
SOLA FIDE

Getting out of my comfort-seeking lifestyle

Living in the United States today is a tremendous blessing given by God. The United States is one of the wealthiest countries in the world, with abundance of resources available such as food, electronics, clothes, medicine and all types of entertainments. The United States also offers wide variety of choices in life such as choosing a desired school, career, relationship and more. But most importantly, in the United States, people have the freedom to participate and engage in any desired faith and its organizations. Because of this, Christians can freely worship at their local church with their fellow believers without facing life-threatening persecutions. Christians can openly have fellowship with their brothers and sisters in Christ and also engage in sharing their faith. In short, living out a Christian faith in the United States is a blessing because there aren't harsh restrictions as some of the Christianity-hostile countries do in some parts of the world. Yet, Christian faith that lacks persecutions and hardships - i.e. Christian life of comfort can be one of the most dangerous drawbacks. This is not to say that Christians are to, and must look for sufferings and persecutions or live miserably and pursue ascetic lifestyle, but it is to say that Christians must be vigilant of the comforts of this world.

The reason why comfort can be dangerous for Christian is because they can cause distractions and temptations, slowly replacing the desire for the living God with pleasures of this world. As result, the priority of Christian life can slowly drifts away from glorifying God to satisfying their fleshly desires. Therefore, Christians must be aware of the pitfall of blending into comfort-seeking lifestyle; instead fight against such tendencies. This is the message articulated in the bible. For example:

“If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.” (Matthew 16:24-25)

“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven” (Matthew 6:19-20).

“And do not seek what you are to eat and what you are to drink, nor be worried...Instead, seek his kingdom, and these things will be added to you” (Luke 12:29-31).

Bible makes it clear that instead of focusing on obtaining comforts of the world (pleasures, fleshly desires, worldly possessions and etc.), Christians are called by our lord Jesus Christ to prioritize seeking him and on things of eternal significance.

Christians are saved by the grace of God, and it causes the inward transformation. And so, Christians have new life and Christians are called to live out that new life in conformity to Jesus Christ. However, due to living in sinful world as well as not yet glorified life (ongoing sinful nature), Christians' hearts are often filled with longing for comforts (pleasures, fleshly desires, worldly possessions and etc.). This is a constant struggle that every Christian will go through until we are glorified - yet we cannot let that be a justifying reason to live such life. Therefore, we must live out the life worthy of the calling that Christ has given us. And the only way to do that is to rely upon the power of the Holy Spirit and responding to His leading; only then Christians can break free from their chains of sinful tendencies. Apostle Paul states in Romans, "For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but the set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace." (Romans 8:5-6).

The Holy Spirit dwells in Christians and guides and directs them towards God. One of the operations of the Holy Spirit is to lift up Christians in their weaknesses and empower them to live out a life that is reflection of that of Jesus Christ. So Christians are to respond to the Holy Spirit and often times, responding to the Holy Spirit means forgoing personal desires and stand at odds with worldly comforts (pleasures, fleshly desires, worldly possessions and etc.). Like many others around me, I desire things from this world. Some of those things are necessary things for my life such as food, clothes, place to live and stuff. But on other times, they are unnecessary things based on my fleshly desires such as unnecessary electronics or costly entertainment opportunities. Electronics and entertainments are not necessarily bad things or sinful things in life, but they are often a leeway to stumble into a lifestyle of comfort (pleasures, fleshly desires and etc.) - seeking. So for me, it is a constant struggle to not let my priority be comfort - seeking (satisfying my fleshly desires or pleasures). I proactively try to engage in the Holy Spirit's leading by setting my mind and heart on biblical matters. For one, instead of prioritizing spending my financial resources on electronics or entertainments, I prioritize spending my financial resources on weekly offerings or tithings or help a fellow believer who is in financial difficulty.

As mentioned previously, the point of this writing is not to suggest that Christians are to live ascetic lifestyle or misery. There is freedom in Jesus Christ!! Nonetheless, spiritual growth and maturity often comes with spiritual discipline and sacrifice. So Christians, let us step out of our comfort-seeking lifestyle, and live the life that is aligned with the Holy Spirit's leading!! Let us trust in the Holy Spirit's leading since we know that God is faithful and that He will finish His good works in us (Philippians 1:6).

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