



SERIES: Philippians (May / June) “Finding Joy in the Journey”

SPEAKER: NAT CRAWFORD

Tuesday, May 18, 2021

Scripture: Philippians 1:28

TITLE: Don't Fear

Have you ever been intimidated? I have more times than I can remember, but what's funny is many times I shouldn't have been. When I was in middle school, I was in the band. Somehow I misplaced one of my mallets for the timpani. I couldn't find it. I got so worried that my band teacher was going to be mad and yell at me. I avoided him every which way I could. I ducked into the bathroom. I bent down to clean my shoes when he approached. Finally, after a couple of weeks, I found it at the bottom of my duffle bag. I returned it to my teacher. He smiled and said, “Thanks”. I worried for nothing.

Paul has an important reminder for us today, as we live in a hostile world. Paul writes, “[Don't be intimidated in any way by your enemies. This will be a sign to them that they are going to be destroyed, but that you are going to be saved, even by God himself.](#)” (Philippians 1:28, NLT)

You can't turn on the TV, get on social media, or walk into a church coffee bar, where we don't encounter the news of Christian persecution. Sometimes it's mild, with censoring. Other times it's being sued by a litigious person. But it can be physical harm and martyrdom.

Persecution is real. It was very real when the church began. But Paul says, “Don't be intimidated.” Other versions say “alarmed”. In other words, *don't fear*. People are going to hate you. They hated Jesus first. They will attack you for your faith. Tribulation and trials are part of the Christian life. If you're not facing it, something may be off.

Some preachers want to tell you that life just gets better and better when you get saved. Now, I agree that we have peace with God. He provides for our needs. But the Gospel writers told us, life as a Christian will be hard. It will be full of rejection and persecution, if we live a life worthy of the Gospel. But as Paul told us in 2 Thessalonians 1:6, “[In his justice, he will pay back those who persecute you.](#)”

You see, we don't need to be intimidated by our enemies. They can sue us, reject us, make fun of us, or even kill us. God will deliver final justice. As Paul said here in Philippians 1, our enemies will come for us. It's proof they are doomed for destruction or Hell. But because we are being persecuted, it's proof of our Salvation.

So here's my challenge for you today: Don't fear the rejection of family members, friends, or coworkers. Don't be intimidated by the media, the government, or the activists who want to cancel Christianity. It won't happen.

We are called to live with confidence in God and boldness of the Gospel. God is watching over us. Justice will be delivered. And no matter what, our hope is secured. So don't fear. When we live with confidence in God, we will win the day.