

A Martyr in our Midst – *Psalm 94*

Introduction – The Governor of Utah stated that the murder of Charlie Kirk was “a political assassination.” And he was correct on the face of it. TPUSA was a conservative political organization committed to educating and organizing students to promote the principles of fiscal responsibility, free markets, and limited government (from the TPUSA website). But it was far more than that, and it only takes watching a few clips of Kirk’s tours to see that he knew his politics flowed out of his Christian faith. He stood against abortion because the Bible says “thou shalt not murder” and declared it. He stood against homosexuality and transgenderism, not because of his political preferences, but because God made man in His image, male and female He created them. He didn’t stand for free markets and against Socialism and Marxism because it made more practical sense to him (although it did and does), but because He believed in a God who upheld private property rights, free speech, and the gift of life and loving your neighbor. He openly declared the Lord Jesus Christ as the only way to salvation and called on people all over this nation to place their faith in Christ. Unashamedly. On secular, unfriendly campuses. And the young man who shot him represents and is the fruit of what the violent, unbelieving world thinks of God and His Word-Law, and of His servants, like Charlie Kirk: “If you can’t win the argument, shut them up” (Acts 7:51-58)

Charlie Kirk is a Christian martyr. And the reason I bring this up in the pulpit on the Lord’s Day is because he was killed for saying many things, many things that have been just as strongly stated in this pulpit, in our church, in our denomination, in Bible-believing churches all over this nation. His message was not radical and extreme, rather normal just decades ago. This week revealed again how God-hating this culture has become.

A Psalm for a Martyr – Martyr is the Greek word for “testimony” and came to mean one who testified for the truth even unto his death. Psalm 94 is one of the imprecatory Psalms, calling upon God to bring righteous judgment upon evil men and vindicate those who have fallen while standing for truth. We sing these types of Psalms and believe God hears and responds, for He wrote them for such a time.

A Prayer and Lament (vv1-7) – The plea is for God to rise up and knock down the insolent. The lament is over how long the wicked have seemed to triumph, speaking their lies, boasting in their lawlessness, and murdering the weakest. They mock the God we worship saying their current victories prove He cannot see and cannot do anything about them.

A Holy Rebuke (vv8-11) – The psalm-singer turns and addresses the proud, calling them “stupid people” and fools. This is not addressing their intelligence, but their moral blindness. How could God not see? Didn’t He make the eyes? (You think these eyes just evolved randomly? - what blind faith that must take). Where do you think thoughts and knowledge come from, you materialists?

A Beatitude for Those Whom God Chastises (vv12-15) – *“The afflicted believer...is in training for something higher and better, and all that he meets with is working out his highest good, therefore is he a blessed man, however much his outward circumstances may argue the reverse”* – Spurgeon. This is the point of Rom 8:28. It will bring rest to the soul (v13). In the affliction, God remains completely in control; He will not cast you off and His righteousness will prevail (vv14-15). In Christ, we are all overcomers (Rom 8:35-39).

A Faithful Trust in the God of Vengeance and Mercy (vv16-23) – It is the Lord who is the Lord of vengeance (Rom 12:17-21). And in this Psalm, especially these verses, we should hear the voice of the Psalm-Singer Himself, Jesus, hanging on a cross because of His mercy for this sinful world (v18), Jesus, for the joy before Him, enduring (v19), the enemies of God conspiring (vv20-21) and the Lord using it all for His purposes (vv22-23). This is why Jesus would tell us to rejoice when we are persecuted (Luke 6:22-23). This is what it means to be a joyful warrior. God wins. Jesus wins. Evil men will fall into the traps they have set for us. *“Your comforts delight my soul...the LORD has been my defense and my God the rock of my refuge...”*

Shape Your Worship; Shape Your Devotions – Our piety is not Christ-like when we think that it is wrong to call on God to destroy His enemies. Jesus said to love our enemies. He also told His disciples that He was going to destroy the temple, knowing full well it would destroy many enemies. But there are two ways that the Lord destroys His enemies: destruction – or – transformation. We are to hate God’s enemies. But we are also to pray for them and not be like Jonah; we want God to be merciful and bring people to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, to receive the unmerited forgiveness that we have received.

Bold, Kindhearted Intolerance – What we cannot hide behind, which the church has been hiding behind, is a cowardice tolerance; “live and let live.” The lie of secular humanism is that we can live in a society without a transcendent, objective law. That is an optical (verbal) illusion, like saying that “there are no absolutes.” As the church has done this, it has ceded more and more cultural ground and the tensions have been rising as the atheistic, evolutionist, socialist idolaters demand more and more allowance and approval of the fruit of their beliefs. “*The state of the culture is the resume of the church*” (Wilson). All politics flow from theology. All polis flows from worship. All culture flows from cultus.

We believe in the separation of church and state. True enough. But we do not believe in the separation of God and state, of morality and state. When the church acts as though it is not a prophetic voice to the state (“don’t mix religion and politics”) the first thing the enemy sees is a job opening.

Bold, kindhearted intolerance is the kind of love that tells people their gods are false and will consume them. Their lifestyles are broken and will destroy them. Their rejection of the Lord Jesus will lead to an eternity of thick darkness and the wrath of God. Bold, kindhearted intolerance speaks words of life into the surrounding community when they want to hear it and when they don’t. And Paul said that this must be done in the church first (2 Tim 4:1-2). As one historian put it, we would rather have ministers of “the third sex” in pulpits, sweet and effeminate, soft words in skirts.

No. We must never forget that the only safe place to flee *from* the wrath of God is to turn and run as fast as you can *toward* the wrath of God poured out on the crucified Jesus. That is what it means to “cherish the old-rugged Cross.”

What is God Doing? What are We to Do? – First, it really isn’t something we are to do. It is what God is doing. Martyrs are not lost, and their martyrdom (testimony) is the seed of revival and reformation. Erika Kirk was correct when she warned, “you do not know what you have unleashed.” But we must be careful, we are not unleashing anger in the flesh and we are not in charge of revival. Our weapons are not carnal. They are Word and Water, Bread and Wine.

We are to continue the work God has begun in us. Worship Him with reverence and awe. Bring your children with you. Enjoy Sabbath rest. Love your wife. Respect your husband. Honor and obey your parents. Train up your children with a Christian paideia. Confess your sins and repent. Sing the Psalms. Work as unto the Lord. Build community. Practice hospitality. Return good for evil. This is how we do warfare.

Jesus said the fields are white for harvest. May God raise up 1000 more like Charlie Kirk who will speak the truth boldly to the world with the love of Jesus and the sword of the Spirit. And maybe the most important personal application for some of you (us) is to never be ashamed to be a Christian (Rom 1:16).