

How to Respond in Troubled Times

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(Pastor Jordan Jacobs)

I. Introduction

A. God Always Has the Right Answers

1. Take your medicine.

Proverbs 4:20-23 (MSG) Dear friend, listen well to my words; tune your ears to my voice. Keep my message in plain view at all times. Concentrate! Learn it by heart! Those who discover these words live, really live; body and soul, they're bursting with health.

2. God said these things would happen.

2 Timothy 3:1-5 (MSG) Don't be naive. There are difficult times ahead. As the end approaches, people are going to be self-absorbed, money-hungry, self-promoting, stuck-up, profane, contemptuous of parents, crude, coarse, dog-eat-dog, unbending, slanderers, impulsively wild, savage, cynical, treacherous, ruthless, bloated windbags, addicted to lust, and allergic to God. They'll make a show of religion, but behind the scenes they're animals. Stay clear of these people.

B. Being Free from Fear

1. The Spirit of Fear

- a. **2 Timothy 1:7 (NKJV)** For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.
- b. Fear is a spirit that does not come from God, it comes from the devil.
- c. Fear seeks to put you in a box and keep you from your normal activities.
- d. The ultimate goal of fear is to keep you from fulfilling the plan of God for your life.
- e. **(AMPC)** For God did not give us a spirit of timidity (of cowardice, of craven and cringing and fawning fear), but [He has given us a spirit] of power and of love and of calm and well-balanced mind and discipline and self-control.

2. Standing Out in a Fearful World

- a. **Luke 21:26 (NKJV)** ...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.
- b. The world will respond in fear when *they have no answers*. As Christians, we are not of this world and *we do have answers*.
- c. Joseph stood out in the land of Egypt because he was not like those in that land.
- d. Daniel stood out in the land of Babylon because he was not like those in that land.
- e. We are to stand out as well!
- f. *"A scared world needs a fearless church."* – A.W. Tozer

II. Choices When Responding in Troubled Times

A. Choose Faith Over Fear

1. **2 Timothy 1:7 (NKJV)** For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.
 - a. We are not of those who have a spirit of fear, we carry the spirit of faith.
 - b. Faith and fear will both draw to themselves.
 - i. Faith draws the blessings of God.
 - ii. Fear draws the attacks of the devil.
 - ***Job 3:25 (NLT)** What I always feared has happened to me. What I dreaded has come true.
 - **"Fear tolerated is faith contaminated."* – Kenneth Copeland
2. **Hebrews 10:38-39 (TPT)** And he also says, "My righteous ones will live from my faith. But if fear holds them back, my soul is not content with them!" But we are certainly not those who are held back by fear and perish; we are among those who have faith and experience true life!
 - a. Faith comes by hearing and fear comes by hearing.
 - b. What are you listening to? (Hebrews 11:1)

B. Chose Protection over Panic

1. Regardless of the plagues that took place in Egypt, the Israelites were protected in Goshen
 - a. **Exodus 10:21-23 (NLT)** Then the LORD said to Moses, "Lift your hand toward heaven, and the land of Egypt will be covered with a darkness so thick you can feel it." So Moses lifted his hand to the sky, and a deep darkness covered the entire land of Egypt for three days. During all that time the people could not see each other, and no one moved. But there was light as usual where the people of Israel lived.
 - b. **Exodus 12:23 (NLT)** For the LORD will pass through the land to strike down the Egyptians. But when he sees the blood on the top and sides of the doorframe, the LORD will pass over your home. He will not permit his death angel to enter your house and strike you down.
2. **Psalms 91:1-16 (NLT)** Those who live in the shelter of the Most High will find rest in the shadow of the Almighty. This I declare about the LORD: He alone is my refuge, my place of safety; he is my God, and I trust him. For he will rescue you from every trap and protect you from deadly disease. He will cover you with his feathers. He will shelter you with his wings. His faithful promises are your armor and protection. Do not be afraid of the terrors of the night, nor the arrow that flies in the day. Do not dread the disease that stalks in darkness, nor the disaster that strikes at midday. Though a thousand fall at your side, though ten thousand are dying around you, these evils will not touch you. Just open your eyes, and see how the wicked are punished. If you make the LORD your refuge, if you make the Most High your shelter, no evil will conquer you; no plague will come near your home. For he will order his angels to protect you wherever you go. They will hold you up with their hands so you won't even hurt your foot on a stone. You will trample upon lions and cobras; you will crush fierce lions and serpents under your feet! The LORD says, "I will rescue those who love me. I will protect those who trust in my name. When they call on me, I will answer; I will be with them in trouble. I will rescue and honor them. I will reward them with a long life and give them my salvation."

C. Choose Peace over Worry

1. **John 14:27 (TPT)** I leave the gift of peace with you—my peace. Not the kind of fragile peace given by the world, but my perfect peace. Don't yield to fear or be troubled in your hearts—instead, be courageous!
2. **John 16:33 (AMPC)** I have told you these things, so that in Me you may have [perfect] peace and confidence. In the world you have tribulation *and* trials *and* distress *and* frustration; but be of good cheer [take courage; be confident, certain, undaunted]! For I have overcome the world. [I have deprived it of power to harm you and have conquered it for you.]
3. **Isaiah 26:3 (NLT)** You will keep in perfect peace all who trust in you, all whose thoughts are fixed on you!
4. **1 Peter 5:7 (TPT)** Pour out all your worries and stress upon him and leave them there, for he always tenderly cares for you.
5. **Philippians 4:6-9 (TPT)** Don't be pulled in different directions or worried about a thing. Be saturated in prayer throughout each day, offering your faith-filled requests before God with overflowing gratitude. Tell him every detail of your life, then God's wonderful peace that transcends human understanding, *will make the answers known to you* through Jesus Christ. So keep your thoughts continually fixed on all that is authentic and real, honorable and admirable, beautiful and respectful, pure and holy, merciful and kind. And fasten your thoughts on every glorious work of God, praising him always. Follow the example of all that we have imparted to you and the God of peace will be with you in all things.
 - a. Thinking on the right things will help bring peace.
 - b. Prayer is to be our first response, not our last resort.