



A LETTER FROM NIC SCHRIEBER JANUARY 6, 2021 EVENTS

Dear Families,

Like many of you, I found myself on Wednesday night (January 6) glued to my newsfeed, saddened and heartbroken by the events, riots, and violence in Washington, DC. Later that night and the next morning, I found myself doing a lot of praying, reflecting, and even writing.

As I did so, the notes that you'll see below started to develop, as I processed and tried to synthesize some of the things that I point my kids (and myself) toward as I watch or hear about violence and unrest around the country and world.

I wanted to pass it along to you, simply as an encouragement, affirmation, and potential tool to use in talking with your kids.

SO HOW DO I TALK TO MY KIDS ABOUT WHAT WE (AND MAYBE THEY) SAW ON THE NEWS THIS WEEK?

First of all, know there is also wisdom in not sharing the news of January 6 with kids of certain ages. There definitely is a discernment needed for us as parents, isn't there? I found myself turning off the news or silencing the conversation around my 6- and 8-year-olds. I did not want them to carry this weight...yet. But with my older kids, we handled it more openly, positioning ourselves as parents to be the ones adding the commentary and reminding them once again of certain truths.

And here is what I find myself pointing them (and my own heart) back to:

THE LORD IS IN CONTROL OF ALL THINGS, AND THAT INCLUDES THE AFFAIRS OF THIS WEEK.

He is sovereign over all things (which simply means **he reigns over all things**). We use that word a lot at our house. And at New City, we say, "Jesus is our King," reminding us who sits on the throne in all circumstances.

I was recently reading Psalm 119, and the phrase, "*For all things are your servants,*"



stopped me in my tracks. *All things*—the affairs of men, the events of the day—are *his* servants. They serve *his* purposes.

So, in all that happened this week, Jesus is in control. And in that, we trust the Lord.

THERE IS A REAL ENEMY AND A REAL EVIL

I remind my kids of the reality and darkness of sin. I point to it as the foundational enemy. Sin hardens, poisons, controls, blinds, breaks, rejects. There is a real spiritual battle waging between the Lord and Satan (2 Corinthians 10:3-5). Sin is not just *out there*. It is in my heart and their hearts, and we must be on guard. But, as Christians, we thank God for forgiveness and freedom in Christ from the power and control of sin (Romans 6).

I also have been finding myself talking to my older kids a lot over the last six months, and once again this week, about racism. Now, I understand that there are differing views on the complexities of how race and racism are playing into current events. However, I have been using the clear discord, unrest, and discussions all around us to simply teach my kids that there is such a thing as racism—that some look down on others or treat others wrongly because of the color of their skin. Racism is evil. And the Lord hates racism. [Genesis 1:26-27, Revelation 7:9-10, Ephesians 2:14-18, James 2:1].

THIS IS NOT THE WAY IT IS SUPPOSED TO BE

The biblical story (from the Garden in Genesis 1 to the New City in Revelation 21) reminds us that this will not always be the way that it is. And when God created, he created all things good. But then sin (Genesis 3) entered the scene.

One thing that was emphasized this week through the myriad of statements and reactions of so many exclaiming how heart broken, sick, sad, grieved, and appalled they were by the riots in DC, is that there is a clear understanding that **this is not the way it is supposed to be**. I was comforted by how clear that was and tried to communicate that to my kids.

ACTIONS REVEAL

Sometimes, we just need to ask our kids what they see.



Ask them, *“What do you see there?”*

Though we are not omniscient and cannot know the hearts of man (only God is and can do that), the Lord certainly has described to us and revealed to us in Jesus what *his* people and *his* kingdom ought to and will look like.

Here’s fruit you will see in God’s people: love, joy, peace, patience (Galatians 5:22–23)—you know the rest. Humility and sacrifice (Philippians 2:1–11). His kingdom will not be one of the sword, but of love and grace (Luke 22:51).

So, when we see violence, hatred, anger, and disrespect on full display—these actions (fruit) reveal clearly that this is not the way of Christ or the Christian.

WE MUST PRAY

This is a direction and action that we should move toward quickly, particularly in moments like this. We pray because it points us back to the One who is in charge. The One who can bring healing, peace, unity, and salvation into (and through) this and every situation. And prayer changes us along the way, too. Remind your kids (and yourself!) that even if they do not know exactly what to say or pray about, that is ok. Prayer is a posture that reveals the One in whom we trust.

WE MUST LOVE AND GO

I want my kids to see all people as made in the image of God and with full value and dignity. And I want them to love all people fully and truly. And I want them to see themselves as advocates and ambassadors of that love. Thus, I challenge them in moments like this to show love to the people around them.

I was reminded this week as I spent some time in Romans 10 that the only way the gospel will be believed and the only way lives will be transformed is through God’s people going and proclaiming the gospel to people, because people need hear it to respond (vv. 14–17). And thus, again, I challenge them (and myself) in these moments to be people who go to others. We need to live for and love like Christ in our broken, barren world.

The image of a “peacemaker” that Bishop Claude Alexander shared about [**this past Sunday in his interview with Pastor Chris**](#) is so relevant for all of us. And I am more



resolved in that now, and I pray that for my kids, and for you and for our church. May we be peacemakers and peace-bringers.

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God." (Matthew 5:8)

I hope you can hear and discern my heart through this note. And if you made it all the way to the end of this, thanks for reading some of my thoughts and reflections from this week.

And please know I am not perfect in this, but I pray for God's help and guidance.

I love you and praying for us all,

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