

# Thriving in Troubled Times

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There is a move of God on the earth right now, and He wants you not to just be touched by it but to be use within it to bless the world. **We are to thrive in troubled times, not just survive.** We are to occupy until Jesus comes.

## **1.) We must recognize “the way it is”.**

- What’s really going on?
- Are we pretending?
- Denial or hiding is not a good thing.

**The way it is, is the way it’s always been, nothing new. It’s about the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan.** (Romans 10:10)

- Jesus came to translate us from darkness into the light. (Colossians 1:13)

The anarchy in Ephesus parallels the chaos we’re dealing with today. The story of Paul’s encounter with Demetrius the silversmith & the goddess Artemis in the book of Acts.

**Acts 19:28-41** - At this their anger boiled, and they began shouting, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!" Soon the whole city was filled with confusion. Everyone rushed to the amphitheater, dragging along Gaius and Aristarchus, who were Paul's traveling companions from Macedonia. Paul wanted to go in, too, but the believers wouldn't let him. Some of the officials of the province, friends of Paul, also sent a message to him, begging him not to risk his life by entering the amphitheater. Inside, the people were all shouting, some one thing and some another. Everything was in confusion. In fact, most of them didn't even know why they were there. The Jews in the crowd pushed Alexander forward and told him to explain the situation. He motioned for silence and tried to speak. But when the crowd realized he was a Jew, they started shouting again and kept it up for two hours: "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians! Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!" At last the mayor was able to quiet them down enough to speak. "Citizens of Ephesus," he said. "Everyone knows that Ephesus is the official guardian of the temple of the great Artemis, whose image fell down to us from heaven. Since this is an undeniable fact, you should stay calm and not do anything rash. You have brought these men here, but they have stolen nothing from the temple and have not spoken against our goddess. "If Demetrius and the craftsmen have a case against them, the courts are in session and the officials can hear the case at once. Let them make formal charges. And if there are

complaints about other matters, they can be settled in a legal assembly. I am afraid we are in danger of being charged with rioting by the Roman government, since there is no cause for all this commotion. And if Rome demands an explanation, we won't know what to say." Then he dismissed them, and they dispersed.

- This was a fight between two kingdoms.
- The only way to come to Christ is to hear the gospel. It's a tactic of the enemy to keep us from hearing.
- Most people, including God's people are captured either by a spirit of "fear" or a spirit of "rage".
- When the pandemic runs its course, both will remain.

**James 1:20** - For the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God

**Ephesians 4:26** - Be angry, and do not sin": do not let the sun go down on your wrath

**To thrive in troubled times, you can't let the troubled times own you.**

**II Timothy 1:6-7** - This is why I remind you to fan into flames the spiritual gift God gave you when I laid my hands on you. For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power, love, and a sound mind.

- Which kingdom's flame am I fanning? Which ember is burning in my heart?
- God doesn't see political parties, He sees two kingdoms.
- The work of the enemy through human beings is to control you forever.
- Fear is one of the enemy's greatest controllers.
- We are called to help translate people into the kingdom of light, not change opinions.

**To thrive in troubled times we must be consumed with the zeal of God for our savior Jesus.**

- We can't be owned by fear or rage.
- The greatest injustice was the death of Jesus.
- If anything in our heart is more important than Jesus, we have become polluted.

**2.) We get to choose the kingdom the kingdom to which we yield.**

**Galatians 5:16-17** - As you yield freely and fully to the dynamic life and power of the Holy Spirit, you will abandon the cravings of your self-life. For your self-life craves the things that offend the Holy Spirit and hinder him from living free within you! And the Holy Spirit's intense cravings hinder your old self-life from dominating you! So then, the two incompatible and conflicting forces within you are your self-life of the flesh and the new creation life of the Spirit.

- We can be ruled by the new creation in us through Jesus or by our flesh.
- You can't live in both worlds.
- The will of a human being is the only place in the universe where the presence of God must be invited.
- We have free will and we get to choose who owns us. (Deuteronomy 30:19-20)

**I John 4:4** - You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.

**A relationship and yielded life to the power, person and work of the Holy Spirit will keep us from being captured by the enemy.**

**3.) We must know the way God wants it to be.**

- The way God wants it to be must be the way we want it to be.
- Before we desire God's power and the gifts of the Holy Spirit, we must pursue His love.

**I Corinthians 14:1** - Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy (to build up, exhort and comfort by the power of the Spirit of God).

**This church exists to help all people understand that God loves them unconditionally.**

**2 Corinthians 10:4** - For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds

- No one but God should own your heart as a Christian.
- The power of God rescues human beings.
- Every person is our mission field.