

Importance of teaching the word

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Christianity has always gone through major challenges and persecutions. During the first century, the church went through severe persecution. Evil emperors like Nero unleashed brutal persecution against the minority following (Christians). The church also had to fight against various heresies (false teachings), such as Arianism and Nestorianism, during the first 500 years of church history. However, the most fascinating thing was that the people never shied away from getting killed for the sake of Truth and the Gospel. The Gospel was spread on the blood of martyrs. For many centuries the Christians didn't have access to the scripture/bible, and if you held one secretly, then you would be mercilessly killed. They were not allowed to take the bible and read it publicly or privately. Irrespective of these challenges, the Christians used to gather in houses and fellowshiped, and they were considered atheists since they didn't follow Judaism, nor did they have any idols like the Greek pagan religions.

However, the small minority group of Christians stood for the word and the Truth. And they paid the price. Their wives and kids were raped, murdered, thrown into the fire pit and thrown to be eaten alive by the wild beasts. As a result of these faithful missionaries, God brought the Gospel into the Western world. And the Western worldview was sort of established on the principles of Judeo-Christian principles. Evangelism and mission were the bedrock of every Christian denomination. People left their jobs, business and went around the world in ships to preach the Gospel. The likes of William Scott Ament and Hudson Taylor went to China. People like Bartholomaeus Ziegenbalg and William Carey came to India and preached the Gospel. Simultaneously, the world has undergone many philosophical, political and religious transitions, especially during the Age of Enlightenment in the 17th and 18th centuries, which led to scientific, industrial and French revolutions.

However, the 20th and 21st centuries have caused a major impact on society than all the previous centuries put together. The 20th century has seen the greatest number of wars and bloodshed than the rest of history put together. "The 20th century was the most

murderous in recorded history. The total number of deaths caused by or associated with its wars has been estimated at 187m, the equivalent of more than 10% of the world's population in 1913." There was a major decline in morality in the society. And by the end of the 20th and beginning of the 21st centuries, complacency has crept into the church. The subtle yet steady growth of complacency has made the church water down the Truth. "Now people compromise to an extent wherein they do not know what they are standing for." Although during the last 2000 years, the church has faced major persecutions and challenges, the greatest persecution is now. It is not just some form of physical or economic persecution but the pressure from the world to seep into the church and water down the Truth. Never been in the history of the church as it is today, where the Gospel has been watered down so much to fit into the culture. Our young generation has been influenced so much by the mainstream and social media, the education system and peer pressure. What the word of God calls shameful is now celebrated. If people can control how you think philosophically and morally, then your life itself is controlled. Now preachers have to apologise ten times before they call sin a sin because we don't want to offend anyone.

【Daniel 3:16-21】 16 Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego replied to him, "King Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter. 17 If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to deliver us from it, and he will deliver us[c] from Your Majesty's hand. 18 But even if he does not, we want you to know, Your Majesty, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up." 19 Then Nebuchadnezzar was furious with Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, and his attitude toward them changed. He ordered the furnace heated seven times hotter than usual 20 and commanded some of the strongest soldiers in his army to tie up Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego and throw them into the blazing furnace. 21 So these men, wearing their robes, trousers, turbans and other clothes, were bound and thrown into the blazing furnace.

If the Scripture you are holding is true, then it is worth dying for. There is no relative Truth (the idea that your Truth is your Truth, and my Truth is mine and let's respect each other's Truth even if we disagree) because the very notion of Truth itself is explicit and exclusive.

"Truth is exclusive, and it is determined by the word of God." Either we trust the word in its totality, or we don't trust it at all.

Especially to the youth and young adults, read the word of God, and marinate yourself in the word. Go over and over again into the word. Give yourself totally to it. Because the world out there is contrary to the word, it's a sewage system, and unless you have the word, you can't survive. Don't skip the fellowship and Sunday service, don't miss the opportunity to hear the word and fellowship with fellow brethren.

Paul writes to Timothy **【1st Timothy 4: 11-16】 11 Command and teach these things. 12 Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity. 13 Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching. 14 Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through prophecy when the body of elders laid their hands on you. 15 Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress. 16 Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers.**

Paul says, "watch your life and doctrine closely." In other words, make sure your life is aligned with the word of God.

Scripture is the basis of our life. Psalms 119:105 says, "Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path." Therefore, every step of my life that I make will be in the light of Scripture. Scripture talks about love, morality, gender, marriage, parenting, business, politics and governance, equality, freedom, creation, life on earth, natural and supernatural realms, mortality and immortality, suffering and pain, healing and health, provision and providence, life and death, glorious eternity and so on. So, every aspect of our life is determined by the Scripture. It doesn't matter what denominations or pastors, or theologians teach. If it isn't in the Scripture, then it's not worth following it. Therefore, the church has the responsibility to teach the word, not just on topic such as prosperity and wealth, although we shouldn't shy away from it but teach everything without watering it down to fit into the culture and norm.

No matter how bad the persecution and attacks against the church. But there is good news, "I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" God will build his church, and he wants us to partner with him, and it is only possible if we stand for the Truth, no matter the cost.

We got only one life, and it's fleeting. It's like a vapour; life in all its glory is still nothing compared to the glory that is awaiting the saints in eternity.