

A Kingdom of Freedom

Almighty and everlasting God, whose will it is to restore all things in thy well-beloved Son, the King of kings and Lord of lords: Mercifully grant that the peoples of the earth, divided and enslaved by sin, may be freed and brought together under his most gracious rule; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Look

Media often delivers their news with a subtext of fear. It grabs our attention and wrestles with something visceral inside us. If we're not careful, these fears will grab hold of us and influence our decisions or even undermine our faith.

1. How would you describe the media's affect on your emotional state right now?
2. What is a positive story you've heard recently that helped you feel better? Why did that story impact you specifically?
3. Why can positive stories about others help provide anchor for our own emotions?

Book

Luke 23:33-43

For generations kings had often reigned with the tools of terror, ruthlessness, and control. The common people of the time lived in a world of struggle and fear. Their faith in a messiah arriving imminently is what kept their hopes alive. The crucifixion of Jesus however is a faith-shattering event for many.

1. How do the taunts and insults invoke fears of those who had believed in Jesus?
2. Describe how you feel the second criminal's response (v40-42) is a framing of his faith?
3. Despite the situation, how does Jesus' response to the second criminal inspire hope for you?

Took

Fear can strangle us and hold us back, but a story of hope gives us something different. We move from helpless victim to community with shared experiences. We can't ignore our fears, but we need to move through them, in faith, with hope as our shield.

1. Why is it important to not simply ignore our fears?
2. Why is it important to have hope in order to live fully in the Kingdom of God?
3. What story of hope can you help write in God's Kingdom with others this week?