



CELL GUIDE

TOPIC Are You Ready?

SPEAKER Ps Andrew Tan

THEME Gearing Up For The Harvest

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MESSAGE SUMMARY

ARE YOU READY TO PAY THE PRICE TO FOLLOW JESUS?

In this hostile world where the Christian faith is constantly being put to the test (e.g. persecution, discrimination, bullying), it might be tempting for us to lie low and keep to ourselves, blend in and allow the secular world to change us, or group off with fellow believers. However, as Christians, we need to be in the world but not of the world, and we should always be ready to make a stand for Christ at all times. [1 Peter 3:15](#) is a call for us to *set Christ apart as LORD, to be prepared to give a defense* to account for the hope that we have and to do so with *gentleness and respect*.

THE CALL TO BE A GENTLE WITNESS UNDER CHRIST'S LORDSHIP

In 1 Peter, the apostle Peter wrote to a group of Christians in Asia who were facing persecution for their faith in Christ. He exhorted the people to stand strong and explained how they should respond when they suffer due to their beliefs. This response, as Ps Andrew Tan shared, is a call to be a gentle witness under Christ's lordship.

1. IN OUR HEARTS – SET CHRIST APART AS LORD

The first and most important thing we should do is to sanctify the Lord. However challenging our situations or environments might be, as long as we have Jesus Christ on our side, we can be confident that all will be well – we would and should not have any fears because the Lord is with us (Ps 23:4, 27:1). Therefore, let us make Jesus the Lord of our lives; set Him apart as LORD by making His will our desire and giving Him control over everything.

2. IN OUR MINDS – BE READY TO ANSWER

When we fix our eyes on Jesus Christ and set Him apart in our hearts, we will have hope – the confident expectation and firm assurance of a glorious future through Christ's resurrection (Rom 8:24-25; 1 Pet 1:3). This hope, when witnessed by our pre-believing friends and family members, will evoke questions (personal or theological) that we should always be ready to answer. God does not just want us to live out the gospel, He wants us to declare about Him!

To do so, we need to first be diligent in studying the word of God so that we can bring the truth about Jesus to our pre-believing friends and family members when the opportunity arises. Do not shy away from questions that you do not have an answer to but promise to get back to them when you do. Secondly, listen to their questions and concerns; hear their longings and heartaches so that we can connect them to the life-giving hope of Jesus Christ. Lastly, always pray and be on the

lookout for opportunities to share about God and the reason for the hope that we have.

3. IN OUR WORDS – BE GENTLE AND RESPECTFUL

When we share about God, we need to do so with gentleness and respect. One of the reasons we find evangelism so scary is that we are afraid of offending people and burning our bridges. No doubt, talking about Jesus can be difficult and may involve challenging words (e.g. taking up our cross daily and dying to self), but let the offence stay with the gospel – do not be offensive in the way that we share the gospel because we are seeking to win a soul, not win an argument. When we share, we should not have a “holier than thou” attitude because we are seeking in love to be a stepping-stone for them, not a stumbling block. Therefore, always be ready to share about God and the reason for the hope that you have with a heart of love, compassion and genuineness.

Conclusion

When we have set apart Christ as LORD in our hearts, we will have hope amidst the trials of life and will be able to rise above it. When we do that, the world will start to notice us and ask about the hope that we have. Are you ready to make a case for your hope in a loving and gentle way – the hope that the world so needs today?

QUESTIONS

1. What would you say to a colleague, friend or family member when they ask you for the reason for the hope that you have?

2. 1 Peter 3:15 is a call for us to *set Christ apart as LORD*, to be prepared to *give a defense* to account for the hope that we have and to *do so with gentleness and respect*. Which of the three points do you find most difficult to do and why?

3. What are some ways in which you can overcome the difficulties faced in question 2?