

Luther's Words: Ease Is a Greater Danger

We should not fear harsh treatment, but prosperity and good days we should fear. These may harm us more than fear and persecution. Nor should we fear the wisdom of the world, for it can do us no harm. In fact, the more the wisdom of the world rises up against the truth, the purer and clearer the truth becomes. Therefore nothing better can come to the Gospel than the opposition of the world with its might and wisdom. The more my conscience, sin, and the devil assail me, the stronger my righteousness becomes. For the sins that oppress me cause me anguish. So I persist more and more earnestly in prayer and crying to God; and in this way faith and righteousness become constantly stronger and stronger. That is what St. Paul means when he says (2 Cor. 12:9): Strength becomes stronger through weakness. Since then, we have a treasure which becomes stronger through temptation and adversity, we should not fear but be of good courage and rejoice at tribulation, as St. Paul says to the Romans (5:3), and as the apostles did who left the courthouse with great joy and thanks to God for having been worthy to suffer shame for the sake of Christ's name (Acts 5:41). If the devil were wise enough to be silent and let the Gospel be preached, he would sustain less harm. For when the Gospel is not attacked, it rusts and has no opportunity to reveal its power and might.

(WLS #3304)