

Gerry & Julie Gutierrez' Update

“The time is near”

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“No one can disagreed that today we are nearer to the return of the Lord than yesterday and tomorrow we will be even closer than today, so lets us think about it because Jesus wants us to make up our minds”

Luke 21:8-38

⁸ He replied: **“Watch out that you are not deceived.** For many will come in my name, claiming, ‘I am he,’ and, **‘The time is near.’** Do not follow them. ⁹ When you hear of **wars and uprisings,** do not be frightened. **These things must happen first,** but the end will not come right away.”

¹⁰ Then he said to them: “Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.” ¹¹ There will be great earthquakes, famines and pestilences in various places, and fearful events and great signs from heaven.

¹² **“But before all this, they will seize you and persecute you.** They will hand you over to synagogues and put you in prison, and you will be brought before kings and governors, and all on account of my name. ¹³ And so you will bear testimony to me. ¹⁴ **But make up your mind not to worry beforehand how you will defend yourselves.** ¹⁵ For I will give you words and wisdom that none of your adversaries will be able to resist or contradict. ¹⁶ You will be betrayed even by parents, brothers and sisters, relatives and friends **and they will put some of you to death.** ¹⁷ **Everyone will hate you because of me.** ¹⁸ **But not a hair of your head will perish.** ¹⁹ **Stand firm, and you will win life.**

²⁰ **“When you see Jerusalem being surrounded by armies, you will know that its desolation is near.** ²¹ Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those in the city get out, and let those in the country not enter the city. ²² **For this is the time of punishment in fulfillment of all that has been written.** ²³ How dreadful it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers! **There will be great distress** in the land and wrath against this people. ²⁴ They will fall by the sword and will be taken as prisoners to all the nations. Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

²⁵ “There will be signs in the sun, moon and stars. On the earth, nations will be in anguish and perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea.” ²⁶ **People will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world, for the heavenly bodies will be shaken.** ²⁷ At that time they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. ²⁸ When these things begin to take place, **stand up and lift up your heads,** because your redemption is drawing near.”

²⁹ He told them this parable: “Look at the fig tree and all the trees. ³⁰ When they sprout leaves, you can see for yourselves and know that summer is near. ³¹ **Even so, when you see these things happening, you know that the kingdom of God is near.**

³² “Truly I tell you, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. ³³ Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.”

³⁴ **“Be careful, or your hearts will be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness and the anxieties of life, and that day will close on you suddenly like a trap.”** ³⁵ For it will come on all those who live on the face of the whole earth. ³⁶ **Be always on the watch, and pray that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man.”**

³⁷ Each day Jesus was teaching at the temple, and each evening he went out to spend the night on the hill called the Mount of Olives, ³⁸ and all the people came early in the morning to hear him at the temple.

“While some faint, others will lift their heads”

Personal notes of Introduction:

Luke, is the greatest mentor I have ever seen in Scripture only second to Jesus. His life work was to write two books for a friend named Theophilus. These were the books of The Acts of the Apostles and the Gospel of Luke. Then he became the friend of Paul and traveled faithfully with him everywhere. The third disciple of Luke was any other Theophilus or “lover of God”, for that is what Theophilus means. That is to say any individual believer who believes his life example and message of Luke. Remember that Luke was not one of the twelve disciples of Jesus.

Luke took Jesus at his word and followed his example. Luke was like Jesus who had three close friends in Peter James and John. Luke was the champion of the small obedience by focusing on the small core of brothers walking together in spirit in a blood covenantal relationship to the end.

Twenty-seven years ago my mentor assigned me to walk with a man in a prominent position of leadership who is much like Theophilus to me. This man loves Jesus and interestedly enough we were born the same year, the same month and the same day only a thousand miles away from each other.

Prompted by God he asked me to write about understanding Jesus and God. His genuine thirst and love for Jesus has been my motivation to write thousands of pages of manuscripts that in fear and lack of faith it has not become public yet.

It was not until my son gave me the task to write on the Book of Luke that I started this book hoping to finish soon before his ordination next month. So this book is for those two men and you who believe in Jesus as we three of us do.

The followers of Jesus wrote letters to other followers and there is no record of their answer. There is no need to answer. Paul wrote from the jail at Philippi to his friends before he died. I am also writing to you from my own charming little Jail in Georgia by the will of God. Longing to go back to Peru and unable to do so.

Greater forces than mine have brought me out of Huanta with strong hand by the broken leg of Ruthie and her subsequent death. The same power is keeping me in this country using Julie who cannot go to Peru and other issues. God’s irresistible will shall

be fulfilling in my life, through me and in spite of me for the glory of God”.

I do not know how much time I have left among you, so let me hurry up and write.

**“Our Nation and the World are not in good shape,
but real crisis is STILL TO COME!”**

Crisis is the agenda for the future.

Crisis is the time when a witness testifies.

Crisis reveals the real nature and character of men.

Crisis reveals where the confidence rests.

Crisis will make the bully cry like a child.

Crisis will cause the childlike to lift his head in hope.

The unbeliever will cry, “Oh my God, Woe is me.”

The believer will say, “Look, it is happening just as He said.”

Testimony is the different way people react to the same things. In the midst of wars, earthquakes, famines and pestilence in various places and fearful events and great signs from heaven, there will be persecutions and imprisonments.

Believers will be brought before Kings and governors on account of Jesus’ name about which Jesus said: **“This will result in your being witnesses to them.” “But make up your mind not to worry beforehand how you will defend yourselves. For I will give you words of wisdom that none of your adversaries will be able to resist or contradict.”**

*The followers of Jesus wrote letters to their fellow believer and there is no record of their answers. Paul wrote his last letters from the jail of Philippi. In the same way others write from their own ‘Jail by the will of God!’ Let me write to you while I can.

Our sovereign God and Father in Heaven is also the Lord of crisis. In fact there is and should be a theology of crisis. The great miracles of Jesus were preceded by crisis in the life of the one who had no other option but to go to Jesus taken him at his word, which is faith. Men of faith were welcome by Jesus and they were encouraged by his words such as these; “son (daughter), your faith has healed you”.

Again, not too fast, the buck should not stop with the man and his faith. No! We must go all the way back to the sovereign God who allowed crisis to work the need to go to Jesus in hope and repentance.

Unless we accept the theology of crisis grounded in the sovereign predestined will of God; we may find ourselves as the people of God from old crying out loud, “Lord the Assyrians are coming after us,” and the Lord replying in a rebuke, “Who do you think is sending them?”

Much of prayer that ignores the sovereignty of God is prayer that asks God to contradict God.

We are in urgent need to rescue the true meaning of prayer. Prayer is to agree with God as the only way to come in alignment with God. By crisis in fear and terror the strong man faints and the faithful look up to God in Heaven.

The child like who fears God has no fear left in Him but to lift up his head in a confident hope and peace. There is a desperate need to understand afresh what “The Fear of the Lord” means. Nothing like crisis to make us run to our Heavenly Father for protection and fear the fear of the Lord.

Without the fear of the Lord, men at best are smart, clever and intelligent. Even phones are smart. Computers are smart, street kids are smart.

What man needs is not self-serving smarts. What men need is wisdom. Wisdom is the God given gift whereby we put intelligence at the service of wisdom for the glory of God, the benefit of others and one’s own good.

Wisdom is the filter by which the pure truth goes through and flows freely. Wisdom will come only to those who fear the Lord and shun evil.

When the strong man faints in terror as the heavenly bodies are shaken; how come the weak in peace lifts his head toward heaven in hopeful expectation?

No amount of smarts is enough for such a peace that passes all understanding. That divine courage and peace can only be traced to the fear of the Lord.

Jesus said: “**Make up your mind not to worry before hand.** How you will defend yourselves. For I will give you wisdom that none of your adversaries will be able to resist or contradict.

You as believers are to react different from others, because you are different!

Once Pastor Alfredo was peeling a banana when a great earthquake hit Lima. The maid came out of the kitchen running and screaming. When she came to where Pastor Alfredo was still trying to keep his balance, peeling his banana and ready to have a bite. The maid stopped dead on her track for a second or two and resumed her running and screaming even louder in new terror of seeing a man too calm under the circumstances. She thought she was loosing her mind or Pastor Smith had already lost his mind.

This is the unrehearsed different testimony between one who is afraid and fainting and one who is lifting the eyes of his heart in faith and eating a banana in the middle of an earthquake.

Only by the fear of the Lord one learns to **make up his mind** and not to worry before hand what to do in such a times as these. When crisis comes, not if it may or may not come, but when it comes. For it will surely come so make up your mind.

It is like when the time of pregnancy is completed, the life or death given crisis has arrived. Nothing can keep predestined crisis from happening. **We can only get ready**

by making up our minds now. For later may be too late. If you close your eyes from any distraction and enter the closet of your heart in prayer, you may be able to hear the footsteps of the betrayal even from parents, children, brothers, relatives and friends and they will put some to death. Jesus said, "All men will hate you because of me." **"But not a hair of your head will perish"** "By standing firm you will gain life."

**It is time to get ready now!
Make up your mind beforehand!**

"For this is the time of punishment in fulfillment of all that has been written."

"It is written" mean it has been predestined. It shall be so and no other way. It is already at hand the great distress, anguish and perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea in tsunamis and so called "Natural disasters." It is wise to make up our minds by taking Jesus at His word and in the fear of the Lord. Stop running and screaming and let us join Pastor Alfredo and eat the banana together. Calm is not absence of crisis but it is peace in the presence of God who said I will be with you always to the end of the ages. Selah! (Pause)

Breaking News!

Behold a sign of the end of times.

A little boy has been found dead at the water's edge on a beach in Turkey with his little head partially buried on the sand face down and the waves gently touching his little head refusing to let him go unattended by himself.

I doubt today that anyone from among the living have not seen him or herself in that little boy. In times as such our fragility is threatened and when a man is threatened his mind builds immediately defense mechanisms to feel secure and at the same time a lynch mentality enter into action.

A righteous anger makes us judges of the tragedy. Since we cannot do much about the little boy's family. Mother and brother is also death. Father alive with no desire to live.

We adopt the pain of the father as ours and of course this is not a premeditated and formal point-by-point reaction. It all happens at the same time and it should not be strange to anyone to homogenize everyone's reaction. "As a drop of water is equal to another, so a man's heart is equal to another."

So, just as the lynch mob mentality of the old West comes to the bored chubby city slicker seated on his armchair looking through his window for some opportunity to ride his new horse and unused saddle. The breaking news gives him the opportunity to shake his fist against someone and become an instant vigilante.

This chubby vigilante knows very little of the country life and the only exercise he does is to jump to conclusions and forgets the real issues of the situation and runs to action. He becomes judge, jury and executioner and bypasses the real culprits and

goes to lynch an alleged murderer to hang Him high.

In this case of the little boy's death, who should be hanged?

Some of those with lynch mob mentality are already asking the typical and classic question. **Where was God when this little boy died?**

Not that they are really interested in God, but they have an opportunity to shake their fist to God and raise themselves as amateur providences and more caring than God. It is to this spin-doctors and consensus builders and instigator that I raise to remind them the same classic answer:

“God was in the same place when his one and only Son died a very painful death on the cross.” Let me elaborate a little more about this little boy. By common grace for the common good we are gifted with the spirit of discernment. But by special grace we are given the Holy Spirit of God but not the mind of God.

The mind of God is developed in us the believers by Holy habits such as meditation on God's Word day and night, and prayer life and body life.

By this exercise we are only by God's grace in shape to know God and to react as God to whatsoever comes to pass around us.

Beautifully and strangely enough we are more the spectators of the life of Jesus within us than actor of that nature.

There is a reality within our reality. Jesus called that “The Kingdom of God is within you.”

There is also another reality of my old and sinful nature that is not completely dead. Though I do not practice sin consciously, I am prone to fall in sin. I do not desire to sin. So this writing is not from a sinless man. But from a man who sins less and less. Blame me for the mistakes but please retain that which is good.

Who is this little boy who has so touched our lives?

From what we are told is that he and his mother, father and brother were escaping from a religious war as refugees. Like Jesus, Mary and Joseph ran for their lives to Egypt at the prompting of an angel about Herod and his murderous intention.

Should Herod have had his way we could have had another picture of little boy Jesus perhaps at the same similar spot and decapitated by the sword.

This little boy had a good mother who did not only wanted to secure a better life for her boy by fleeing from danger to peace and safety. She fed him well at least three meals per day. The little boy looked healthy and strong for his age.

The little boy was clothed with an exquisite taste of a caring and loving mother in a color coordinated cloths designed to cause a good impression in the land unknown to start a

new life. Even by worldly standards of beauty, this little boy whose face I long to see in heaven, must have been a handsome little boy.

The sea that took his breath away delivered his body gently at a sleepy beach and softly caressed his little head as a mother lioness licks the dead cub killed by hyenas.

The little boy before being his mother's boy and our adopted boy, he is God's little cub and resting now in the lap of God's favorite babysitter "Father Abraham."

God sent this little boy to testify of the bad times that many are going through with the promise of more of the same coming to pass before His return. We gain nothing by ignoring the signs of the times or by burying our heads in the sand while still alive. Let us instead pray together the prayer of Simeon that the Lord may come in our generation. Let us make sure to have the front seat to welcome the King.

First come, first served!
Come, dear Lord, come soon!
Maranatha!
Amen, and Amen.

Gerry Gutierrez

P.S. My smart phone announced that there was mail. When I opened the letter the news from Peru is that a teaching elders granddaughter just committed suicide by taking rat poison while another teaching elder's granddaughter is pregnant at a very early age. The storm will fall over the wicked as well as over the righteous little ones. The will of God will be done on Earth, but our request along with Jesus is that it may be done as it is done in Heaven, in total agreement and no competing wills.