

Ready or Not: *Pushback and Blessing*

My mother's 100th birthday

I. 5 Statements – Awake, Arise, Count it all joy, No eye has seen, the eyes of the Lord. [SLIDE 1]

Is. 51:17 Wake yourself, wake yourself, stand up, O Jerusalem,

Arise and Shine (Light's role in Creation) [SLIDE 2]

Is. 60:1 Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.

**In Persecution, the real church stands up in grace
AND radiant with hope**

II. The Journey to Joy leads through Current Events

Jas 1:2 **Count** it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, ... [SLIDE 3]

A. Govern Our Hearts toward Joy... Rejoice in Sufferings

Rom 5:3 Not only that, but we **rejoice** in our **sufferings**, knowing that **suffering produces** endurance,

Endurance — *persistence, resilience* – the active, manly fortitude of the soldier in the thick of a hard battle who gives as much as he gets; fights on to the end. Gains strength and fearlessness

4 endurance produces ... and character produces

5 hope does not put us to shame, because **God's love** has been **poured into** our hearts through the **Holy Spirit** who has been given to us.

B. Be Prepare for Pushback — 3 Virtues

1. Fearless love worthy of the gospel

What does it mean to live worthy of the gospel of Christ?

WORLDVIEWS – ontologies (ultimate reality)

Naturalism (modernity) – matter and energy

Subjective reality (postmodernity) – define your own truth

Trinitarian theism – Father, Son, Holy Spirit, communion with the church. In the world, not of the world. Christ is the center and the mediator. Holy Spirit is making it real.

Phil. 1:27 Only let your ***manner of life be worthy of the gospel*** of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are ***standing firm in one spirit***, with one mind ***striving side by side for the faith of the gospel***, [SLIDE 4]

28 and ***not frightened*** [SLIDE 5] ***in anything by your opponents***.

This is a ***clear sign to them*** [SLIDE 6] of their ***destruction***, but of your ***salvation***, and that from God.

29 For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should ***not only believe*** in him but also ***suffer for his sake***, 30 engaged in the same conflict that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

2. A Reasonable Courage

A season of unmasking and exposure.

1Pet. 3:8 Finally, all of you, have ***unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love***, a ***tender heart***, and a ***humble mind***. 9 ***Do not repay evil*** for evil or ***reviling*** for reviling, but on the contrary, ***bless***, for to this you were called, that you may obtain (inherit) a blessing. 10 For

“Whoever desires to love life

and see good days,

let him ***keep his tongue*** from evil

and his ***lips*** from speaking deceit;

11 let him ***turn away*** from evil and ***do good***;

let him ***seek peace*** and ***pursue*** it.

12 For ***the eyes of the Lord*** are on the righteous,

and ***his ears are open*** to their prayer.

But ***the face of the Lord is against*** those who do evil.”

- 13 Now who is there to harm you if you are zealous for what is good?
- 14 But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed. ***Have no fear of them, nor be troubled,***
- 15 but in your hearts ***honor Christ the Lord*** as holy, **always** being **prepared to make a defense** to anyone who asks you for **a reason for the hope** that is in you; yet do it with **gentleness** and **respect**, [SLIDE 7]

* Tanner Cross video

- 16 having a good conscience, so that, **when** you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame. 17 For it is **better to suffer** for doing **good**, if that should be God's will, than for doing evil.

Prepare as a STUDENT (DISCIPLE)

1. Testimonies of God's goodness — yours, others, history
2. Reasons for the existence of God
 - Anything that exists had a beginning (big bang)
 - Complexity and order had a designer (universe, life)
 - Any sense of right and wrong has a basis
 - Proofs of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ
3. Basic doctrinal confessions — WORLDVIEW
 - Trinitarian theism v naturalism v postmodernism*
 - Nicene Creed Creed of Chalcedon
 - Westminster confession

3. Supernatural Joy and Faith

Rejoice and be glad! Testimony of accusation and turnaround.

Matt. 5:11 “Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.
12 **Rejoice and be glad**, for **your reward is great in heaven**, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Never happened again. Assignment cancelled.

III. Ministry

Prayer for boldness and Holy Spirit Power

Teachers, doctors, politicians, attorneys, professors,
students, business owners, employees, anyone facing pushback

REMEMBER HIS COVENANT —

Hb 13:5 Keep your life **free from love of money**, and **be content** with what you have, (FREE FROM lust greed pride)

for **HE** has said,

“I will never leave you nor forsake you.” (Dt 31.6, Josh 1.5)

6 So we can confidently (courageously, boldly) say,

“The Lord is my helper; (Ps 118:6)

I will not fear;

what can man do to me?”

Our expectation must be to advance, to hold the line, and to advance.

Acts 4. 23-31 PRAYER FOR

FAITH

Holy Spirit BOLDNESS & POWER

Rom 8:28 And we know that *for those who love God* all things work together for good, for those who are **called** according to **his purpose**. [S 13...]

Dt 23:5 But the Lord your God would not listen to Balaam; instead the Lord your *God turned the curse into a blessing* for you, **because** the Lord your *God loved you*.

YOU WERE BORN FOR THIS TIME!!

Luke 21:26 people fainting with fear and with foreboding of *what is coming on the world*. For the powers of the heavens will be shaken. 27 ... see the Son of Man coming ... with power and great glory. 28 ...begin to take place, **straighten up** and **raise your heads**, because your **redemption** is drawing near."

Commission to Hope Therapy!

Rom 15:13 NIV May the **God of HOPE** fill (ἡ πληρω- fill to overflow, pervade with influence, fully possess) **you** with **all joy** and **peace** as you trust in him [in believing], **so that you may overflow** (ἡ περισσεύω - over and above, abound) **with HOPE by the power of the Holy Spirit!**

Holy Spirit – Come and fill us