

Energized for Mission - Occupational Hazards

Acts 4:1-22; John 15:18-21

There are _____ to every task, job, or activity. The joys and benefits bring with them unpleasant realities that just go with the _____.

Well, the Good News of Jesus is a _____ to some really uncomfortable bad news and has some very painful _____ if we truly understand it. It's easy to forget this if we've been Christians for a long time. It's also easy to sort of skip over the painful parts in a largely accepting culture. But the pain and _____ remain.

If we are going to be about the "main thing" we need to keep this in mind. Some people will _____ our message. Some will not. Some people will respond to our message as we hope. Many more will not. Some will not only _____ our message, they will actively work to _____ us. It's an occupational hazard.

The Good News of Jesus is threatening to people that:

- Believe this _____ is all there is. (Acts 4:2)
- Have a place of _____ in this world. (Acts 4:5-7)
- Have _____ and wealth in this world.
- Can't stand the thought of being _____. (Acts 4:11)
- Despise the _____ of Truth. (Acts 4:12)
- Can't handle _____. (Acts 4:20)

To _____ themselves from these painful realities, many react with _____ towards the Gospel and those that share it or even simply represent it. There are threats, arrests, beatings, and eventually worse.

But how does any of that matter when compared to the One who _____ us so much he sent his Son? How does any of that compare to the One who _____ sin, Satan, and death?

God loves you. He sent Jesus to die and _____ for you. The Holy Spirit has descended. Christ will come again. The future God has prepared for those that love him and trust in his Son, Jesus is _____ it.

That hope is so powerful, it's what not only enables us to _____ it turns persecution into _____. Because when people see how Christians respond to suffering, that is when they truly see Jesus.

How have you seen the Gospel as a threat to others?

How have you seen the Gospel as a threat to yourself?

What kinds of reactions to these threats have you seen in others and in yourself?

How is the Holy Spirit revealing a reluctance to share the Gospel because of these threats?

How is the Holy Spirit leading you to a steadfast persistence in the face of these threats and challenges? What are you going to DO about it?