

A balanced and fruitful life

– the Scriptures and the power of God

How can I grow to be a healthy and fruitful Christian?

How can I help the church to grow?

Then the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to him with a question: “Teacher,” they said, “Moses wrote for us that if a man’s brother dies and leaves a wife but no children, the man must marry the widow and raise up offspring for his brother. Now there were seven brothers. The first one married and died without leaving any children. The second one married the widow, but he also died, leaving no child. It was the same with the third. In fact, none of the seven left any children. Last of all, the woman died too. At the resurrection whose wife will she be, since the seven were married to her?”

Jesus replied, “Are you not in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God? When the dead rise, they will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like the angels in heaven. Now about the dead rising—have you not read in the Book of Moses, in the account of the burning bush, how God said to him, ‘I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’? He is not the God of the dead, but of the living. You are badly mistaken!” Mark 12:18-27

Introduction:

We are all prone to take sides. This is natural and correct when it comes to siding with Jesus and being against evil and unbelief. We should take sides with all God’s people. Jesus said: “Whoever is not against us is for us”.

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However, it’s unfortunate that many Christians take sides against other Christians, thereby dividing the church when Jesus’ main goal is that we should all be one. In this meditation, we will examine ourselves to make sure we’re on the side that unifies and not that divides. What can we agree with, and what must we stand against?

Are you not in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God?

Knowing the Scriptures:

- Jesus quoted from over 24 books of the Old Testament over 180 times. Daily reading, memorising and meditating on the scriptures is as important as eating food. If we really want to be healthy and successful then a balanced diet including positive and what we might think of as negative passages is essential. There are many passages to encourage us such as “Those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will

run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.” Isa 40:31. But there are also many passages such as “Better a poor but wise youth than an old but foolish king who no longer knows how to heed a warning” (Eccl 4:13) or in the New Testament: “avoid foolish controversies and genealogies and strife and disputes about the Law, for they are unprofitable and worthless. (Tit 3:9)” Paul said to Timothy: “From infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness” 2 Tim 3:15,16

Knowing the scriptures also helps us to build and maintain unity with other believers, and cautions us who to pray for or admonish. Here are some issues that the scriptures clarify:

Praying and working towards unity:

Jesus and Paul clearly make the unity of the body of Christ first priority. Jesus’ prayer before he went to the cross was: “My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me.” Jesus’ goal stated here was clearly unity, and with a purpose “that the world may believe”. So our goal should be the same. This means being sure of what we believe so we can confidently work at unity with those who believe the same.

**All Scripture is
Gods-breathed**

Unity in the home

Real faith is first shown by our love for one another in the home, and it’s this that takes the most effort. Reading the Bible together, memorising the scriptures together and praying together; all these help enormously to keep and develop the precious gift of unity that the Lord so much desires. As we read the scriptures, we face together the truths of how relationships should be – submitting to one another, not getting angry: “you must also rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips” (Col 3:8), etc. As we read these verses, it drives us to pray together and plead God’s mercy that we should change and do as the scripture says. There will always be a battle here as it’s the home that the Enemy targets the most when he attacks the church.

Unity in the congregation:

As we work at unity in our households, so the fruit should automatically be glorious unity in our congregations.

Unity with Christians in our neighbourhood: This is not the first time we’ve

addressed this theme because it's something that is sorely needed in the Church at large. In the next section we explore some more thoughts about this precious topic:

How broad is the church?

The expression “a broad church” is usually taken negatively. However, a simple believer, a lover of Jesus Christ with Jesus in his heart, will always want to be one with as many other Christian neighbours as possible. The problem comes when they diverge from Jesus' clear teaching in His New Testament. Of course, the Enemy is always trying to introduce false doctrine to divide; this is why we need to be really clear about what His New Testament teaches:

Sexuality:

Jesus and His New Testament clearly state that marriage is between a man and a woman and that sex is for marriage only. We need to avoid argument and controversy wherever possible, but where others try to promote other forms of relationship, we need to pray seriously about how much we can express unity with them. The expression “love the sinner but hate the sin” is a good maxim. Jesus and Paul also declared that if we are able to, remaining single and chaste is a high calling as it allows us to concentrate on glorifying God without distraction.

Different sects and Christian branches: Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, Roman Catholics, liberal churches, etc

Apparently about one in 500 people in the UK are Jehovah's witnesses and about the same number are Mormons – two groups who vehemently oppose each other. About 1 million people go to a Roman Catholic mass on Sunday. Many Christians attend churches that are not clear on issues of the uniqueness of Jesus Christ, sexuality and other issues.

We need to go to the teaching of Jesus and His New Testament to see which things are true; and we need to be deeply humble and not judgemental. We won't be saved by belonging to the right church, but by throwing ourselves on Jesus, believing in Him and pleading for Him to have mercy on us.

We should as far as possible be at peace with all men and not enter into dispute with other believers, but be aware of the truth and make sure it doesn't get eroded.

*Are you not in error because you do not know the Scriptures **or the power of God?***

The Greek word for the power of God is “Dunamis” from which we get the word “Dynamite”. It is the explosive energising that wells up from the inside like

streams of living water, motivating us and giving us power to do the works that Jesus did.

Jesus said to the disciples before the day of Pentecost: “you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” Acts 1:8. The Spirit in Greek is “Pneumatōs” meaning “filled with wind or air”. Jesus said that the Holy Spirit is a gift for which we need to ask: “Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. “Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!” Luke 11:9-13

Conclusion:

Just as a bird needs two wings in order to fly, so we too need to be in balance, strengthening both our knowledge of and meditating on the scriptures while crying out to God to have mercy on us and fill us with the dynamic wind of His Spirit. As we make this our daily practice, so we will grow into balance and fruitful Christians, giving glory to our creator.

Your Father in heaven will give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!

The centre of the scriptures is Jesus Christ Himself, who is the Word of God. By His word the worlds were formed

Memory verses for this theme:

Are you not in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God? Matthew 22:29

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness 2 Timothy 3:16

You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. Acts 1:8

“...be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord. Eph 18,19.

Songs: Jesus...your word is a lamp; Holy Spirit rain down.