

More Than a Motto — the Fight Between Truth and Modern-Day Values



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**Obedience. Courage.
Influence. Conviction.**

According to the New Testament, these are traits that are to define the life of Christ followers. These are not offered as optional suggestions that a believer may consider. **They are characteristics that each Christian is commanded to cultivate and model.**

We are to obey the teachings of Christ, our Savior (Luke 6:46). **Believers are to live**

courageously, seeking not popularity, but the Lord's approval (Galatians 1:10).

Those who have accepted Jesus' gift of salvation are to shape their lives and priorities around God's revealed truth. Believers are also to persuade others about those Biblical truths that may not be known or accepted by the culture at large (II Timothy 2:2; II Timothy 3:12-17; Jude 1:20-23).

Christians are to speak truth — even when truth is unpopular (Gal. 1:10)

Stand up for biblical truth today, and you may find yourself standing alone. But be assured: Jesus is with you!

A contrast of two legacies

Two news items recently garnered much press: the death of former Pope Benedict XVI (also known as Joseph Ratzinger) and noted Christian music artist Amy Grant's announcement to host a lesbian wedding at her farm.

Ratzinger served as Pope from 2005-2013, and I believe will be remembered as one of the greatest defenders of core Christian doctrine in

recent memory. As a Cardinal, and later as Pontiff, he consistently stood for the biblical position on key issues of our day: marriage, abortion, homosexuality, gender, the deity of Jesus, Christ's resurrection, the authority of Scripture, objective moral truth, and more.

Ratzinger understood that God's revealed truth is objective (not based on personal opinion), timeless (not subject to the changing tides of culture), and unifying (Christians of all strata should rally around the core truths of the Gospel).

Upon his passing, the news media was mercilessly critical of his life of ministry. They called the late Pope "narrow," saying that he was Islamophobic, homophobic, and anti-abortion. But for a Christian, such barbs by the pagan press should be viewed as compliments. **Joseph Ratzinger was a man of conviction, courage, and influence. It was never his agenda to placate a God-rejecting world.**

On a very different note, as commentators opined on Pope Benedict's legacy, popular contemporary singer Amy Grant made

headlines for hosting (and paying for) her niece's "gay" wedding. Amy Grant has become wealthy and well-known creating music for her Christian fan-base. Known primarily as a "contemporary Christian" singer, it might be assumed that Grant would live and uphold biblical positions.

This public condoning of a lesbian wedding is not the first time Amy Grant has generated shock and pushback from her Christian fanbase. But when called upon to justify her hosting of a gay wedding, Grant stated, "Love God, love people. That is what I'm called to do."

On the surface, this sounds like a great motto for life. But Christians are responsible to live out more than just catchy slogans, we are called to align with and proclaim "the whole counsel of God."

Amy Grant may believe that talk of 'love' avoids a public relations issue with her fanbase. But if we're tempted to stay silent on things about which Scripture speaks loudly, this question should be asked: **"Is it truly loving (and honest) to give tacit approval to a lifestyle that Scripture says if not**

repented of will keep people out of heaven?” (Romans 1:24; I Corinthians 6:9-11; Ephesians 5:3).

The differences between truth and values

With the privilege of salvation come the obligations of discipleship. In putting our faith in Jesus to be saved, we are agreeing to commit to live by His Word. If we accept the gift of “sonship,” we are also accepting the responsibility of “followship.” Believers are not left here to utter vague messages about “values;” we are to clearly speak truth that will be used by the Holy Spirit to convict sinners and draw them to the Savior.

Everyone has “values.” Christians, however, have been entrusted with the revealed Word of God. There is a big difference between “values” and “truth.” Values are a part of ever-changing cultures and people groups. Truth is eternal and unchanging. Scholars define truth “that which corresponds to reality.”

Values most often refer to our preferences and ideas. This is fine, so far as the “values” of which we speak line up with what God has said is true and right. But when it comes to matters of morality, human life, sin, redemption, eternity - people need exposure to more than subjective values. The human race needs truth.

Today, nebulous personal “values” are not the life preserver that can rescue a drowning America. People urgently need to hear truth.

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