

Have you found yourself a little anxious lately? You're not alone. With terrorism, serial killings, and a depressed economy at home and the threat of war abroad, nerves are beginning to fray.

Unsettled Times

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We live in what is probably the most unstable time in global politics since World War II. Violence threatens to erupt on many fronts, such as Iran, North Korea, and China; and these fronts are multiplying.

While international unity is promoted in speeches, the world is fragmenting. In 1956, there were 72 independent nations in the world. Today, (2009) there are 195. And ethnic groups in many of those nations want independence for their people and region, which would fragment the world even further. Often, these groups are willing to use violence to gain their independence. Hotspots are in Columbia, the Balkans, Africa, and the Middle East.

Religion, too, divides people. Muslims are clashing with Hindus in India, with pro-Western Islamic (but sometimes repressive) regimes throughout the Middle East and Asia, with Jews in Israel, and with Christians in Africa. Of course, some of these conflicts involve both politics and religion. This is particularly dangerous, for when you combine religious zeal with people frustrated politically, you get a formula for terrorism. And when the West, particularly the United States, is perceived as the principle supporter of governments (ranging from Israel to Saudi Arabia) that are unpopular with the zealots, we find terrorism in our backyards.

On the home front, western nations are faced with international and domestic terror, escalating crime, the possibility of long and costly overseas wars, a faltering economy, and the collapse of giant corporations amid scandal. People can hardly be blamed, then, if they sometimes feel uncertain and even scared. Anyone seeing the headlines on a typical day of sniper shootings, bomb blasts, war posturing, terrorist threats, and bank failures might wonder if the universe is indeed ruled only by chaos and chance. But we Christians know better.

As Christians, we know that the universe was created by and is ruled by God. We also know that God is never uncertain, never faltering, never unstable. With Him "is no variableness, neither shadow of turning" (James 1:17). Jesus Christ is "the same yesterday, and to

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day, and for ever" (Hebrews 13:8). Jesus Christ is called a Rock (1 Corinthians 10:4; Psalm 62:6). And He has given us a source of absolute truth by which we can live in these times. It is the Bible, the Word of God.

This book is like no other. It tells us of God, the Creation, man, and how sin—and along with it death—entered the world. It also tells of God's Son, His birth as a man, His sinless life, and His atoning death for the sins of those who trust in Him alone as their Savior. The Cross of Jesus is never shaken. Those who look to it will never fail. We have a firm foundation. The Bible explains that this world only seems to be chaotic when we look upon it with faithless eyes, and that God is working out all things in history for "good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose" (Romans 8:28). And it speaks of the end of this unstable world when Jesus Christ will return to divide the sheep from the goats, i.e. judge between the living (those who have faith in Him alone as Savior) and the dead. "He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death" (Revelation 21:7-8). Then, speaking of the believers, "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away" (Revelation 21:4).

The Gospel of Jesus Christ is the message of hope that we Christians are to present to this confused and unsettled world. By "looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith" (Hebrews 12:2) and growing in His grace and knowledge (2 Peter 3:18) by continually looking into God's Word, we can remain unshaken in these unsettled times.