

Background: My 4 daughters were among those who were devastated by the results from this year's election. The following are excerpts from a letter I quickly wrote to my family "the morning after".

Wednesday morning, November 9, 2016

The sun comes up it's a new day dawning  
It's time to sing Your song again  
Whatever may come and  
Whatever lies before me  
You'll find me singing when the evening comes...

Bless the Lord O my soul...

I've been thinking a lot about what Danielle asked, "What am I going to tell my kids in the morning?" Here is where I am this morning...

Many of the people who voted for President Elect Trump are frightened, angry, and desperate... Those who are angry express their perception that somehow they have been left behind and left out. This is not simply the rural vote... many in the middle and upper classes feel the same way. Members of my own extended family are a case in point... for them social change has happened too fast and a dysfunctional and an ineffective government has exasperated them pushing them towards the President Elect...

The problem with fear is it will lead to anger if not calmed by love. I think this is why Jesus said, "Perfect love casts out fear."

This morning those who voted for Secretary Clinton awoke with alarm and fear. So today I choose to receive God's love and grace and redouble my commitment to express that love and grace to others. I will not give in to fear or pessimism. For the fact remains: whoever was elected was going to leave half of the country feeling disenfranchised and left out of the American Dream. ...

Last night's vote will have consequences for our nation and world... what they are and how far reaching they will be remain to be seen. Nevertheless, I have read the Book and it tells us God's love and justice prevail. Knowing the end of the book liberates me to live differently -- I hope!

So what does this mean practically for me?

- I will choose to daily surrender to God through worship.
- I will continue to allow (hopefully) the Scriptures to challenge my worldview with His Kingdom vision which is true, real, here now, and coming.
- I will seek to daily be filled with the Holy Spirit.

- I will be vigilant to pray for our leaders as Scripture commands so that we may live in peace.
- I will recommit myself to preaching the Scriptures in confidence that the Spirit of God will judge/convict by His truth and/or redeem/release by His grace.
- I will endeavor to love and be a man of grace, with Christ's love and grace for everyone without prejudice -- this was already hard for me :)
- I will be more deliberate in seizing/creating opportunities to share the Gospel as this remains the only hope for this nation. This must start with re-evangelizing the Church. Judgement always starts with the house of God.
- I will position myself to stand with justice as God defines it.
- I will choose to daily surrender to God through worship. (Yes, I know I have repeated myself!)

In the midst of all of this I have a great deal to be thankful for...

- I have known God's love and grace- I am no better than anyone else. It is God's grace that has made all the difference in my life.
- I have been blessed with wonderful parents.
- I have been given a wonderful wife.
- I have been given 5 wonderful children -- sorry Chris, I count you as one of my own despite the last name!
- Chris and Alison have wonderful twins on the way that we all will welcome, bless, pray for, and love.
- I have been given a wonderful community of people to share our lives with
- I have been given wonderful opportunities to serve and see God move
- I have been given food, shelter, clothing, and health in abundance that my life does not deserve...

I will stop there lest I bore you all any further...

I love you all... let's live life inspired by God's love, grace, truth, and justice and not an angry, jaded, and frightened life that is an anxious knee-jerk reaction to the world around us...

I love you all,

Dad/Mark

P.s. another reason to be thankful -- Murphy!