

AUGUST 24, 2025, FATHER JOHN BERTAO

Perhaps you, like myself, have heard some people say that the Bible was written 2,000 years ago and it's old. It's outdated. It's not relevant to my life today. They're wrong. Tell them. They're wrong. You are so wrong. You see, we are living the Bible today and every day. And God willing, we'll live in the life, the Bible tomorrow and many tomorrows afterwards.

For example, today's second reading from Hebrews asks the question, "What is the sense of all the suffering in the world around us?" For example, constant pain, worry, loneliness, fear, frustration, war, family strife, and all kinds of misunderstanding. Is all this distortion and misery compatible with the belief in the God of love, in the Gospel, in the good news?

The same letter gives us an explanation. It tells us first, it is the loving and training discipline of a Father to bring us peace. We don't experience peace until we experience unrestfulness. Just think. In a world without pain, would we ever turn to God? No pain. Do you think of medication? Do you think of God? When all is going well, many of us can imagine very nicely, "Oh, I do everything well. It's so nice, so fine. I don't need anybody else. Everything is great, I have everything I need." And then things turn around.

You see, if our world falls apart, we then need God to put it together again for us. Provided that we have the faith—that God will put it together for us. And if you are sick, yes, medication, doctor, and so on. But how about a little bit of faith and asking the Lord to give you the courage to accept the healing that you need, that you would like to have; to accept the suffering that you are going through. You see, trust me, you just cannot do it on your own—it's impossible. No matter how much we try on our own, we just cannot do it. And Jesus tells us this in today's Gospel.

He says, "Despite our best efforts, intentions, and other things, we fail again and again as we attempt rather to do everything ourselves. It just doesn't work. When we ask God for help to follow His Son, Jesus—His Son, our Savior, our friend, Jesus—in turn helps us. Jesus will always be ready to help us, especially when we ask for forgiveness and we ask for His mercy and compassion. Provided, of course, that we are—here's the key word—humble enough, humble enough to bend the knee and to ask for forgiveness and to ask for forgiveness through the sacrament of reconciliation. Jesus will help you, He will forgive you. The rest then is up to you.

My dear friends in Christ, never give up. Never give up because you are loved. God loves you as if you're the only person in the world for Him to love. I'm sure you've heard this many times before and it's so true. I've experienced it. He loves you so much, so deeply. If we really knew how much, we would be afraid. We wouldn't want to do anything else to hurt Him whatsoever. Never, please, never give up on God. Live free of sin and live for God's ways—and His ways.

And how? Again, the Ten Commandments. And the Ten Commandments are, "Thou shalt not kill; thou shalt not lie; thou shalt not steal; ..." Don't do anything in your life that will hurt your relationship with God. And if you do—because we're not perfect—and if you do, again, go down on your knees. Ask for forgiveness, and He will forgive you.

Let me close with this beautiful prayer that I came across just for you:

Lord Jesus, you have called us to follow you. Help us to know your will and to conform our will with yours, with great joy and love. You who live in reign forever and ever. Amen.

May God bless you.