

Calm Before the Storm

Our lesson this morning comes from the 13th Chapter of Romans where Paul gives instruction on how to interact with the government. To summarize he says obey the government so you can live a peaceful life. It is believed that the letter was written between 57-58 AD during the rule of Emperor Nero. Nero had become popular with the poor of Rome because he had given them tax relief and other benefits. The church was primarily made up of the poor thus their relationship with the government would have been somewhat peaceful. But that would soon change.

In 64 AD there was a great fire in Rome which destroyed as much as two thirds of the city. Some believe that Nero himself had the fire set for his own amusement. However he never took the blame but rather blamed the fire on the small sect of Christians living in Rome. Nero declared “open season” on Christians and thus started a dark period of terrible persecution. Christians were hunted, tortured and put to death. Most would think that it would be the end of the church, however historical accounts say that the martyrdom of those Christians killed caused an increase in faith and the church continued to grow. That’s absolutely amazing and causes us to wonder how we would react to such persecution. Let’s thank God for the church and the peacefulness we enjoy today.

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Today’s Scripture Reading:

*Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence.
(1 Timothy 2:1–2)*