



CELL GUIDE 2016

Theme	Be Bold and Courageous
Topic	The Counter-Culture Christian
Speaker	Elder Edric Sng
Date	12 th and 13 th March 2016

Message Summary

Spiritual Objective: Living Boldly in Counter-Christian World

World history is filled with exemplary individuals who bravely put their lives on the line for their beliefs. If they, for a non-Christian cause, have the courage to stand up for their beliefs, then what about us as followers of our true God?

The speaker started by asking us to consider whether identifying as believers makes a difference in our lives. There should be evidence of transformation that extends beyond the superficial. Even when our faith is put to the test, or when it has no tangible benefit, we should still be willing to declare the gospel and boldly glorify God. This sermon sets out an example in Daniel 3 for us to follow.

Being A Counter-Culture Christian

Key text: Daniel 3:12-28

The passage tells the story of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, three Jews who had to choose between their God and King Nebuchadnezzar's idol, with their lives at stake. These men presented as paragons of boldness when confronted with worldly hostility. What can we learn from them about being bold and courageous Christians?

1) Expect Challenges

These men knew that their faith would be challenged, and that they would have to make a choice about their faith convictions. As Christians, we must expect life to be full of challenges to our faith, and prepare ourselves accordingly. There are many sources of challenges: our physical self, people around us, and the world. We are reminded that the ways of the world usually contradict that of God, because Satan, being the prince of the world, works to keep people away from God.

One illustration of a worldly contradiction to our beliefs is the motto "YOLO", acronym for "you only live once", which implies that we should enjoy life as we have only one life on earth. However as Christians, we know that we have a life in heaven as well, and so what we do on earth has consequences for our afterlife.

Therefore, the life we lead must be counter-cultural and counter-natural, although submission to God and resisting temptation is unnatural to the self. Our natural state is fallen, and looks for self-gratification and self-glorification. Christ calls us to resist the values of the world and to hold on to those of Christ, so that we may instead exhibit God-gratification and God-glorification.

2) Express Convictions

Despite being threatened, the three men expressed their faith convictions through their words (v 17-18) and actions without any compromise. Likewise, we are encouraged to express our convictions in the face of challenges, regardless of consequences we may have to reckon with. We



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should avoid being “strategic Christians” who make concessions to the world according to our liking. Being strategic about our choices can become a convenient excuse for not obeying God. As 1 Cor 10:21 tells us, “...you cannot have a part in both the Lord’s table and the table of demons.” God calls us to step up to a higher level of faith, wherein we are empowered by the Spirit and have the boldness to express our faith convictions without compromising our beliefs.

3) Experience Christ

By expressing their faith convictions, the men were able to experience Christ (v 25). They were saved from the blazing furnace, unharmed and untouched. This shows that when we stand up for Christ, He fights the battle for us. The blood of Jesus is the basis of our faith and boldness. Through our acts of convictions, we can experience His salvation and grace. Others may also experience Christ through our expression of faith, just as how King Nebuchadnezzar was moved to praise God. It is stated in Joshua 1:9, “Be strong and courageous... for I am with you wherever you go.” The Lord assures us that He is in control, and that Jesus will carry us through as we go forth in boldness.

Questions

1.) What are some ways in which you have experienced Christ coming through for you?

(Fill In Answer Here)

2.) Elder Edric spoke about how Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego (in Daniel 3:17-18) expected challenges, expressed their convictions and as a result, experienced Christ. Share about a time when your faith was being put to the test. What did you do/could you have done to express your conviction?

(Fill In Answer Here)

3.) What are some norms that you think you should break away from in order to be a more counter-culture Christian?

(Fill In Answer Here)