit that grows from a saved soul.

Most of all, you'll have a deep desire to turn away from the things of this world. All that "stuff" that used to be so important to you, you'll find just doesn't matter that much anymore. As you learn to live for the King, your priorities will fall in line. And if you've been living in fear, you'll find that fear falls away too, and is replaced with power, love and a sound mind.

You can still expect great persecution, because that's part of the Christian life here on this earth, and even more so as the world grows darker and more wicked and evil. You'll find that the closer you draw to Christ, the more the world will hate you, and Jesus said it would be that way. After all, it hated Him first. But those who stand strong 'til the end shall be saved. That's eternal life. For most people, life in this world is the only "heaven" they'll ever know. For those whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life, life in this world is the only "hell" they will ever know.

So refuse to allow any falsehoods or lies – about any topic – to go unchallenged. Stand up for righteousness and justice, in whatever venue it's needed... get involved in your school board, your library board, your city council, and wherever public policy is made. Be there, to be the Salt and Light of God to everyone you come in contact with. You have nothing worthwhile to lose, so be bold, be courageous and do exploits for God in these dark days, while you still can. Proverbs 10:5, *"He that gathereth in summer is a wise son, but he that sleepeth in harvest is a son that causeth shame."*

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