

Chapter 28: The Year Of The Fuss, 2014

Life Application Verses:

2 Timothy 2: 14-16: Keep reminding God's people of these things. Warn them before God against quarreling about words; it is of no value, and only ruins those who listen. Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth. Avoid godless chatter, because those who indulge in it will become more and more ungodly. **Lamentations 1: 20-21:** See, LORD, how distressed I am! I am in torment within, and in my heart I am disturbed, for I have been most rebellious. Outside, the sword bereaves; inside, there is only death.

In the year 2014, in which this original chapter is penned (or keyed, these days), as I read the newspaper, listened to news broadcasts, and visited the Internet of All Things, it seems to be The Year Of The Fuss, 2014. By the time you read this, some of these events will have changed, disappeared, or will have been replaced or multiplied by other similar events. I can't list them all, and I would not even desire to try. But, if you think about the IRS, ISIS, immigration, and the general mood of the nation, it's like: yada, yada, yada; noise, noise, noise; blah, blah, blah; and, ENOUGH ALREADY!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

What's an ordinary Christian—trying to live an extraordinary life—to do? We could become an ostrich! You know, head in sand, noise goes away until we look up and we hear, "I'mmmmmm Baaaaaacccccckkkkkkkkk!" Yep, The Year Of The Fuss, 2014. I'm not going to try to decipher what is going on at the moment because it's worse than children arguing! Problem is...these are not children's games. With that said, let's look at what the Life Application Verses have to say about all of this. When we consider Lamentations 1: 20-21, the writer is so distressed about life that it is like being in torment. He has been rebellious and hope seems lost. I have days like that. Even today, at this writing, it seems like that. You got a second?

I was at work and my wife came home from purchasing some groceries and other items for us and our daughter and her family. She checks the mail for the day and calls me. Seems like I can't figure out the Tax Return correctly these days, so the IRS sends me a form that says we owe them another \$604. Now, mind you, I take great pains to do the math correctly, but not according to the brain trust of the IRS. This reminds me of what Jesus said about give to Caesar

and to God, but Caesar wants more all the time. So, that was the first issue. The second issue was at work where our AC has been out in the midst of some hot weather down in Alabama. My office has been on average 89 degrees for a month, and before that it was 81-85 for a month, with 3 days of AC before it broke—again. Not complaining, but you should try these temps in a room with no air flow and only a fan to push hot air on top of hot air. Then, there was a committee assignment I had volunteered for to move from co-chair to chair, but no word for 6 weeks, until I found out that the appointment was offered to someone else. Not fussing, just relaying the facts: yada, yada, yada; noise, noise, noise; blah, blah, blah!

Then, the wheels on my lawnmower came off—well, what can I expect for 12 years of great service from it. My battery powered weed eater went kaput! And, well, I’m all fussed out, so multiply this by the number of issues that are going on at any moment in the town, city, state, and nation in which you live. And, then think about this: **2 Timothy 2: 14-16:** “Keep reminding God’s people of these things. Warn them before God against quarreling about words; it is of no value, and only ruins those who listen. Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth. Avoid godless chatter, because those who indulge in it will become more and more ungodly.” Does this mean that we should be Heavenly Minded to be as Earthly Good at all times in our thoughts, attitude, and words? Lord, can’t I fuss just a bit more?!

As ordinary Christians, what I have relayed to you (which is true, btw) is not out of the ordinary for so many Born Again Christians. What makes it extraordinary is that in spite of these things, we will get up the next day and start all over. I’ll go to my office again, sit in 90 degrees, and do my job as best as I can. Sometimes I just want to say to my God, “God, I am hot, tired, and frustrated. I’ve done what is right as in Colossians 3: 23-24, yet it seems that at every turn, the enemy is at the gate and kicking down the door and taking over. I just want to yell at the top of my voice and fuss!” Do you ever feel like that? If you are truly honest, you have. We all have. And in The Year of the Fuss, 2014, we have a lot to fuss about.

As I mentioned, I won’t blast you with all the issues that are going on right now, but they seem overwhelming. It feels as if God is beginning to lift His Favor on the nation. We’ve destroyed innocent lives before they were born; we’ve taken God out of our schools and prayer

in public places is taboo; Jesus has been usurped at the season of His birth by Marketing and Sales; people in the world want to kill other people for any reason they can conjure up; the national debt is exponential, yet Caesar wants more and they are broke on the backs of the taxpayer; Social Security, which millions have paid into all their lives is expected to run dry in the next few years; the threat of uncontrollable disease is lurking at our doors; and, I fear for my daughter and granddaughter as all this fuss is not make believe, but real—as real as unto the very death of a nation and its citizens. The Year of the Fuss, 2014—not a pretty sight or a hopeful future—if we forget God in Christ Jesus.

I admit that when I received the call from my wife about the IRS and its ‘corrected copy’ to pay Caesar more, I fussed. Oh, I surely did! I sort of got a little miffed at God because He has all power. Can’t He do something about this? Can’t He send His Angels down to the spaces of the IRS and straighten them out? I work two jobs, pay more taxes than I can save, help my daughter when needed, give to my church and charities, and yet—pay more to the IRS!!! In that 90 degree office, I fussed until I came to my senses. I told myself that I just didn’t care anymore. I felt like the world was insane, and it was doing the same thing to me. I was ranting and raving and joining The Year of the Fuss, 2014. To understand something: this Year of the Fuss, as I have noted, is not good for Christians. Here again is what God says about it: “Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth. Avoid godless chatter, because those who indulge in it will become more and more ungodly.” While the world around us seems to be caving in, we should stop in our tracks when problems arise, and Pray—present myself to God as one approved.

When things are seemingly out of control, we MUST remember that greater is He that lives in us than he that is in this world (1 John 4: 4). In The Year of the Fuss, 2014, that is true; in an office that is 90 degrees, that is true; being dinged to pay more to the IRS surely does not make 1 John 4:4 any less true. IN other words, in The Year of the Fuss, 2014, God is the same yesterday, today, and forever, and our Lord Jesus Christ never changes. It is we who change and allow our circumstances to change us. Oh, maybe some venting is good for the Christian, but do the fussing, get it out of your system, and get back to being an extraordinary, Heavenly Minded,

Earthly Good example of what God can do in our lives in SPITE of the IRS! (Sorry, a little fuss was about to escape!) And remember, our Prayer-Hot-Line never closes!!!

I believe that God is real; I believe that Jesus Christ is who He said He was and is; I believe that there is a Holy Spirit that is our comforter; I believe that Heaven is a real place; and, I believe that the Holy Bible is Truth. I also believe that I live in a world that is full of hate, violence, murder, lies, political turmoil, intent of global annihilation of nation-against-nation, and so on. But, I also believe I live in a world that has a God, Jehovah I Am That I Am, and a Savior in Christ Jesus, that are not blind, deaf, or uncaring. IF that were the case, oh we would be miserable in our failed hope of Life Eternal. But God, in Christ Jesus, offers a life where The Year Of The Fuss, 2014, will not be remembered long—more apropos, not remember at all! IN fact, in the timeline of eternity, The Year Of The Fuss, 2014, will be nothing more than long forgotten in the 10,000 years we sing about in *Amazing Grace*.

Oh, while we are here, there will still be the IRS, threats against our nation, murders, thefts, hackers, death, sickness, and all ills imaginable. I cannot for a moment think that God doesn't see it all. How can His Heart not break from what we have done to ourselves? While this may be The Year Of The Fuss, 2014, underneath the fuss people are suffering, dying, and being held in bondage. IN a recent *Washington Post* study, it was estimated that 29.8 million people still live in slavery. While politicians and others behoove slavery, what is being done to alleviate this human tragedy? Can you imagine what those 29 million people must endure every single day while we fuss over things? Don't get me wrong: there is a time to fuss and a time to act. Christians, when will we stop fussing with each other? Denominations fuss with other denominations; Christians fuss over abortion as they disagree with the issue; Born Again believers fuss over waiting in line; I fuss over the IRS; and, you fuss over _____. (You fill in the blank. Do you need more space than what I provided???)

I'm not saying you shouldn't speak out about your frustrations, because the fuss I have about the IRS is real to me and my family. It will take an additional \$600 from our meager savings that could be used elsewhere or in an emergency. However, after I got over the shock of the IRS, the chair job, and the heat, I realized God didn't go anywhere; He didn't decide to "throw me under the bus"; He didn't lean over to His right and say to Christ Jesus, stomp on

Ken a bit more; and, He surely did not forsake me. It was I who forgot God's Promises; I fussed; I failed to "avoid godless chatter, because those who indulge in it will become more and more ungodly." I listened to my plight, not my God; I indulged, along with millions of Americans, in The Year Of The Fuss, 2014, when I should have said to my God in Christ Jesus, "You promised to take care of me and my family, and I embrace that Promise!" I should have vented correctly, not turned my voice to godless chatter, because it violated my Heavenly Minded, Earthly Good consistency to live not as an ordinary Christian, but as an extraordinary Christian as I have explained in several instances throughout this book. I would hate to see what grade I made in my fussing. IN fact, I wrote an article shortly after the 4th of July Celebration that was a bit of fussing that I sent to *The Montgomery Advertiser*: (our local newspaper)

Reflections on a 4th of July Celebration

On Friday, July 4th, my family and I went down to *The Alley* in downtown Montgomery and had a very excellent meal at Dreamland BBQ. The place was crowded, there were scores of people out and about, and all-in-all, it was a wonderful experience. We stayed for the fireworks, and I must say, that in thirty years of being in Montgomery, that was one spectacular show. It made me proud to be an American, to be a Veteran of the U. S. Navy, and to be a son, husband, father, and grandfather.

Then, as the final 'boom&flash' occurred, I thought about this nation. I wondered if the Founding Fathers, of whom many were Christian, would recognize it were they to walk through *The Alley* and talk to people they met? Would they be amazed at how far we've come as a nation or would they be appalled at the way we have piecemeal-shredded the Constitution?

Would they be happy about our progressive tendencies to be an open society where we have beliefs that are not in unison and many times tear us apart? For example, if they were to review the recent Supreme Court's Hobby Lobby decision, what would they think of that outcome? Would they say that this was about one religion over another? I'm not sure what they might say, but I know this: we have splintered ourselves into groups, factions, racial identities, religious ideologies, and on-and-on, until One Nation Under God is perilously close on the cusp of an inability to remain cohesive and united.

While this writing is maybe a bit feel-good, hopeful, and wishful thinking, it is quintessentially about a nation that is torn apart by what it has done to itself. We can no longer be the caretaker of the world because we can no longer afford it. Our political zeroes—my apologies—I should not be so flippant, hopeful heroes, have spent us into oblivion. The national debt, taxes, hundreds of millions and billions on foreign nations—have all resulted in harming the American Dream for all future generations of Americans, including our present generations.

Tell me this is not so. Show me proof that this is not the current State of the Nation. I want to see the books on this. Tell me—no, validate for me—that we are not in the midst of one of the most egregious administrations in the history of our nation. The best they can do is conjure up some talking points about 'phony scandals' as if that is justification for their continued illicit leadership of a contemporary, self-inflicted, failing nation!? My God, when will we wake up from this nightmare? They have taken us down the primrose path to illegal activities, self-rule, and non-enforcement of laws they vehemently espouse in others as being broken!

What I felt at the 4th of July event was pride in my nation. I still believe in it, because there is no backup plan for it should it fail; no country for us should this one succumb to total financial collapse or worse. To quip that it is 'too big to fail' cannot even be called nonsense; it can fail! Do you not know your history of The Roman Empire? Or other empires that blew themselves apart internally and are no longer in existence? Yes, we can fail as a nation. But we can also pull ourselves up by our bootstraps and we can regroup and come together once again and become a mighty nation. It won't happen if we continue to splinter ourselves into Democrat vs. Republican; Left vs. Right; have's and have not's; Black vs. White vs. Hispanic vs. whoever we choose to dislike; takers vs. givers; workers vs. those who refuse to work; and, so on and so on.

I can imagine that there will be those who read this and they throw it to the curb; others will call it Conservative nonsense; yet, some will understand and take up the challenge. I'd like to think that there are enough in this nation to turn it around. Lifetime politicians like Harry Reid or Nancy Pelosi (Republicans too) who have become like dictators in Washington, need to go! Who in the heck do they think they are anyway? They make laws, we are dictated to follow them, and yet, these political hacks believe they are qualified to lead a nation? What in God's Name have we done to ourselves by allowing them to rule over us, not with us? Are they not supposed to represent the people they serve? I think they have the process a whole lot backwards!

Whether the United States remains viable in the foreseeable future depends on what we as the citizenry do with our vote and our will to voice our Beliefs. It was said once, "A single twig breaks easily but a bundle of twigs is strong." One voice will be ignored; a thousand and the same will occur; bring millions together, and it will be like a bundle of twigs. Our nation is worth saving. When we live honorably between ourselves, we return honor to our nation. Our children deserve better for their futures than what the dictators in Washington have handed down.

What I wrote above, is to me, the epitome of The Year Of The Fuss, 2014. My apologies to you, my God, my Savior, and anyone that might be offended by what I wrote. I wanted to share it because we all have these times when we open up and fuss, or as Scripture reminds us: "Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth. Avoid godless chatter, because those who indulge in it will become more and more ungodly." I tried to be fair, and I Pray that God is pleased with what I said? Oh...and remember something: fussing is not action. Action is doing, it is taking up our Cross daily and living for God daily. Action is when we vote en masse to stop abortions, anti-God laws, and so forth. That is 'presenting ourselves to God as a people approved.' See the comments from Billy Graham below...

A Question of Curiosity:

Should we complain or fuss when it is convenient? Or should we stand up for God, whether the world thinks it fussing, if we adhere to His truth in **2 Timothy 2: 14-16**. And you say...

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"We are the Bibles the world is reading; We are the creeds the world is needing; We are the sermons the world is heeding." ~ Billy Graham ~

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My Prayer For You:

Lord, as I write this, it has my feelings and heart all over it. I'm in need of Your reminder every day, down to the hour at times, that You are still in control of what goes on in this world. I don't need to understand it all, because in Christ, I know that You know every dotted i and every crossed t. You know the intents of hearts, ideologies, beliefs, hatreds, godless laws, and why every single individual lives as they do. In Christ, we who have been Born Again, must understand Your Holy Bible because it explains what will happen in this world and how things will become more evil in the last days. What I pray for my fellow Born Again Christians, is that we all might remember You in times when the world seems like chaos rules. When we receive news that is upsetting or our situations appear to us dire and hopeless or beyond our ability to cope with, remind us then—in that moment—that our God, who gave us His son, Christ Jesus, is able to do that which is Exceedingly Great! In this, The Year Of The Fuss, 2014, grant us Wisdom, Mercy, Grace, and Love that is truly Exceedingly Great in our lives, because we can only see what is in front of us, with the Hope that Our God will protect us and provide for us in such perilous times. May our fussing not be as the world fusses, but deliver us into action for You. May our fussing cause us to stand our ground in Your Name, to move us to not give in and accept the actions of others that deny the Name of Christ Jesus, or seek to overthrow You, O Lord. I ask this for myself and for my Brothers and Sisters in Christ, for You are the One True God. In Christ, before the Throne of Mercy and Grace, I pray for the sake of those who have been Born Again, Amen.

Notes:
