

Faith for the Future

Well - it's New Year's Eve - and as we prepare to begin to make another trip around the Sun...

...I have no doubt that there are many who are filled with fear about the future.

One reason why is because - the Sun keeps erupting with solar flares that are pounding the Earth with geomagnetic storms.

It was earlier this month when scientists at NOAA observed several strong solar flares...

...which triggered strong geomagnetic storming here on the Earth.

According to a new NASA study - the Sun has become increasingly active since 2008...

...and as a result - we are currently watching an increasing number of strong solar flares...

...which create intense bursts of radiation, and coronal mass ejections...

...as huge bubbles of plasma erupt from the Sun's surface and streak across the solar system.

As we begin another revolution around the Sun - I can't help but to wonder how the Earth will be affected...

...as we pass through the peak of Solar Cycle 25 - which could result in the sort of geomagnetic storms...

...that can interfere with satellite operations, disrupt GPS and radio communications, and in more extreme cases...

...adversely affect electric-power transmission systems
and lead to widespread blackouts.

There are also many who are filled with fear about the future - after witnessing the record breaking weather events of 2025.

This included the snowstorm that impacted the Gulf Coast - back in January.

According to the reports - this unusual snowstorm caused the Florida Panhandle to temporarily beat Alaska's seasonal snowfall.

There was also record snowfall in Alabama and Louisiana.

It was a few days later - when a Generational bomb cyclone slammed into Ireland - and the United Kingdom

The storm set a new wind record for Ireland of 114 miles per hour...

...while winds gusts in the U.K. reached 100 miles per hour.

Power outages affected more than seven hundred thousand buildings...

...as the storm swept across Ireland.

In February of this year - global sea ice reached a new record low...

...according to the European Union's Copernicus Climate Change Service.

The reason why was believed to be a new record to an Arctic heat wave...

...that prevented the normal growth of ice in the month of February.

Then - in March - almost every city east of the Rockies experienced extreme winds...

...which led to destructive wildfires - sun-blocking dust storms and massive pileups.

The National Weather Service declared this to be the windiest March on record.

In June - we witnessed the first EF5 tornado in 12 years - which tore through Enderlin, North Dakota.

And this was just one - of the 25 tornadoes that tore through North Dakota.

It was also last June - when a powerful heat wave resulted in more than 3,000 daily record-high temperatures across the nation.

There were some spots which measured their hottest June - or all-time temperatures.

I'm sure we all remember the flash floods that took place back in July.

It was July 4th - when the lives of at least 89 people were lost - after torrential rains caused the Guadalupe River to overflow its banks.

Nearly a foot of rain fell in the Kerrville area between July 3-7...

...which caused the river to rise nearly 30 feet in six hours - which is the highest on record - since 1932.

It was back in October - when Hurricane Melissa created 252-miles per hour wind gusts...

...setting a new record for the highest wind speed recorded - by a dropsonde.

Hurricane Melissa was the third-most intense hurricane ever observed in the Caribbean...

...and it's the strongest storm in recorded history to strike Jamaica.

And let's not forget about the record-breaking rainfall that just hit Southern California.

Last week's storm delivered Southern California its wettest Christmas in modern history...

...which actually broke a decades-old record - for rainfall in certain areas across the region.

In light of these events - there are many who believe that these record breaking weather events will continue to increase - in the year to come.

And one reason for believing this is due to the fact that - there's Lord Jesus assured us...

...that natural disasters will increase in frequency - and intensity...

...prior to His second coming.

As a matter of fact - it's in Luke chapter 21 - where Jesus informed His disciples that...

Luk 21:11 "...there will be great earthquakes in various places, and famines and pestilences; and there will be fearful sights and great signs from heaven."

Here in this verse - we find the Lord Jesus - describing the days when natural disasters - like earthquakes and famines...

...will begin to affect all of the people here on the planet.

And according to Jesus - this will include signs in the heavens - which will cause distress here on Earth.

It's here in Luke 21 - beginning at verse 25 - where Jesus declared...

Luk 21:25 "...there will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring;

Luk 21:26 "men's hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken.

It's possible that Jesus was talking about major Solar flares which will cause catastrophic geomagnetic storms...

...or He might've been describing meteor showers - and asteroid strikes that impact the Earth.

Either way - there's coming a day when the Hearts of those who dwell on the Earth will be distressed...

...by the disasters that are coming upon this planet.

It's in Matthew chapter 24 - verse 8 - where the Lord Jesus referred to these things as the beginning of birth pains.

Here's how the scholars who created the New Living Translation rendered this passage...

Mat 24:7b There will be famines and earthquakes in many parts of the world.

Mat 24:8 But all this is only the first of the birth pains, with more to come.

Now - it should be noted that birth pains increase in both frequency and intensity.

Therefore - Jesus seemed to be suggesting that we should expect to see these natural disasters...

...increasing in both frequency and intensity - as we get closer and closer to the second coming of Christ.

It's for this reason that many believers are filled with fear...

...as they look forward to the future.

Another reason for this fear of the future is based on the promise that Jesus presented...

...when He described the increasing persecution of those who trust in Him.

Here's how He put it - in Luke chapter 21 - it's beginning at verse 12 where He declared...

Luk 21:12 "...before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons. You will be brought before kings and rulers for My name's sake.
Luk 21:13 "But it will turn out for you as an occasion for testimony.

From this - it seems to me that the persecution of Christians will continue to increase...

...the closer we get to the second coming of Christ Jesus.

And that certainly seems to be something that is happening in the world today.

Case in point - let's consider the situation happening there in Nigeria.

According to one report from Open Doors - - Jihadist violence continues to escalate in Nigeria...

...and Christians are particularly at risk from targeted attacks by Islamist militants.

Sadly - these attacks on Christians in Nigeria are shockingly brutal.

More believers are killed for their faith in Nigeria than anywhere else in the world.

And more than 16 million Christians in sub-Saharan Africa have been driven from their homes...

...by violence and conflict.

Data from Open Doors also helps us to see that MORE than 380 million Christians around the world...

...are currently facing high levels of persecution or discrimination because of their faith in Jesus.

This represents a rise of persecution of Christians - by nearly 15 million in a single year.

In order to help us grasp the global impact of this research - the open doors watchlist presents the data in this way - and I quote...

...1 in 7 Christians worldwide live in situations with at least "high" levels of persecution and discrimination.

This includes 1 in 5 Christians living in Africa - and 1 in 7 Christians living in Asia.

According to the data - Christians in at least 50 countries throughout the world...

...are being abused - intimidated - mistreated - harassed - and attacked...

...and for no other reason - than because they are simply serving our Savior.

And listen - things are only getting worse - every day.

I must also insist that - the persecution of Christians is beginning to become more common in the west.

Case in point - it was last September when Charlie Kirk was assassinated for His public proclamation of faith.

And I have no doubt that this was a turning point - in the level of persecution that will be carried out against Christians...

...here in the United States of America.

And it's for this reason that there are many who are filled with fear - as they consider the future.

Another reason for why many Christians are filled with fear is based on the wars - and the rumors of wars that continue to increase.

The US is on the verge of war with Venezuela - - and it's for this reason that China is now preparing to defend Venezuela.

According to the reports - China has loaded more than 100 intercontinental ballistic missiles...

...into three newly constructed silo fields near its border with Mongolia.

And if things continue to escalate - - we could find ourselves at war with China - in 2026.

At the same time - it was just last Saturday - when the President of Iran declared: 'We are in full-fledged war with America, Israel, and Europe'

I'll remind you - it was back in June - when the U.S. launched 75 munitions...

...against the Iranian facilities located at Fordo, Natanz and Isfahan, causing extensive damage.

And while it's only been six months since that attack...

...the Iranian military has rebuilt to a stronger position than it was in before the conflict.

Meanwhile - there are also reports that the European Union is preparing for war against Russia...

...as Putin continues to wage war against Ukraine.

At the same time - Turkey is building military bases in northern Syria - as they prepare to attack Israel.

And as we consider all of the conflicts currently taking place...

...it certainly seems to me that we are watching the prophecy that Jesus presented in Luke 21...

...being fulfilled - right before our very eyes.

It's beginning at verse 9 - where the Lord Jesus described the days before His second coming - by declaring...

Luk 21:9 "...when you hear of wars and commotions, do not be terrified; for these things must come to pass first, but the end will not come immediately."

Luk 21:10 Then He said to them, "Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom."

Much like the natural disasters - which will continue to increase in frequency - and intensity...

...we will also witness an increasing number of wars - - or at the very least - rumors of wars.

And as we consider all of the conflicts that appear to be on the horizon...

...I have no doubt that there are many who are filled with fear - as we enter into the new year.

If this sounds like something you're struggling with - and if it's true that your heart is filled with fear as you look forward to the future...

...then it's my hope that the rest of our study will help you to see that...

...those who trust in Christ Jesus - can rest in the peace that passes all understanding.

I like the way that Jesus explained it to His disciples - in John chapter 16 - it's beginning at verse 32 - where He declared...

Jhn 16:32 "Indeed the hour is coming, yes, has now come, that you will be scattered, each to his own, and will leave Me alone. And yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me.

Jhn 16:33 "These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

Without debate - those who trust in the Lord Jesus will suffer the trials and troubles of this world.

And while it's very possible that things will continue to get worse in 2026 - as we get closer to the second coming of Christ...

...we can rejoice in knowing that those who fix their focus on Jesus...

...will have peace in the midst of our problems - and persecutions.

And listen - those who trust in Christ Jesus will not only receive the peace that passes all understanding...

...but - we also receive the love of the Lord - which fills our hearts with incredible confidence...

...so that we can face the future with Christ-like courage.

Let's consider how the apostle John explained it - in 1st John chapter 4 - it's beginning at verse 15 - where he assured us that...

1Jo 4:15 Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.

1Jo 4:16 And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him.

1Jo 4:17 Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world.

1Jo 4:18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love.

Here in these verses - we find the apostle John - helping his audience to understand that...

...those who have received the love of the Lord Jesus - can look forward to the future with courageous confidence...

...and the reason why is because - we no longer need to live in fear of God's judgment.

Those who receive the perfect love of the Lord - by faith in Jesus Christ - no longer need to live in fear of the future...

...and one reason why is due to the fact that - there is now no condemnation for those who trust in Christ Jesus.

And while this doesn't free us from the trials and troubles of this world...

...we can still face the future with the faith that fills our hearts with the perfect love of the Lord...

...which casts out every faithless fear.

Now - this is not to suggest that there aren't things that will fill our hearts with fear.

And as we consider everything the Bible says about the problems and the persecutions which will take place - prior the rapture...

...I can assure you that the world will continue to become a more fearful place.

At the same time - we can rejoice in knowing that...

...the perfect love of the Lord is able to cast out every carnal fear.

Christian - listen - if your heart is filled with fear - as you wonder about the future...

...I encourage you to abide in the perfect love of the Lord - by faith in Jesus Christ.

You see - those who abide in the perfect love of the Lord - will receive the courage we need...

...to look forward to the future - with complete confidence in Christ Jesus.

Proof of my point can be found in Romans chapter 8 - it's beginning at verse 28 - where Paul declared...

Rom 8:28 ...we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.

Rom 8:29 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Rom 8:30 Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

Rom 8:31 What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?

Rom 8:32 He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?

Rom 8:33 Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies.

Rom 8:34 Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.

Rom 8:35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

Rom 8:36 As it is written:

"For Your sake we are killed all day long;

We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter."

Rom 8:37 Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.

Rom 8:38 For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come,

Rom 8:39 nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Here in these verses - we find Paul - helping us to understand how those who abide in the perfect love of the Lord...

...can face the trials and troubles of the world - with courageous confidence.

To sum it up simply - there isn't one problem that can separate us from the love of our Lord.

And there are no persecutions that can keep the Christian from receiving the love of Christ Jesus.

Therefore - we can rejoice in knowing that those who trust in Jesus...

...are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.

Not only that - but - Paul also assured us that - God is able to work all things together...

...for good to those who love God - to those who are the called according to His purpose.

What this means is that - the trials that the troubles that we might face in 2026...

...will actually be used for the good of those who abide in the love of the Lord.

Therefore - I encourage you to remember that the perfect love of the Lord...

...will free us from the fear of the future.

In order to further grasp this incredible truth - let's consider how Paul explained it in 2nd Corinthians 4 - it's beginning at verse 16 - where he declared...

2Co 4:16 ...we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day.

2Co 4:17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory,

2Co 4:18 while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

Here in these verses - we find Paul - presenting us with a proper perspective...

...by helping his audience to see the problems and the persecutions of this world - in the light of eternity.

And while it's true that the afflictions we face while we're here in this world - will be painful to endure...

...it's also true that those who suffer for the sake of our Savior...

...will receive a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory...

...as we enter into the presence of our Savior.

I like the way that the Lord Jesus explained this - in Matthew chapter 5 - it's beginning at verse 10 - where He declared...

Mat 5:10 Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake,
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Mat 5:11 "Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say
all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake.

Mat 5:12 "Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in
heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Christian - listen - the Lord Jesus didn't promise to protect us from
persecution.

No - instead - He promised eternal rewards to those who end up
being persecuted - for the sake of righteousness.

And in light of this promise - we can rejoice in knowing that
there's coming a day...

...when every born-again believer will receive eternal
rewards...

...for all of the ways that we suffered for
righteousness' sake.

And it's for this reason that we can look forward
to the future - without fear.

Another reason is found in Revelation chapter 21 - where John described his
vision of the New Jerusalem - it's beginning at verse 1 where he declared...

Rev 21:1 Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven
and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea.

Rev 21:2 Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down
out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

Rev 21:3 And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God.

Rev 21:4 "And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."

Rev 21:5 Then He who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." And He said to me, "Write, for these words are true and faithful."

As we face the trials and troubles of this wicked world - we can rejoice in knowing that...

...there's coming a day when the King of kings will reverse the curse as He establishes His kingdom - here on the Earth.

And it's at that point in time - when we will be - forever free - from the effects of the fall.

I like the way that the Lord summed it up in Jeremiah chapter 29 - it's verse 11 where He declared...

Jer 29:11 I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.

Here in this verse - we find the Lord - helping the prophet Jeremiah to understand that...

...the Lord had a plan - to provide the children of Israel - with a future - and a hope.

And I have no doubt that He has the same plan for everyone who trusts in Him.

And as we consider the perfect state of the Millennial Kingdom...

...Christians can look forward to the future - without fear...

...and the reason why is because - the Lord
preparing a perfect place for us.

Let's consider how King David explained it - in Psalm 16 - it's verse 11 -
where he declared...

Psa 16:11 You will show me the path of life;
In Your presence is fullness of joy;
At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

Think about that for a moment - - as we enter into the presence of the
Lord...

...we will not only experience the fullness of Joy - - but - we will also
enjoy endless pleasures - for the rest of eternity.

In other words - we will spend the rest of eternity - experiencing
the perfect pleasures...

...that the Lord has promised to those who trust in Him.

What this means is that - the Kingdom of God will not only be free from pain
and suffering...

...but - those who dwell in the kingdom of God - will enjoy eternal
ecstasy...

...as we celebrate with our Savior - in a state of sinless perfection.

And it's for this reason that every Christian can look forward to
the future - with heavenly hope.

Now - I have no doubt that 2026 will probably be a tough year that is filled with
many troubles and trials.

And we can be sure that the prophetic promises that Jesus presented in
Luke chapter 21 - will continue to come to pass.

At the same time - we can also be certain that our Savior will fill our hearts with the perfect love that casts out every fear.

And so - while we really don't know what the future holds for us...

...we do know that the One Who holds the future is able to work all things together...

...for the good of those who love Him.

And it's for this reason that I encourage every Christian to fight the good fight of faith.

Let's consider how Paul put it - in 2nd Timothy chapter 4 - it's beginning at verse 6 - where he declared...

2Ti 4:6 I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand.

2Ti 4:7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.

2Ti 4:8 Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.

Rather than living in fear of the future - like those who have no hope...

...let's look forward to the future - as we long for the appearing of our Lord and Savior - Jesus Christ.

But until that day comes - let's continue to fight the good fight of faith...

...as we spend our time serving the One Who has promised to provide us with a future - and a hope.

