

But Did You Die?

We are going through things in our lives that shape us daily. Even if we think that we are not being affected by what is happening in the world around us we are. Whether it's our personal circumstances such as family, financial or emotional trials or if it's the broader world around us. Being in a state of limbo or stagnant is not actually a possibility.

[Rev 3:15-16 NKJV] 15 "I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. 16 "So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth.

We think neutral is a safe place to be yet that was not the example Jesus gave us. He loves us enough to tell us the truth. We must speak out against evil, ignoring guilt is the same and condemning the innocent. We often think because I didn't get involved it's ok.

[Pro 17:15 NLT] 15 Acquitting the guilty and condemning the innocent--both are detestable to the LORD.

1. What are ways the church has been silent in the face of evil?

We in the church are called to bring forth the truth. We see in Ezekiel that he was equally responsible for the sin of the people if he did not warn them. But if he did warn them he was off the hook and their free will kicked in. We see in Acts that this principle was also followed.

[Eze 3:16-21 NKJV] 16 Now it came to pass at the end of seven days that the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 17 "Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel; therefore hear a word from My mouth, and give them warning from Me: 18 "When I say to the wicked, 'You shall surely die,' and you give him no warning, nor speak to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life, that same wicked [man] shall die in his iniquity; but his blood I will require at your hand. 19 "Yet, if you warn the wicked, and he does not turn from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but you have delivered your soul. 20 "Again, when a righteous [man] turns from his righteousness and commits iniquity, and I lay a stumbling block before him, he shall die; because you did not give him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he has done shall not be remembered; but his blood I will require at your hand. 21 "Nevertheless if you warn the righteous [man] that the righteous should not sin, and he does not sin, he shall surely live because he took warning; also you will have delivered your soul."

[Act 20:26-28 NLT] 26 I declare today that I have been faithful. If anyone suffers eternal death, it's not my fault, 27 for I didn't shrink from declaring all that God wants you to know. 28 "So guard yourselves and God's people. Feed and shepherd God's flock--his church, purchased with his own blood--over which the Holy Spirit has appointed you as elders.

2. What are ways the church can speak up in the face of evil? Why should we?

We are in a time that we must take this very seriously. Whenever Israel got comfortable, they fell. The children of Israel were in a constant state of obedience, lethargy and then disobedience. This pattern led to captivity which ultimately caused them to repent and turn back to God. The level of disobedience was the determining factor of how severe the discipline was. Notice their freedom was not connected to the repentance of the heathens it was based on the repentance of Gods people.

We look at a sinful world around us and point fingers and say, "if those sinners would get it together" Yet the Word of God says if "MY people" get it together I will heal their land. Judgement comes first to the house of God.

[2Ch 7:14 NKJV] 14 "if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.

3. What does this last scripture look like in a practical application?

The world sees the prosperity or the demise of Gods people and that becomes their lens to see God. Most will never pick up the Bible but they will come in contact with you and me. What worldview of God are we giving to them.

The same way Israel had different periods of history where they went from wiping out "All the idols" to full blown idol worship, we have had those same types of shifts in the church. Somewhere in between those shifts was the shift of passivity. Comfort historically not just in Israel leads to defeat.

"In my weakness, HE is made strong". The world needs truth.

[2Co 12:9-10 NKJV] 9 And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

The world needs us to line up with our words. When the church says ridiculous things like Jesus would wear a mask or would get a vaccine because He loves people it's a lie. That's the same compromise, hypocrisy and fear the religious leaders of Jesus time dealt with when they tried to kill him for healing on the Sabbath. Because He was doing something that challenged their faith they decided to kill Him. He was making them look bad by touching lepers and healing the sick. It was love and mercy that led Him to do the exact opposite of what the religious and society as a whole condemned. He never said "oh this make others feel uncomfortable so I won't do it. He spit on the ground made mud and put it in someones eye. How many of you would enjoy that? In that culture it was an incredible insult and yet He wasn't stopped by their culture. He was moved by His love to do what they thought was disgraceful in order to do a greater good which was to heal and restore.

If we are unwilling to step up over challenges or social norms that we don't think are a big deal now, how are we going to step up when our lives are at stake. Many say it's not life or death so why not, lets not be difficult. It's the same thought process as "when I have more money I'll give". Yet statistics show that's not the case. If you don't know how to manage small amounts of finances, you won't know how to manage large amounts either. The Bible back up this principle many times. In the story of the talents the lazy servant who was unwilling to work with what he had because he didn't think it was much had his taken away and it was given to the one with the most. The Bible says that "To whom much is given, much is required". It says if He can trust you with a little, then he can trust you with much. We want to do everything backwards.

We can't be afraid of the truth.

[Mat 7:13-14 NKJV] 13 "Enter by the narrow gate; for wide [is] the gate and broad [is] the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. 14 "Because narrow [is] the gate and difficult [is] the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.

4. What is your biggest obstacle to standing up in the face of social/political issues that you others around you disagree with?

We will go through trials and tribulations if we stand up for what is right. The early church was persecuted right into lions dens for the truth and yet they did not back down. We view them as martyrs but for us it's wisdom to "stay out of it".

[Jas 1:2-3 NKJV] 2 My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience.

It's in the fire and in the trial we grow and our faith is tested and produces. "But did you Die" is not to be insensitive it's to point out that you are still here. You are still breathing and no matter what evil has come upon you or that maybe you have done. You still have time to overcome, repent, move forward to accomplish what you were put on this earth to do. What you weren't put on this earth to do was simply exist. That's lukewarm and that gets you spit out.

5. What is one way to you are willing to step out and do something to make a difference (besides pray)?