

# Peace in a Turbulent World

by Anton Bosch

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**Scripture:** John 16:33, Psalms 37:1, Matthew 6:27, John 18:36, 1 Corinthians 5:12, 2 Peter 2:20

**Topics:** "Trust in God's Sovereignty", "Prioritizing Relationship with God"

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## Description

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## Transcript

Especially members, obviously, of Sun Valley Community Church, and then also our friends from other parts of the world who are joining with us this morning. This morning's message is going to be a little bit different because I want to particularly address our church and our fellowship, but obviously others are welcome to listen in and hopefully some of this will be of a blessing and of a help to you. So let's open in prayer.

Father, we come to you in the name of the Lord Jesus again, and Lord, as we meet under very difficult circumstances, many challenges around us, and also the absence of one another, we thank you that you are present wherever we meet in your name. And Lord, even though we are watching this in different places, different homes, different parts of the world, you are present, and we thank you, Lord, that your word remains true, whether we are gathered together physically in one place or whether we're not. And so I pray this morning, Lord, that you would minister to us, that you would speak to us through your word.

I pray, Lord, above all, that you would help us to overcome our preconceived ideas and prejudices and that we might be able to look again at what your word says and that we may conform our lives and our thinking to the word of God. And so, Lord, I pray for your blessing upon us today. In Jesus' name, amen.

Amen. So I'm going to read from John chapter 18 and 33 through 38, the Gospel according to John chapter 18 from verse 33. And of course, the context is Jesus is meeting with Pilate, he is being judged by Pilate just before the crucifixion, and I'm sure you wonder what this has to do with our present situation, but I trust that you'll see as we move along.

So let's read together from John chapter 18 and verse 33. Then Pilate entered the praetorium again, called Jesus and said to him, Are you the king of the Jews? Jesus answered him, Are you speaking for yourself about this, or did others tell you this concerning me? Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Your own nation and the chief priests have delivered you to me. What have you done? Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world.

If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would fight so that I should not be delivered to the Jews. But now my kingdom is not from here. Pilate therefore said to him, Are you a king then? Jesus answered, You say rightly that I am a king.

For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears my voice. Pilate said to him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again to the Jews and said to them, I find no fault in him at all.

The question that we need to answer this morning is, what is the kingdom of God? I think that it's an area where there is a tremendous amount of lack of clarity, a lot of different ideas as to what the different identities or entities in the world are. I think that one listens to most preachers, and when you read a lot of Christian literature today, there are basically three entities, depending on where you live. The first is the church, the second is the world, and then the third is the nation.

And so, if you live in America, well, then it's the church, America, and the rest of the world. If you live in the United Kingdom, it's the church, the United Kingdom, and the rest of the world. But, in fact, the reality is that there are only two entities in the whole of the world.

It is the church and the world, or the kingdom of God and the world. That's all there is. Everything outside of the body of Christ, and I obviously don't mean the local assembly, I'm meaning all the believers that are part of the body of Christ, who are born again, that form the church of God, that is separate from the world.

When one listens to a lot of preaching at the moment, in the middle of the crisis that we find ourselves in, a lot of people are speaking about God speaking to America. And if you go to England, you'll find that they are saying, well, God is speaking to England. And if you go to Australia, they're saying, well, God is speaking to Australia.

God is not speaking to Australia, or to England, or to South Africa, or to America. God is speaking to the church. But He does, obviously, speak to the world.

But that's exactly the problem. We think, because we live in America, that we're so special that God deals specifically with America. Or if you're in England, you think God deals specifically with England.

No, God is just dealing with two groups of people. The one is the church, and the other one is the world. There is nothing in between.

Obviously, there is a third entity which is not part of the picture right now, and that is Israel. God sees Israel as separate from the nations, and God will deal with Israel separate to the nations at the end time. In

fact, for practical purposes today, Israel is just as much part of the world as any other nation is part of the world.

And so when we look at this statement of the Lord Jesus, because obviously the problem here is that Pilate is thinking that Jesus is setting himself up as a king in opposition to himself and in opposition to Caesar. And so that was really the story that they had come to Pilate with. The Jews had come to Pilate and said, well, Jesus is a threat because he has set himself up as the king of the Jews, and he's going to cause trouble for you.

And so that really is the heart of the question. So the question is, are you a king? And Jesus says, well, you've rightly said I'm a king, but here's the problem. My kingdom, he says in verse 36, is not of this world.

Jesus answered, my kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would fight. I'm going to come back to that part of the verse in a moment.

So my kingdom is not of the world. God's kingdom is not part of the world. The world is separate to the kingdom of God.

And so the question is simply, what is the world and what is God's relationship with the world, but more specifically, what is our relationship with the world? How do we relate to the world? And so Jesus is saying his kingdom is not part of this world. It is not part of this world system. Now, also as we get into the study this morning, I think what we need to also remember is that generally when we read the New Testament and we read about the world, and of course John speaks a lot about the world, but Paul also speaks about the world.

When we read the world, we generally think about the worldly passions, worldly desires, sins, the stuff that makes the world go around. But in fact, the world is not just that. The world is the systems of the world, the way the world functions, the governments of this world, the finances and the financial systems of the world.

This is all part of the world, and that world is set apart from the kingdom of God. The kingdom of God is not part of this world, and these kingdoms are not part of the kingdom of God. And I know that there are many who teach what we call a kingdom now or dominionism theology, which says that these are all part of his kingdom and we need to take control of this world and set up the kingdom of God.

This is simply not biblical, and we don't have time to get into that this morning, but Jesus' world set up his kingdom. I'm going to touch in a few moments on Daniel chapter 2, but these kingdoms are not part of the kingdom of God. So in John chapter 17, the previous chapter, Jesus says, I pray for them.

This is Jesus' high priestly prayer, and he speaks about the world a lot in this chapter and this prayer. He says, I pray for them, for his disciples. I do not pray for the world, but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours.

Now just look at what Jesus is saying about the world and those who are his. Those who are his are his disciples in this immediate context, but in our context, those that are his are all of those who are born again, who are the children of God. And so he says, I'm not praying for the world.

I'm praying for those who are mine. And right now, people are praying for the world. People are very concerned, and this is really what I want to speak about this morning, is to what degree do we get

concerned with what's going on in the world, and do we allow that to impact on us? And I find that many Christians are being over-concerned about the things that are going on in the world.

And it's interesting that Jesus says, I'm not praying for the world. Obviously, it doesn't mean he doesn't want the world to be saved. We need to pray that people be saved.

But the idea of praying for the world, that the world becomes a better place, is a waste of time. The world is not going to become a better place until Jesus comes and sets up his kingdom. And so the idea of just praying for the world, now here's where it becomes difficult.

If you're an Englishman, your prayer is for Britain. And in fact, there are several organizations in the United Kingdom that have that as part of their name, praying for Britain, praying for the United Kingdom. But Jesus says, now here's the question.

If the United Kingdom is part of the church, well, then Jesus would have prayed for it. But Jesus says, no, I'm not praying for the world, I'm praying for the church. So the question we must ask is, is the United Kingdom, is America, is Australia, is South Africa, is whatever country, is that part of the church? Or is it part of the world? It can only be one of those two things.

It is not a separate thing in itself. And by definition, it is part of the world. And so Jesus says, I'm not praying for the world, I'm praying for the church, I'm praying for those who are mine.

And in chapter 17 of John also, in verse 15 and 16, I do not pray that you should take them out of the world, but that you should keep them from the evil one. So here's where we get this concept of being in the world, but not of the world. So he says, I'm not praying that you take them out of the world, and I think many of us would like to get out of the world today, get out of our situation and out of the corruption and the fighting and all the nonsense that's going on.

But he says, I'm not praying that you take them out of the world. Obviously the day will come when he will take us out of the world, and I believe that that day is coming, and is coming very soon. So he says, I'm not praying that you take them out of the world, so they're going to be in the world, but then in verse 16, they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.

So the Christian and the church is not part of the world. So we are in the world, but we're not part of it. And so there's a line of distinction between the church and the world.

The problem is that, as I've said by introduction, that we don't recognize that distinction. In fact I was very disturbed, I prepared these thoughts beforehand, but I think it was yesterday I watched a video of one of the better preachers in America, very big name, and his whole message was about God's dealings with America, and he was clearly confusing the church and America. These two things are the same thing in his mind, in his thinking.

And the problem is, and I know that this is going to be a difficult thing for many people to understand or accept, but the problem is that for most people in America, America and the church are the same thing. Many people in England, and England and the church, I just received an email from a brother this morning saying exactly that thing, saying that England is in a special deal with God, a special relationship with God, as though England is the church. No, England is not the church, Australia is not the church, they are not his.

We are in the world, but we are not part of the world. And those who are part of Sun Valley Community Church will remember, we spent a lot of time in Peter in this last 18 months, where Peter speaks about the fact that you are strangers and pilgrims in this world, we are not part of this world, our citizenship, and while we may have American or British or South African passports, our citizenship is in heaven. And we are strangers, we do not fit in, we do not belong, and that was the purpose of Peter's letter, is to say, how then do we live in a foreign society? In a society which has a different agenda, has a different God, has a different foundation to the society of the people of God.

So they are in the world, but they are not of the world. And then in 1 John chapter 5 and verse 19, we know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one. This is an important concept to understand.

The words lies under the sway, and you'll see on the screen that the words under the sway is in italics, because that's not in the original. The original has just this word lies, and it's a very difficult word to translate, and so I believe that this is a good translation. There are other translations that say that the whole world lies in the lap of the wicked one.

Clearly the wicked one, the devil, is the one who is in control in the world. Now I know people say, well what happened at the cross? Did Jesus not make an open show of the principalities and powers? Yes, he did. But remember that there's this concept that it is yet future, even though it is now.

The same ideas of our salvation. We are saved, and yet we will be saved. We are justified, yet we will be justified.

And in the same way, Jesus got the power, the authority, because he says when he rose again, he says, all authority is given to me. And yet at the same time, he's allowing the devil to continue for a while. And so the devil still has control, and John says, and remember John is now writing way past the cross, past the resurrection, he's writing right in the New Testament, and he's saying the world is under the control or the dominion of the devil.

So what does that mean? Well the world, here again, is that which comprises the systems of this world. So where does politics fit in? It's under the dominion of the devil. Where does science fit in? Because that's one of the battles we have right now.

Science versus the politicians. Where does science fit in? It is under the dominion of the devil. Now we say, well, you know, that can't be true, because science is science, and science is true.

And yet we know that science teaches evolution, which we know is not true. So science is not always right. Science interprets things in the light of its own agenda.

And to say that science doesn't have an agenda, it does have an agenda. It has a theology. We say, well, you know, science is science, it cannot have a theology.

It does have a theology. Its theology essentially is that there is no God, and so everything is designed and everything is studied from the point of view or from the preconception that there is no God. So science lies under the sway of the wicked one.

What about the arts? It lies under the sway of the wicked one. Now it doesn't mean that God cannot use these things. Of course he uses these things.

Of course he can use politicians, he can use medicine, he can use scientists, he can use art, he can use commerce, he can use the money of the world to do his work. But at the end of the day, it's the devil who controls what goes on outside of the body of Christ. If we go to Daniel chapter 2, and I'm not going to put it up on the screen, but you remember in Daniel 2, Daniel sees this vision of this great image, the head of gold and going down to the feet made up of iron mixed with clay.

And they represent the different empires leading up to the final Roman Empire. Not the Roman Empire of the time when Jesus was on earth, but the end time, the reconstituted Roman Empire. But it represents the world and its governments.

And you know, Daniel could have looked at that and been absolutely amazed and said, well this is a wonderful thing. Look at the gold, and of course he was living at the time of the head of gold, of Babylon, the greatest of all the kingdoms. And he could have said, look at this wonderful privilege that is mine to be part of this great kingdom, this great Babylon.

And remember that even the king looked at Babylon and said, is this not the great Babylon that I have built? And yet, that's not where it's at. But he also sees a stone that comes out of the mountain, and the stone comes and it smashes that whole image, destroys these kingdoms, and that little stone becomes big and becomes the kingdom of God. And so the picture that he gets, and of course the message is, that don't get yourself tied up with it, whether it's the gold or the silver or the bronze or the iron kingdoms or any of the kingdoms of this world, because they will all be destroyed, Jesus' kingdom will surpass them all.

So if you're going to be part of these kingdoms, you're going to cost your lot with the kingdoms of this world, you are going to be destroyed in the end. But if you cost your lot with the kingdom of God, with let's just call it the church for simplicity's sake, then you will be okay. So now the question then is, how do we relate to the world? And I'll get down to the practical application in a few moments.

In Romans chapter 12, very well known verse, verse 2, do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is good and acceptable and perfect will of God. Now do not be conformed to the world, again we normally translate this and we say don't become sinful like the world, and yes it means that, but it doesn't just mean the sin of the world, the immorality of the world, it means everything that the world stands for. Don't let the world put you into its mold.

Don't become like the world, but be changed by the renewing of your mind. Now how does the world try to put us into its image? Through the mind, and particularly today through the media, through television, through a fake book, through newspapers, through the radio, through all of the stuff that we see around us, the world is trying to get us to think its way. And of course right now there is a battle for our minds.

Those on one side are trying to get us to see things this way, and those on the other side are trying to get us to see things the other way. And that's exactly where Christians find themselves today. Do we go with the Republicans or the Democrats? Do we go with the scientists or with the White House? Do we go with those who want to go back to work, or do we go with those who say we want to be safe? These are the things, but all, and here's the point, all of these is the world's way of thinking.

That is the world. Whether we go back to work tomorrow, or in a month's time, or in a year's time, that is the world. It is not the church.

And yet that shapes our thinking. Whether the virus comes out of a laboratory, or whether it's a natural thing that comes out that came from animals, that is the world, it is not the church. And yet we are allowing those things to shape us.

And I don't mind which one you believe in. I prefer that you believe in the Lord Jesus. That we not allow the world to conform us.

But the problem is that we are pushed into a corner today where we feel we have to take sides. I have to take sides, either with the Democrats or the Republicans, I have to take sides with the scientists, and so the list goes on. But whatever side you take is not the side of God.

It's the side of the world, because it's all the world. Whether it's America or China, it's the world. Now I mean that's a shocking thing to many people.

People say, well you know, China, that's the world, America is not the world. No, China is just as much the world as America is the world. As far as God's concerned, there is no difference.

Oh, but we have a great heresy, heresy, we have a great heritage, a Christian heritage in the United Kingdom or in America. The heritage makes no difference, it doesn't help. It's where we are at today.

It doesn't matter on what basis America was founded, or China was founded, or England was founded, that is gone and past. It's where we are today. And today, every nation in the world, there is not a single nation that can be called a Christian nation.

And so we look at that and we say, well, you know, no, I've got to choose the better of these two. These guys are closer to the Christian values than these guys. And so I align myself with these guys or those guys, because I say, well, neither of them are Christian.

Now, please, I'm not for one moment saying that we mustn't fulfill our civic duty, that we shouldn't vote, that we shouldn't obey the law, pay our taxes, do all of these things. Of course, we need to do those things. Remember, Jesus says we're in the world.

And while we are in the world, we need to live under the authority that is in the world. But do we have to choose sides? Do we have to fight for one side or the other? I'm going to come back to this idea of fighting. I don't believe that we should, because in that process we've been conformed with either the liberals or the conservatives, with this side or that side.

Don't allow the world to shape you. We say, well, I'm not allowing the world to shape me. Sometimes the world shapes us in a negative way, in a reactive way.

So the world pushes against us and we push back. And we form our ideas and our thinking in reaction, not based on the Word of God, but in reaction to what we find around us. And at the same time, I'm being shaped by the world.

The world is conforming me to its image. But be transformed by the renewing of your mind. It's the Word of God that renews our mind.

And as we study the Word of God, as we live the Word of God, it is in the Word of God that our minds are being changed. But here's the problem, and I've spoken about this many times. The problem is that we spend so much time watching television on Facebook and on YouTube and on all of these things, and so

little time in the Word of God, and we wonder why our thinking is worldly rather than godly.

Don't allow the world to shape you. Let your mind be renewed by the transformation that comes as a result of the Word of God. Galatians chapter 6 and verse 14, here's where the thing really comes down to the basics.

But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. That's not just Paul's testimony. That should be the testimony of every single born-again believer.

When we died, when we were born again, we died to the world. There's that whole theology that Paul deals with in Romans, that we have died to the Lord and we've been raised to walk in newness of life. Yes, we died to the Lord, but we also died to the world, to whom the world was crucified to me.

You cannot become a Christian, you cannot be a Christian, unless you have crucified the world, unless you've put to death the world. Not using the word crucifixion here in the sense of an atoning thing, but simply in the sense of putting it to death, but obviously reminding us of what Jesus did at the cross of Calvary. So the world is dead to me, and I'm dead to the world.

So it really should be a two-fold thing, it should be a double jeopardy. We should be dead to the world and the world should be dead to us. So what the world does, therefore, should not have an impact on us.

This is really the heart of my message today. What the world is doing, what is going on in Sacramento, in Washington, in downtown LA, wherever the county supervisors sit, that should have no impact on us whatsoever. Yes, it impacts on whether we can open this chapel's doors again.

It impacts on whether we wear masks or don't wear masks. It impacts on whether we can work or can't work. Of course it impacts on all of that, but it should have no impact on our values.

It should have no impact on our peace of mind. It should have no impact on our spiritual life whatsoever, because that is dead as far as we're concerned, and we should be dead to it. But here's the problem.

It is just the opposite in most Christians' lives. Most Christians are right now being so upset by what is going on in the world, they feel they need to take up arms. Some are feeling the need, and many Christians are going and protesting against the stay-at-home orders and protesting against this and that and the other thing.

But if you're dead to the world and the world's dead to you, then what are you protesting about? You can see the problem. In James chapter 1 verse 27, in fact, I had dozens of scriptures and I only could select a few that we'd be able to get through this afternoon. So James chapter 1 verse 27, pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this, to visit orphans and widows in their trouble.

That's not the emphasis this afternoon, though today, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world. Again, it's not just the sins of the world. It's the values of the world, it's the world's way of thinking, the world's way of doing things, the world's paradigm, if you will, the worldview of the world.

Keep yourself unspotted from the world. Don't allow the world to put spots on your garments. When he's speaking about unspotted, I believe what he has in mind is what Paul speaks about in Ephesians, where he is going to present the church to himself as a bride without spot and without blemish, without spot and

without blemish, without dirty marks on her dress.

Paul speaks about the communion, that the communion is spoiled sometimes by those who are spots on the feast, those who spoil the purity of what is going on. And so we need to keep ourselves pure from the world. Don't let the world contaminate your thinking.

Don't let it contaminate your values. Don't let it contaminate your spirit. Don't let it get to you.

Keep yourself unspotted from the world. 2 Peter 2, verse 20, a similar verse, for if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they again entangle themselves and are overcome, or overcome the latter end is worse for them than the beginning. He's speaking as a complicated verse, but notice he says escape the pollutions of the world.

That connects back to what James says, the pollutions, the spots. Don't allow the world to pollute your thinking. Don't allow the world to pollute your values, your spirit, your emotions.

We have escaped the pollutions of the world. The world is polluted. There's no way you can turn that there is not the pollutions of the values and the immorality and stuff of the world.

So we've escaped that. But then he says there are those who are again entangled in those things. That word entangled is a very graphic word and I don't have to explain it.

That they become tied up and tied in and entangled with the world. In fact here's my concern is that so many Christians right now, Christians in our church and in other churches, are entangled with the stuff of the world. Their thinking is all muddled because it's so much of the world is, because we're being bombarded by the news media and by the media conferences of the various politicians and there's hours and hours and hours of the stuff going on.

And what it is, is it's entangling us, it's tying us up and tying us in knots and some of us are saying, I don't know what to believe anymore. Do I believe these or do I believe them? Do I believe this or that? And we get tied up and don't get entangled in these things because they will rob you of your joy and of your relationship with the Lord Jesus. In Matthew chapter 13 he speaks about the sower and the seed and I'm not going to get into the background, I'm sure you know the context.

Now, he who received the seed among the thorns is he who hears the word and the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word and he becomes unfruitful. I'm not going to speak about the deceitfulness of riches, that's not our theme this afternoon, but it is the cares of this world, the cares of this world. And I don't think that there are many Christians who are not overcome by the cares of this world right now.

The concerns about will I get sick, the concerns about our finances, the concerns about will the national economy, will the world economy ever recover? Are we getting into the times of the Great Depression again? And of course those concerns are real. I'm not saying that these things are not real, of course they are real. Yes, and right at the beginning of this whole thing I warned about the dangers of these things and the other question is, is this not a plot by the devil to take over the world and to have a single world economy and to bring all of the countries under control? And of course there's an element amongst Christians in America and in other countries right now who are saying, well, the stay at home orders and all of these orders are simply the governments flexing their muscles in order to get us ready for the one world government.

That may be true. I don't know whether it is true, but it could be true. But the problem is if you get those cares, allow those cares to encroach upon you, the picture here is of the seed growing and the weeds come and they encroach and they entangle with the seed and the seed becomes without fruit.

The seed becomes unfruitful. It doesn't die, it's interesting in this particular example, but it becomes unfruitful. Folks, if we're going to allow the stuff of the world and what's going on in the world to get to us, the Word of God is going to become unfruitful in our lives.

Don't allow that to happen. And then 1 Corinthians chapter 5 and verse 12 and 13. Now the question here is that there are many Christians who say, well, we must judge what's going on in the world.

We must speak out against all of the wrong stuff that's going on in the world, and I'm not going to single out a specific example. We need to speak out against this and that and the other thing. We need to picket outside various institutions.

We need to stand up against the government. We need to stand for truth and for righteousness. But this is what Paul says.

He says, what have I to do with judging those who are outside? Who's outside? The whole world is outside. It's not meaning outside this chapel, but outside of the body of Christ. He says, is it my business to judge what the world is doing? And we say, of course it's my business.

Most Christians, if you ask that question, they'll say, yes, it is our business to judge the immorality of America. It's our business to critique what's going on in the world in general. Paul says, it's not my business.

What do I have to do with judging those outside? He says, my business and our business is to judge those who are inside. In other words, we need to get our own house in order, our own private lives, our own families, our church. We need to get that.

That's where our business is. That is where our jurisdiction is. We have no jurisdiction outside of the church.

And then he says in verse 13, but those who are outside, God judges. So it's not like they're going to get away with anything. God will judge them.

And God is judging them. And is what's going on now a judgment? I don't know. It may be.

Again, that's not my business. That's God's business. And so our business is the church.

God's business is what goes on outside. Therefore, he says, put away from yourselves the evil person. In other words, they were harboring sin in the body of Christ.

And he says, you don't deal with this, what's going on in your church, but you want to deal with what's going on in society at large. So what is the answer? Where do we go from here? And I'm going to go to four more, five more scriptures. John chapter 16 and verse 33.

Again, back in John, these things I have spoken to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have trouble, or tribulation, the old King James says trouble. But be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.

Jesus has overcome the world. Now he's saying, and I want you to notice the prepositions, I think they are, in the world you will have tribulation. The degree to which we are in the world, the degree to which we expose ourselves to the world, we will have trouble.

But notice the opposite of that. In me you have peace. And of course there's that teaching in John chapter 10, and in other parts of the New Testament, abide in me, remain in Jesus.

And here I believe is the secret to a peaceful life in the midst of the coronavirus crisis. If we're going to live in the world, if we're going to live with our heads in the world, we're going to have trouble. But if we live in Jesus, if we live, and as Paul said to the philosophers on Mars Hill, in him we live and move and have our being.

If we are living in him, if we're seeing things from his perspective, if we're hearing him, we will have peace. And I believe that many Christians don't have peace right now. Many Christians are deeply disturbed about what's happening and what could be happening.

And I can understand that from a worldly point of view. But in me, he says, you will have peace. And so really the secret is not to be fighting what's going on in the world, but the secret is to remain in Jesus, to remain in him.

Now I said I would come back to John chapter 18 and verse 36. Jesus said, my kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would fight so that I should not be delivered to the Jews.

But now my kingdom is not from here. Jesus says what defines my kingdom as being extraterrestrial, being outside of this world is the fact that my servants don't fight. My servants don't fight.

Now just think about that. If then there are those who are fighting, and many Christians are fighting right now, fighting the government, fighting the systems, fighting the worldliness, fighting the immorality, fighting all of these things, what are they saying? Are they saying that they're not his servants? Because he says my servants don't fight. You see, he's not sent us to fight the world.

He's not sent us to fight Sacramento or Washington or whatever stuff is out there in the world. He's not sent us to fight those things. He's sent us to preach the gospel to them, but he's not sent us to fight because he can set up his own kingdom and he will set up his own kingdom.

And so a very, very important concept that concerns me deeply is the number of Christians today who are fighting, fighting the authorities, fighting the rules, fighting everything that's out there, thinking that they can create some system of justice and some system of righteousness amongst us. We will never have that as long as the world has not come to the Lord Jesus Christ. And so let's go to Matthew chapter 6 and verse 27, a very well-known verse, but I want to just apply it in a slightly different way for the purposes of this morning.

Which of you by worrying, and of course the whole context deals with worry, which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? Of course, it's a rhetorical question. It's a stupid question. How can you add 20 inches, 22 inches to your length by worrying? How is worrying going to change that? It can't change it.

It doesn't change anything. Your length is your length, or your shortness is your shortness, whatever it is. Nothing changes by worrying.

And yet we think that we can change what's going on in the world today by worrying about it. We can't change anything. And so here's something that I really trust I'll be able to get across in the few minutes we have left today.

You cannot change what is going on in Sacramento. You cannot change what goes on in City Hall in downtown LA or wherever you live. You cannot change what goes on in the capital of your nation by worrying about it, by talking about it, by getting all hot and bothered under the collar about it, by getting angry and frustrated about it.

You cannot change it because it's the world, and that's the point. It is the world and they will do whatever they do. You say, well, do we just have to roll over and play dead? No, we're in Christ.

And in Him we have hope for something far greater and far better than a utopian society. In fact, it is a utopian society, but not one of this world's making that is fragile and that has to be enforced by guns and prisons and things like that. But a utopian society, heaven, the millennium, the thousand years of peace in which Jesus rules and reigns.

We're looking for a new heavens and a new earth. We're looking for a different society. And we cannot change anything.

You say, well, if all the Christians in America got together, maybe we can change something. Well, just try and get all the Christians in America to get together on anything or in any other nation in the world. We can't even get along together in small churches of ten or twenty or thirty or fifty people, let alone get all of the Christians in one nation and across the world to stand together on any issue.

So that's not going to happen. But can your stress and your worry about what's going to happen tomorrow, when will we be able to go back to work, when we'll be able to go back to the beaches, is that going to change it? It's not going to change it. So what's the point watching all of these conferences day after day? I think I mentioned this a few weeks ago, and I was wrong, I said the president has a one hour, and I believe it was two hours, I don't know whether he then suspended it, I don't know what he's doing right now.

But at that point it was two hours a day. People were sitting listening to what he has to say. Then another hour with the governor.

Then another hour with the county board of supervisors. And then another hour with the mayor. And you add all of that up, and then all of the analyses that comes after that by the anchors, oh he said this and he said that, and it actually means this and it actually means that, and you can spend all of your waking hours trying to understand and figure what's going on, and at the end of the day it's not going to change anything.

It's not going to change when we go back to work. It's not going to change when we are able to meet together here again. It will happen when it happens.

What we need to do is we need to trust in him. That's the point. It's not a less is fair thing.

It's not just saying, well, you know, whatever comes, you know, comes. No, no, we're living in trust. We trust the Lord Jesus Christ.

We trust our Father who is taking care of us. In John chapter 19, and this is the end of Jesus' conversation with Paul, or Paul's conversation, sorry, with Pilate, or Pilate's conversation with Jesus really, Pilate said to him, are you not speaking to me? Do you not know that I have power to crucify you and power to release you? And I don't know if I copied, no, I didn't copy the next verse, sorry. The next verse says, Jesus says, you have no power unless it's given to you from above.

In other words, what is Jesus saying? He's saying, Pilate, you can't do anything. Yes, you may have the power to crucify me, but that power comes from God. God, nothing is going to happen to me, Jesus says, unless God allows it.

So here's the thing, going back to the conspiracy question. Was there a conspiracy against Jesus? Yes, most definitely there was a conspiracy against him. The Jews had conspired with the Romans.

They had conspired with Judas, and so they had conspired to have Jesus crucified. Jesus doesn't talk about the conspiracy. He doesn't even think about it.

His only concern is, what does the Father want me to do? What is the Father's will? What happens as far as the Romans, as far as the Jews, as far as the chief priest is concerned, as far as his disciples who would run away from him, that has got nothing to do with the issue. There's only one question. What does the Father want? And he obeys the Father.

You see, exactly the same thing with Paul, and I read again this week, as I was thinking on these things, 2 Timothy, and 2 Timothy is Paul's last letter, just before he is executed. And again, is there a conspiracy against Paul? Yes, there's a conspiracy against Paul. The devil wants him dead.

The Jews want him dead. The Romans want him dead. They're done with him.

He's a troublemaker. They need to get rid of him. Does he talk about the conspiracies? Does he talk about everyone ganging up against him? No, he doesn't talk about those things.

His only concern is that he pleases the Father, that he does the will of the Father, that he finishes that race that God has set before him, and that he completes it honorably. And so, what is our concern today? Our concern is simply, what is God doing in my life? What does he want me to do? It doesn't matter what Washington does. It really doesn't.

Yeah, they may even have the power of life and death. It doesn't matter. God is the one that we serve.

God is the one who, and if he chooses for me to die on the cross like Jesus did, or like Paul did, at the hand of the executioner, then that's God, and that's my relationship with him. I trust him, and so I want to appeal to you today. Get your head out of the media.

You say, well, don't we watch the news? We can watch the news as long as it leaves us unspotted. In other words, if we can watch these things in a dispassionate, objective way, yep, that's what's happening, that's what's happening to the world, and it does not affect us, then that's fine. But if you have watched the news, if you're watching the news and you're getting angry, you're getting frustrated, then it's no good.

It's not helping you, and it's not helping your relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. And I know many people say, well, you know, we don't watch the news. We only watch Facebook, fake book.

Well, in fact, there's nothing more fake news than there is on Facebook. And I want to leave you with, and I know I'm over time, but I want to leave you with a very practical suggestion, because I know that there are those who like to use Facebook. I use it to minister.

If you go onto my Facebook, you'll find only ministry-related stuff there. I like to watch what my friends are doing, what my family is doing. Of course, that's what it was designed for originally, but it's become something totally different.

But some of my friends get very angry when they read Facebook, because they've been bombarded by propaganda from every which way, every side. Now, folks, here's what I do. And if you're one of the so-called friends on my Facebook, be warned.

There is a button called lock, and there is a button called unfriend, and there's a button called unfollow. I use those buttons every day, every day. You send me some kind of political story, I will unfollow you.

You get around that, I will block you or unfriend you, just like that. I do it all the time. Why do I do it? Because I don't like people? No, because I like my sanity.

I like my relationship with Jesus Christ. I don't want my peace to be disturbed by what's going on. And it's not because of what's going on, but how do you know the difference between what is true and false? I don't know the difference.

I look at this one story, I say, that looks true, and then I look at the opposite, oh, that looks true. Where's the truth? Isn't that the question Pilate asked Jesus? What is truth? And of course, Jesus elsewhere says, I am the way, the truth, and the life. There's only truth in Jesus Christ.

Folks, we've got to find the off button on our remotes. We've got to find the unfriend, the block, the unfollow button on our Facebook. I don't get those kinds of things.

When I get a political ad, whether it's from the Democrats or the Republicans, I respond to Facebook and say, I don't want to see these ads. And so I don't get them. So Facebook is a relatively safe place for me, and yet for others it's not, and so I want to encourage you.

You're not forced to watch anything. We're supposed to be free. You're not forced to watch the news.

You're not forced to read what's on Facebook or Twitter or any of those things. Let's have our minds conformed to the image of the Lord Jesus. Now I want to close with Psalm 37, and I'm going to try not to comment, but just read through the first 11 verses of Psalm 37.

And I would encourage you to spend some time in the Psalm. Do not fret because of the evildoers, nor be envious of the workers of iniquity. Does that apply to today? Most certainly.

Don't fret. This is a verse that came to me during the night as I was meditating on these things. Don't fret because of what's going on in the world, for they shall soon be cut down like the grass and wither as the green herb.

Trust in the Lord and do good. Dwell in the land and feed on his faithfulness. Delight yourself also in the Lord, and he shall give you the desires of your heart.

Commit your way to the Lord. Trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass. He shall bring forth your righteousness as the light and your justice as the noonday.

Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for him. Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way, because of the man who brings wicked schemes to pass. Cease from anger and forsake wrath.

Do not fret. It only causes harm, for evildoers will be or shall be cut off, but those who wait on the Lord, they will inherit the earth for yet a little while, and the wicked shall be no more. Indeed, you will look carefully for his place, and he shall be no more.

But the meek shall inherit the earth and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace. And I could read the rest of the chapter if I had the time, and I would encourage you to do that, because I believe that for me, as I read the psalm this morning, it was prophetic. It was really speaking to our situation.

Don't fret. Don't get yourself in a state. Trust in the Lord.

He is faithful. He is faithful to his church. He said, I will build my church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it.

And so it doesn't matter what happens to the economy, it doesn't matter what happens out there in the world. He will win in the end. And if we are on his side, we will be victorious with him.

Father, we thank you for your word. We thank you for the Lord Jesus, and we thank you that we have a gracious, loving, heavenly Father who cares for his children. Lord, I pray that you'd help us to not be overtaken by the cares of this world, not to be embroiled and to be entangled by the cares and the worries and the concerns and the frustrations of being locked in and not being able to do what we want to do and all of these things.

Lord, we don't know what is coming. We don't know what's going to happen to the economy. We don't know what's going to happen to us personally.

But we know you, and you are faithful, and our trust and our confidence is in you. Help us, Lord, to not be like Peter who looked at the storm, but help us, Lord, to have our eyes fixed on Jesus, the author and the finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despised the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the majesty on high. Lord, help us to be like Jesus and have our eyes fixed on the goal.

We ask this in Jesus' name. I pray that you'd go with each one, Lord, that you'd cause your peace to be real to us. Lord, help us to overcome the temptations.

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Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/3tWmQQH5VHk.mp4>  
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