

Salt

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“For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.” 2 Timothy 4:3-4

To start out, I guess I should say that I was saved four months ago. The gracious God Almighty opened my eyes to the lies that Satan had laid before my feet to trap me in his net. I was blind and being lead by those who were also blind. I was very unaware that I was about to fall into a ditch and perish for all eternity. Every day that I had lived was a blessing from God and another chance to repent and turn from my wicked ways. I was already half way through my first year of grad school and when I returned people immediately took notice of my difference.

I tried speaking to classmates one by one speaking of my testimony and how I thought my whole life that I was saved but in reality was greatly deceived. I didn't just pray a prayer, I prayed several of those little delicate calls to a false Jesus and I was falsely converted time upon time in my life. The more I expected people to be uplifted by these encouraging words of true deliverance from the bindings of sin in this world, I found alienation and earthly condemnation from my peers. They hated what I had to say. They thought I had entered into a cult and had scripture completely twisted. God calls us to be blameless, and after receiving the knowledge of the truth I had but one decision to make. I chose to follow God with a whole heart and give up everything I had to walk in his footsteps with my cross.

It only took me a short time of maybe a week or so to feel the deep burden for my fellow students and faculty members. Every single one of them is a professing Christian yet I found not a single person who I could rest my soul with and share my burdens. The days of my classes were the worst days of my week. I had to sit through a class where everyone gladly partook in conversations glorifying the very thing that hung the Lamb of God on the cross. I felt as though I was in a room full of people who had their eyes taken from them since birth. None of them knew what the world really looked like and how dark it was, even on the sunniest days. Through much rejection from classmates I eventually took my spot in the corner of the classroom where I definitely belonged and sat quietly sometimes going the whole day without saying anything. While others would have their laptops open and others would be texting, I held my Bible open under my desk on my lap and read it silently on my own, desperately praying for God to protect me from the evil communications that surrounded me.

My school believes itself to be a Christian university. Yet like most private universities it had no doctrinal backbone...at least in my department. I felt that every day I was in class Satan was walking around behind each one of my classmates sneering at me and laughing saying, “see what I have done to them? And you can't do anything about it”. I couldn't let them go through. I had to warn them of this road to destruction (Matthew 7:13-14)! I was horrified at what I was hearing and watching all around me. I could do nothing but leave class and go home to seek God and cry for these lost souls. Me being alone in this community was no longer a factor, it was the growing burden for the hearts of everyone.

Just to understand some of the things that are being taught in my class, I will go through some beliefs my teachers have. Our mission statement for school is “To educate students for Christian service and leadership throughout the world”. My teachers tell me that in order to be a good social worker, we are to not bring up our faith...but instead show it through our actions. Professing our Christianity to others is completely forbidden in our Social Work Code of Ethics (rule book for my future profession). One teacher (who is the new Director of my program) described a time she had a lesbian client seeking counseling. My professor talked to the client for a short period of time and the girl told my professor that she came to the counseling session for help getting back together with her fellow partner. My teacher went on to describe to the class, the very obstacles that will arise when we are in practice. She went on to tell the class that she had a choice to make. She could either refuse the client and refer her to someone else, tell her it was wrong and “push” her Christian beliefs on her, or help her with what she wanted. She told us that she agreed to help her. She hid her faith and helped join two lesbians together.

Other teachers come in and make perverse jokes of crude TV shows that they watch at times while others promote other sin to the class. The worst part of this whole situation is that while they are telling everyone these things, the entire class is laughing. Not a single one has discernment against these things. It stunned me that these people were so easily swayed by men. Oh how will they ever face the judgment day of Christ without reproach. My heart sank deeper into my stomach.

Evidence-based practice in communities is another class I had a hard time attending. I was surrounded by ravaging wolves and if that wasn't bad enough, my teacher came in towards the very beginning of the semester and put on a DVD to help the class “better understand communities that we will be working in”. The language was like nails on a chalkboard, ringing throughout my head the rest of the day. Oh the profanity and nudity and vile affections that were being promoted in this video! Every other word was “GD” or “Oh my ___”. I hated it. I felt so burdened my hands began to tremble. I was angrier than I had ever been in my life. I went home that day ashamed of myself. How did I possibly sit through something so wicked? I tried looking down from the TV but I could still hear everything. I could barely look myself in the mirror. I called to God for forgiveness and told him I was desperately sorry for doing such a thing. I returned to class grieved and emotionally exhausted. Facing this class is like continuously facing the lake of fire while people are being lined up to be thrown in it.

I expressed some concern to a classmate who I had been attempting to witness to and all she could say was “well I don't care what you think about it, I love it!” I tried to express to her that if we love the Lord we hate sin (Psalm 97:10). And if we claim to be Christians and walk in Jesus' footsteps while at the same time walking in sin, we are liars and the truth is not in us (1 John 1:6). Conviction quickly came across her face and she looked down and away from me. Upon returning to this class a second time, my teacher announced that we will be watching *The Wire* again but not only this time, for the rest of the semester. He said if any of you don't feel comfortable watching it, let me know. He put it on for everyone to watch and I quickly grabbed all of my books and purse and proceeded to sit next to him to talk to him. He asked, “are you going to sit next to me while we watch it?” but I replied, “I can't, I can explain later but I don't believe in watching this show”. He sent me the alternate assignment since I missed the source I was to write a paper on. In this email I conveyed my deep and growing concern. Psalm 101:3 says *“I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes, I hate the work of them which turn*

aside". This verse seemed to do no good to him.

Every class I proceeded to leave and go to the library. People were so mesmerized by the sin being conveyed in the TV show that they didn't even notice I was gone. For the couple of people who did know why I left, they told other classmates that it was "disrespectful" and "made the teacher feel bad to where he couldn't show anything in class". Eventually my teacher sent out an online survey to the class asking their thoughts on *The Wire*. I believe this is where he was a bit confused on whether he should show it or not again next year. The survey was free response so I could write as much as I wanted. He wrote in the beginning to be open with our concerns and that it was going to be completely anonymous. I believe if he could, he would take the survey back and never send it out. I felt so compelled to warn him of the willful sin in his life because I knew the path that he was on was leading straight to eternal damnation.

I filled out the survey which in the end would probably total around 8 pages or so of verses, links to sermons, links to videos, and my own commentary. I told him I was concerned for his soul and that everything I mention comes from a heavy heart. I sent my warning out and his blood was taken off of my hands. I felt hopeful that this could cause an awakening in his life and God could use it to open his eyes to the truth. I only wanted him to live.

I eventually became completely alienated from my classmates and faculty members. Although I daily tried to be kind to them and shine as much as I could for the Lord, it was difficult nonetheless to reach the countless hearts of iron. I began to have to lean on God more than ever in my life throughout this past semester. Since December I have had my family turn their back on me, my friends stop talking to me altogether and God's word became more and more alive to me. God showed me what it meant to be totally excommunicated from the world as I once knew it and to follow him alone down the path to heaven. The director of my program who is also another teacher of mine constantly talks about how much she loves Eminem. She always wants to listen his songs and wants to "teach a class on it one day". I felt so compelled to warn her as well, so one day I went into her office and said hello and asked if I could show her a video that was very helpful to me. I went to www.goodfight.org and clicked on the link for Eminem. I clicked play, handed her a CD with Christian music on it to encourage her and asked her to let me know what she thought of the video and I left (I was running late for class).

Although I never got a response or reaction to the video or music I gave her, I knew it could only lead to a strong conviction. People know these artists and shows are pure evil yet they continue to uphold them above loving God and still continue to complain about how bad the world is today. After school got out (thank the Lord!) I received an email from this same teacher. She asked me to meet her in her office to "have a chat" so I met her. She closed her office door and sat down and told me she was "deeply concerned for me". I have had nothing but problems with this teacher all year long. This specific teacher is in control of our entire graduate program and I can honestly say she hates me. In class she would call on me and then when I would try my best to ask a question or answer one of hers, she would proceed to roll her eyes and disregard everything as stupid. She nearly put a failing grade on all of the papers I had written in her class for reasons I have yet to know. Double mindedness would be an understatement to describe this teacher's attitude towards me and other people in the class. One day she would pretend like she loved me so much and other days she would smile with her mouth yet murder me with her eyes.

After we began to talk in the office, I knew immediately that this was going to be a rough conversation. I prayed to God for strength and that he would quicken his Word to my mind. I knew that this was probably going to be the last time I would ever talk to her. I sat up in my chair and proceeded to just nod and endure with silence the endless list of corrections she had for me as a person. I would try to speak up and tell her through scripture my reasons for acting the way I do and talking to people like I do. She asked immediately, “Where is this in the Bible?” I told her several verses and she went to go get a Bible. The Bible she got had several translations in it and I proceeded to recite the KJV of it. She told me that she doesn’t like the KJV and I reminded her of those “ridiculous” people who only believe in reading the KJV. I read from another version the different verses that showed her that we are in fact called to edify, reprove, rebuke, and exhort people around us. On top of this we are to judge people by their fruits they bear. Although she was barely listening I could sense a conviction in her. She sharply remarked that this is not about Christianity but instead about “you Stephanie...you, you, you, you...guess who this is about...not me!...YOU!”

She proceeded to cut me off from speaking a single word for a good hour telling me that I had “no right” to talk to people in higher positions than me about their faith when in fact they are “walking in the faith”. She told me she had shoes older than me and that because I was only 21 I was just a baby. I gave her a short version of my testimony telling her that I thought my whole life I wasn’t saved because of the sin I was indulging in was something that God hated and I loved it. I tried as hard as I could to speak about something but every time a verse was quickened to my mind I was immediately cut off with rude and hateful remarks that were aiming straight for my heart. I was trying so hard to pray to God for help while hearing what she was saying. Before I ever mentioned anything about her salvation she said in an angry tone, “Okay Stephanie, so you are the sinless person and I am the condemned sinner going to hell in a bucket...you are saved and you came to tell me about salvation...you think you can condemn me?...I don’t think so!” I tried to explain that edifying meant both warning and encouraging but I never got to tell her this due to my short openings to speak.

I replied, “I know you don’t want me here in your office right now”, and she sharply interrupted, “I never said that...you are putting words in my mouth” only moments before telling me to get out of her office. I knew my time was short in there and I was about to be “excused” from our meeting so I tried to tell her the best I could while holding back tears that I cared about her and I was worried for her. I tried to bring up more scripture but only managed to fit a few verses, one of them being 1 John 1:6 “If we claim to have fellowship with him and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth”. She told me, “Okay, I don’t want to hear any more scripture. That means nothing to me. Jesus lives in my heart. Don’t you know that Jesus is love? I mean, Stephanie, what is God’s greatest commandment?” I replied, “In Matthew 22 it is to trust in the Lord with everything we have”. She looked a little confused and said “yes, to Love the Lord”. I told her, “we need to trust in the Lord with everything we have and to love our neighbor as ourselves”. I tried to go on to explain the differences because if we were to “trust” in our neighbors all the time, we would be running around in circles of confusion. But yet again, I never got the chance to even say this. My professor is a person who believes it is “disrespectful” to say anything in disagreement with her.

She went on to ask me, “Is it true that you read your Bible while sitting in class?”. I said, “Yes, I sit with it under the desk where no one can see it”. I assume the teacher knows I read it because it’s on top of my desk during breaks or the students say something to the professor. She asked

me if I thought that was a responsible choice and I replied “no, probably not”. I probably shouldn’t have been reading it in class but in all fairness I can honestly say the entire class is texting, talking, writing notes, or not even paying attention at all. If the world could see how painfully empty the discussions were in our class, they would understand. Reading my Bible was a way of escape. She went on to tell me that what I said in my survey to my other professor was “inappropriate” and should never have happened. She went on to tell me that I should apologize to him for saying such things such as he was “going to hell”. Of course I never told him this directly but instead that I was “concerned for his soul”.

I can’t even go into the other parts of the conversation we have because they are nothing different than what is mentioned above. They are just pure hatred. She asked me in a demeaning tone, “Why is it Stephanie, that you have so many people alienate themselves from you and I am surrounded by so many people?” I took a deep breath and looked her straight in the eyes and said, “Woe unto you when men speak well of you, for so did the Pharisees of the false prophets”. She hysterically laughed and got up and said, “Okay, now I want you out of my office!” I wanted to say, “See, I told you that you did not want me here” but I refrained from doing so. I got up and tossed a CD with sermons on her desk and proceeded to walk out. I stopped at the door way and told her “I love you Dr. Brice, even though you don’t think so” and she said “Do not tell me those words, I don’t even want to hear it!”

She told me that “I should go live in a cave” if I am to separate myself so much from the world. I thought it was a good idea. If only I could do it with a clear conscience. God tells us in Mark 16:15 to go out into the world and to preach to every creature. We are called to be in the world but not of the world. It doesn’t take me watching a film such as “The Passion of Christ” for me to remember in my day to day life that I should die to myself because he first died for me. Every morning I wake up, I want to fully die to every single one of my desires. People are being skinned alive and martyred in countries all over the world. Jesus is calling people everywhere all over the world to come and follow him and be his disciple. The day I die will be the happiest day of my life, for I know that I will be able to stand and hear God say, “well done, good and faithful servant”, but until then, I am going to be running the race as hard and as fast as I can towards his throne. People WILL find it offensive, judgmental, angry, and hateful, but I know the truth. I have it written on my heart. Plus, our life is like a vapor anyways, we don’t even know if we will live tomorrow. We all have a choice to make, I don’t know about the rest of the world but I choose life.

*Only one life
‘Twill soon be past
Only what’s done for Christ will last
And when I am dying
How happy I’ll be
For the lamp of my life
Has been burned out for me.*