

Raising IT Higher

- Survey by TIME magazine among 440 people aged between 16-29 claims:
 - a. 9/12 have negative perceptions of the church
 - b. 87% - church judgmental
 - c. 85% - hypocritical
 - d. 75% - church too involved in politics
- Another poll in the UK, 1/3 thought Christianity will still exist in 100 years

Our Response

Daniel 3:14-18

and Nebuchadnezzar said to them, Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, that you do not serve my gods or worship the image of gold I have set up? Now when you hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipes and all kinds of music, if you are ready to fall down and worship the image I made, very good. But if you do not worship it, you will be thrown immediately into a blazing furnace. Then what god will be able to rescue you from my hand? Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego replied to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter. If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to save us from it, and he will rescue us from your hand, O king. But even if he does not, we want you to know, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up.

Raising our Standards

SIN

1 Peter 1: 14-16

As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: Be holy, because I am holy.

Ephesians 5:3-6

But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people. Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving. For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person—such a man is an idolater—has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no-one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God's wrath comes on those who are disobedient.

Raising our Standards

SIN

Mark 9: 43-47

If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life maimed than with two hands to go into hell, where the fire never goes out. And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life crippled than to have two feet and be thrown into hell. And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into hell

Raising our Standards

SIN

- God takes sin very seriously
- Consequences of our sins
- Setting our standards higher, on what would Jesus do, what would our parents do, what would the church elders do?

Ephesians 4:1

As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received.

Raising our Standards

SACRIFICE

Romans 12: 1

Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God – this is your spiritual act of worship.

1 Peter 2: 4-5

As you come to him, the living Stone— rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to him - you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

Greek word for acceptable 'Euarestos'. Meaning well pleasing or accepted

2 Samuel 24: 18-25

On that day Gad went to David and said to him, Go up and build an altar to the LORD on the threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite. 19 So David went up, as the LORD had commanded through Gad.

20 When Araunah looked and saw the king and his men coming towards him, he went out and bowed down before the king with his face to the ground.

21 Araunah said, Why has my lord the king come to his servant? To buy your threshing-floor, David answered, so that I can build an altar to the LORD, that the plague on the people may be stopped.

22 Araunah said to David, Let my lord the king take whatever pleases him and offer it up. Here are oxen for the burnt offering, and here are threshing-sledges and ox yokes for the wood.

23 O king, Araunah gives all this to the king. Araunah also said to him, May the LORD your God accept you.

24 But the king replied to Araunah, No, I insist on paying you for it. I will not sacrifice to the LORD my God burnt offerings that cost me nothing. So David bought the threshing-floor and the oxen and paid fifty shekels of silver for them.

25 David built an altar to the LORD there and sacrificed burnt offerings and fellowship offerings. Then the LORD answered prayer on behalf of the land, and the plague on Israel was stopped.

Genesis 4: 3-7

In the course of time Cain brought some of the fruits of the soil as an offering to the LORD. But Abel brought fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock. The LORD looked with favour on Abel and his offering, but on Cain and his offering he did not look with favour. So Cain was very angry, and his face was downcast. Then the LORD said to Cain, Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast? If you do what is right, will you not be accepted?

Heb 11: 4

By faith Abel offered God a better sacrifice than Cain did. By faith he was commended as a righteous man, when God spoke well of his offerings

Here we learnt 2 things:

- He was righteous
- He offered fat portions (the best) from the firstborn of his flock (most precious)

Colossians 3: 23-24

Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.

- Studies / work

1 Sam 15: 22 – 23

But Samuel replied: Does the LORD delight in burnt offerings and sacrifice as much as in obeying the voice of the LORD? To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams. For rebellion is like the sin of divination, and arrogance like the evil of idolatry.

- Church Activities (song leading, devotion, careteam lessons, bible class, etc.)
- Physical Appearance

Sacrifice that costs us

John 12: 1-5

Six days before the Passover, Jesus arrived at Bethany, where Lazarus lived, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. Here a dinner was given in Jesus' honour. Martha served, while Lazarus was among those reclining at the table with him. Then Mary took about a pint of pure nard, an expensive perfume; she poured it on Jesus' feet and wiped his feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. But one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, who was later to betray him, objected, Why wasn't this perfume sold and the money given to the poor? It was worth a year's wages.

Conclusion

Matthew 5: 13 – 16

13 You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men.

14 You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden.

15 Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house.

16 In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.