

November 7, 2014: Fearful Bride

'If we are to evangelize the "prostitutes and sinners," it demands that we be secure enough and mature enough in our own freedom to not be evangelized by them.' Christopher West

Exposed by loving eyes and primed with living water, the Samaritan 'bride' raced off to tell others the good news about Jesus. Newly kindled faith made her fearless. All she wanted was for her friends to know 'this man who told me everything I ever did.' (Jn 4:29)

And guess what? 'They came out of town and made their way toward Him' (v.30); many became believers as they heard Him and attested to the fact that 'this man really is the Savior of the world.' (v.42)

Jesus really is the Savior of the world—beautiful and strong enough to draw real sinners and transform them through the miracle of His dynamic presence. On paper, few Christians disagree with this but in practice we doubt His power. What else explains our fear-based approach to sinners?

I have seen a retreat among many colleagues of mine in the day of 'gay marriage' and litigation for any act that can be interpreted as 'anti-gay.' Our blogs and Facebook posts are full of disturbing new gender-bending advances. We talk about the holy remnant, the shrinking faithful, and the need for higher firewalls to protect the few from infection.

False liberties tempt us to create a 'we-them' mentality. When we conceive that temptation, the faithful retreat in fear and strategize ways that the church can withstand the deluge. I understand this, and some caution is not unwarranted. The gay agenda is just that and seeks to rout out truth, especially from the church.

But the Church is the Church, against which hell will not prevail. We have Jesus' transforming beauty on our side! We do not need to construct a more water-tight ark; we need to equip and commission simple rescue boats to save lives enslaved by many lovers. I am convinced that a generation weaned on gay-friendly everything is crying out for living water. 'Gay' freedom kills. Jesus saves.

Weary veterans of the culture wars need to reenter the waters of Life again. Like the Samaritan 'bride', we need to hear the voice of the One who exposes our fearful, self-protective ways and who gives us mercy in exchange. Let mercy alone guard us. May mercy overcome fear and motivate us to proclaim the freedom only Jesus Christ offers.

'There is no fear in love. Perfect love drives our fear...The one who fears is not made perfect in love.' (1 Jn 4:18)

Please join us as we pray for:

1. **Northern California:** Peter Kockelman - Coordinator: For continuing strength and vision for Peter and group leaders in the region.
2. **Living Waters Lithuania:** For the Lord to continue to strengthen and protect the leaders Vilma Karveliėne and her team; for translation of the revised Living Waters guidebook to go forward smoothly.
3. **Encourage:** Bob and Susan (National Overseers) - For grace to equip and unify chapters of Courage around the country.

"Courage for Pastor Phil Strout (National Director Vineyard USA), that he would ensure that the Church becomes a clear fountain of transformation for persons with same-sex attraction!"

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