

## **Good Samaritans Just Passing Through**

'The new travel manager was trying to trim the travel budget for the sales department without much success. He called one of the salespeople into his office to go over some of the travel receipts. "And what's this item on your report?" the travel manager asked. "Oh", answered the salesperson, "that's for my hotel". "Well, I have a cost-saving suggestion for you", replied the travel manager. "From now on, how about *not buying* the hotel?"

Sounds like that salesperson got a little too enamored with the hotel he or she was staying at, so much so they actually bought it. The point is, however, that we who are the saints of God, do not belong to this world. We may be out and about, as it were, on sales trips, peddling, as it were, the Gospel of salvation to any and all who will hear. We are to be about being "good samaritans", doing good works, which humankind is created, purposed, destined, to do, while in this world, during our sojourning life on this planet, which is not our real or permanent home by any stretch of the imagination. Our time here is a prelude to our real life, our eternal life, if we are saints of God, in His very presence in the unimaginable glories of Heaven. Those people who end up rejecting Christ, instead willingly throwing their lot in with the father of all liars, the devil himself. Well, after their short time on

this earth is through, they discover a quite different, mostly unexpected state of existence which is called the second death, an eternal state of darkness, anguish, turmoil, and gnashing of teeth. Apparently it is quite unpleasant, and anyone in their right mind will do all they can to avoid it.

In these current days of supposedly required social distancing, where in some states, regulations have not only bordered on but are actually ridiculous, ludicrous, insane and patently absurd, the social beings God created us to be can no longer be that. Surely you've heard that if you live in or are going to visit family or friends in California over the Thanksgiving holiday, you can join with only two other households in your festivities. You must maintain six-foot social distancing at all times, and your gatherings must be outdoors. You can only go inside a house to use a restroom if it is frequently sanitized. Otherwise, apparently you're going to have to hold it. But it shouldn't be too bad because the gatherings are themselves limited to two hours in length. And while eating, you must keep your mask on at all times, except between taking bites of food or drink. Of course, there can be no physical exertion, loud talking, chanting, shouting, or singing. Playing musical instruments is allowed only if they aren't played by blowing into them, and the musicians must be members of one or more of the households gathering. No hiring of non-related musicians! And with the social distancing mandate, rule out all hugging, smooching, hand shakes, etc. Families, you know, can't

afford to get too close to each other! Does this not begin to sound like an introductory course in how to survive hell? The ever-burning fires, inability to move, and continuously-rotting, dropping flesh will be covered in later coursework.

Today we celebrate All Saints' Day, commemorating all the saints who've preceded us in faithfulness to the Lord, and who now live rejoicing with the risen Christ Jesus in paradise. Since it is *all* saints, in a sense, we're also celebrating our own now and future entry into that vast company of the faithful. But when we consider the saints, we often recall, as the Book of Hebrews reminds us, of those faithful who underwent some of the most cruel, brutal, vicious, and inhumane treatment conjured up by the most wicked of minds. And among those saints are those even still living now, and many who've only recently paid the ultimate price for honoring the name of Christ Jesus.

So appropriate is it that every All Saints' Sunday is also the International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted. For in a very real sense, those persecuted today are farther advanced in the training for sainthood than those of us who live our cushy American lives. Indeed, the persecution of Christians, and Jews, for that matter, has been on a precipitous increase over the last several decades. More Christians have undergone more persecution, torture and death in the last century than in all history before. Things have been getting worse and worse around the world, not better. Why, things are even beginning to heat up against us in

the United States, the land of the “free”. Which is why, the last few national elections in our nation’s history have each been at their time, the most important election to date. Each subsequent election has become more crucial than the last. For there are now two Americas. One which still remembers our holy Christian founding, a nation established for the sole purpose of propagating the Gospel of Christ Jesus to this land and then to all the world. And the other counterfeit America which denies our history, denies that God even exists, and proclaims that we are masters of our own fates, that any and everything we decide feels good is exactly what we should do when and where we want, with no restrictions whatsoever. Feel like breaking some glass, burning down some businesses, looting a Walmart? Feel free. Have at it. No one will stop you, for you are only doing what you’re entitled to do as a “free” American. And the government will pay for everything! Vote democrat if this is the vision of America you want to see take over. For today’s democrat party bears no resemblance to the party of former President John F. Kennedy who stared down Nikita Khrushchev, First Secretary of the former Soviet Union. Can you imagine a modern democrat doing anything even remotely like that?

Do we not see here one of the signs that Lord Jesus spoke of in answering His disciples’ questions about when the future things He spoke of would come to pass? As both the Apostle Paul prophesied in just what we read in his first letter to the Thes-

salonians 3:3: “we are destined for such troubles”, Lord Jesus stated it much more bluntly in Matthew 24:9: “you will be arrested, persecuted, and killed. You will be hated all over the world because you are My followers”. He went on in verse 10: “And many will turn away from Me and betray and hate each other”. How many church folks have proven themselves to be fake Christians as they have given up any pretense of actually believing the Bible, and turned to joyfully celebrate the culture of death in the sacrifice of millions upon millions of preborn and just born babies? Christ stated in verse 11: “And many false prophets will appear and will deceive many people”. These are the demonically-inspired pastors, priests, bishops and other “church” leaders and rabbis who reinterpret the Bible to say the opposite of what it actually means. Lord Jesus further said in verse 12: “Sin will be rampant everywhere, and the love of many will grow cold”. The lifestyles of too many people are far removed from the standards that God ordained for humanity. Intact families are now in the minority in this country, to say nothing of the world. Is it any wonder that most of the rioters in the streets have no compunction against the suffering they cause other human beings? Not only has their love of God vanished, they can no longer even empathize with fellow human beings.

But even if people right and left have forgotten what love means, God never forgets. He is love itself. He love us, now and forever, regardless of what we have ever done. For He created

each and everyone of us in the wombs of our mothers, and He stands ready and waiting to be the perfect Father we never known to put His arms around us and walk with us through anything and everything this life throws at us. If we but accept His free gift of the sacrifice of Christ Jesus as the payment for our sins, acknowledging them and turning over control of our lives to Him, He will set us on the right path and begin the process of repairing everything that is out-of-kilter in our lives. We are put on the path of sainthood! And when we're on that path, as long as we keep our hand in His, the final destination is guaranteed. We will join that great company in Heaven singing in unison the praises of Him Who is the only One worthy of all praise and glory, Christ Jesus the Messiah, the Lamb of God Who was slain, but now the Lion of Judah Who lives and reigns forever and ever!

