

“The Standard of Scripture”

In the early 20th century, the Dutch Reformed theologian Herman Bavinck wrote, “There has never been a time when the family faced so severe a crisis as the time in which we are now living. Many are not satisfied with remodeling; they want to tear things down to the foundation.” In the 18th century, Jonathan Edwards delivered his now famous sermon “Sinners In the Hands of An Angry God” to the congregation of Enfield, New England because congregants were actively resisting the work of God. People were “thoughtless and vain”. In the 5th century, Augustine penned *City of God* to defend Christianity and to decry the immorality of the Roman government. The corruption of the ancient Roman gods produced immorality that might make many of us blush today. While we might think that Christians today are living in unprecedented times, I think history demonstrates the opposite. Today is nothing new. To claim that these are unprecedented times gives the impression of historical myopia.

I am not suggesting that Christians ignore what is presently occurring. I am suggesting that Christians responding according to the standards of the Scriptures instead of abandoning them. The reason is because it is attempting to “fight fire with fire.” But we must address hostility with the message of the gospel and obedience to the Lord. We are told that the church conquers the accuser “by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death” (Rev. 12:11).

Consider the example of the Lord Jesus. How many of the Ten Commandments were broken just to crucify our Savior? He was rejected, despised by men; he was dishonored; his own people turned away from him; his name and honor were stolen; lies were fabricated against him; and he was unjustly crucified. Yet, he didn’t respond according to the standards of the world. Instead, “like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth” (Is. 53:7). He remained obedient to the Lord God. He patiently endured hostility.

Consider the instruction of the Apostle Peter. As he tells them to be ready to give a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with “gentleness and respect” (1 Pet. 3:15). Herman Bavinck stood firm in the faith as he also respected his opponents by treating them fairly. The Alliance of Defending Freedom is a Christian legal team largely responsible for the recent *Dobbs* decision. While they remain firm, they are also known as lawyers of integrity and high character.

Beloved, I encourage you not to throw away the standard of Scripture as we encounter a hostile culture. These are not unprecedented times. Instead, saturate yourselves with Scripture. Look at examples of faithfulness in church history where men and women remained firm in the faith with gentleness and respect.

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