

Developing a Resilient Faith

Sermon by Andy Sochor

Text: 1 Peter 1:3-9

I recently read the book, Faith for Exiles: 5 Ways for a New Generation to Follow Jesus in Digital Babylon by David Kinnaman and Mark Matlock. The book described how living in today's godless and digital society is like living in exile (like Babylonian captivity). Based on research of 18-29 year olds who grew up in "church," the authors found five practices that were common among "resilient disciples." These practices are Biblical, which makes them helpful for us to be faithful today and to help guide the next generation. So let us consider these five practices that are common for "resilient disciples."

#1 – Our Faith Needs to Be Our Own

- Paul spoke of the role that Timothy's mother and grandmother played in his spiritual growth (2 Timothy 1:5) – yet THEIR faith had to become HIS faith; we are individually responsible to follow the Lord (2 Corinthians 5:10)
- This faith needs to be in the real Jesus, not society's version of Jesus – He does not change (Hebrews 13:8)

#2 – We Need to Seek God's Wisdom Over Worldly Wisdom

- As we live in an increasingly godless society, worldly wisdom becomes more prevalent/accepted – yet the wisdom of the world will not lead us to God (1 Corinthians 1:21); true wisdom starts with the fear of the Lord (Proverbs 9:10)
- We are not to be conformed to the world, but transformed (Romans 12:2)

#3 – We Need Meaningful Relationships with Other Christians from All Age Groups

- This stresses the importance of the local church (Hebrews 10:24-25) – the pandemic has put a strain on this; but it is more important than ever
- This also stresses the importance of relationships that extend beyond the assembly (Acts 2:46) – relationships with more than just peers

#4 – Our Faith Needs to Be Part of Every Area of Our Lives

- We cannot act like a Christian and "go to church" on Sunday and ignore the Lord the rest of the week – in everything we do, we are to do it for the Lord (Colossians 3:23)
- We are to be letting our light shine to others (Matthew 5:16) – our example can help lead others to the Lord

#5 – We Need to Set Aside Our Will and Focus on Fulfilling Our Purpose in Christ

- The world encourages us to do whatever is personally fulfilling – we need/have a greater purpose; we are to follow the example of Christ (Philippians 2:5-8); do His will no matter the cost
- We are to take up our cross and follow Him (Luke 9:23) – give our lives over to Him

Conclusion

- There are challenges that come with living in “digital Babylon” – yet there is also hope for us and for the next generation
- We/they can be “resilient disciples” – yet we need to work toward this and train others to become this
- YOU have to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God – no one can do that for you
- YOU have to recognize that the world does not have all the answers – look to God
- YOU have to develop relationships with those who are people of faith – more than just your peers
- YOU have to be consistent in your life – every part of it is to be governed by faith
- YOU have to put the will of the Lord ahead of your own – this is our purpose in this life