

"PINK JORDANS"

Date: March 13, 2022

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**THAT'S
NOT
HELPFUL**
A KESSID TEACHING SERIES

You are not going to enjoy today...

- I'm going to pick a bit of a fight this weekend. I'm speaking on being 'Savvy' in our approach to reaching the world with the gospel...
- Put On the New Self... (Vs) Colossians 3:1-17 – *"If then you have been raised with Christ..."*
- This is perhaps the most articulate description of what it means to be a Christian... Basically, this is 'Boss Level' Christian living...

Paul Continues... (Vs) Colossians 4:2-6 – *"Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving. ³ At the same time, pray also for us, that God may open to us a door for the word, to declare the mystery of Christ, on account of which I am in prison— ⁴ that I may make it clear, which is how I ought to speak. ⁵ Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of the time. ⁶ Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.*

Jesus is the one who started this concept:

- He described His followers as the 'salt of the earth' in Matthew 5 as part of His Sermon on the Mount...

(Vs) Matthew 5:13 – *"You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet."*

There were two purposes for salt in the first century – "Salt: Preserving food and enhancing flavor."

Salt as a preserver...

- By using this salt metaphor, Jesus may have meant that His disciples are called to be "preservatives" in the world, slowing down the advancement of moral and spiritual decay.

(Vs) Psalm 14:3 – *"They have all turned aside; together they have become corrupt; there is none who does good, not even one."*

- Believers are to preserve truth and goodness in a fallen world.

Salt as a flavor enhancer...

- Jesus may have been instructing His disciples to “enhance” the flavor of life in this world —enriching its goodness and making God’s work stand out from the normal way of doing things.

(Vs) Luke 6:35 – “But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, for he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil.”

- As believers behave in ways that reflect God’s nature, they accentuate the difference that Jesus makes in one’s life.

All of this means we are supposed to be experts at loving, talking, and spending time with lost people...

- ... But we aren’t. We are generally terrible at it.
- Instead... This is how we communicate God’s “love.”

“God Hates...” Signs

- And, anyone who does it differently than this is torn to pieces... As Lukewarm or Cowards and Heretics...

Allow me to illustrate in a very messy way...

- One Big Request... Hold your emotions openhandedly. This is happening to you on purpose!
- Let’s start with an easy Illustration: These are my Pink Jordan 1’s
- Most Shoes come in different Colorways – these are my pink, black and white ones...
- Now depending on your opinion of shoes and shoe fashion, your initial response will be affected!
- You are going to judge what wearing shoes like these means. You may have an initial response, ranging from, “Love them! Super trendy,” to, “Pastor’s shouldn’t wear Jordan’s,” to “Boys shouldn’t wear pink!”
- **Quick Note:** I don’t have hundreds of pairs of shoes. I was a poor kid with 1 pair of shoes to last the school year. I wiped them down when I got home after school – I still do! I have had some of my shoes for 20 plus years!

Now, let’s make this a bit more complicated... Remember, hold those emotions!

- **Video:** Stephen Colbert and Dua Lipa...
- **Again... Be Aware:** “Your initial response to him as a person will usually determine whether what he said was acceptable to you or not.”
- It will have nothing to do with whether what he actually said was true, valid, or damaging... You’ll see him and think, “Oh, I hate Him,” or, “Oh, I love Him...” White, Male, Catholic, Trump Opposing, Foul Mouthed, Entertainer, Etc. ...

- The Point? As [poet] Robert Hayden said,
“We must not be frightened nor cajoled into accepting evil [as] deliverance from evil. We must keep struggling to maintain our humanity, though monsters of abstraction threaten and police us.”
- “...Accepting Evil as deliverance from Evil” ...
- Isn't that what this is? (More hate signs.)

You may think, “That feels like a misrepresentation or generalization of Christians across the board...”

- I'd have to acquiesce and confess that in some ways that's true, but I would also maintain that in other ways it is not.

Illustration: You are sitting today in a 'Non-denominational Church service.'

- This simply means that we are, in many ways, on our own, because Kessid was planted from scratch, and we received no financial support, but we are accountable to Scripture, The Holy Spirit, and Ourselves. We have Bible-Based, Biblical Elder Accountability, etc. but, there isn't a group of men back east that determine what we can or cannot speak about.

There's absolutely nothing wrong with Denominations...

- I grew up in multiple denominationally based and blessed churches, but when we planted Kessid, this is not the route we decided to take.
- You may say that's probably because no one would take your Hot Mess of a Pastorate! ;)

And then I would say, that's not true...

- We were 'shopped' 6 or 7 years ago and asked to ponder joining a national denomination.
- They offered to potentially buy us a building and move our ministry to the next level... In exchange, I would be asked to help other churches in the denomination plant in a healthy way.
- But, this also meant they could move me to anywhere they thought I could be useful... My Wife and the Church leadership declined.
- **FYI:** Being Nondenominational is, in and of itself, a sort of Denomination. So, don't take too much pride in acting like we figured something out.

Here's my point... Nobody has figured anything out!

- **For example:** The whole idea of denominations comes out of the reality we can't even agree on how we are supposed to worship God!

Denominational facts:

- There are more than 45,000 denominations globally.
- Although followers of Jesus span the globe, the global body of more than 2 billion Christians is separated into thousands of denominations...Pentecostal, Presbyterian, Lutheran, Baptist, Apostolic, Methodist — the list goes on.

You think that's rough?

- Did you know... We have about 50 main versions of the English Bible today.
- And, if we count revisions, we are well into the hundreds of Bibles.

Formal Equivalence

- Focuses on translating word-for-word and strives to be as literal as possible.
- Bibles that fall under the formal equivalence philosophy would be the ESV, KJV, and NASB.

Functional Equivalence

- Focuses on a thought-for-thought (Dynamic equivalence) translation...
- Its goal is to make the text easy to read and easier to understand. Bibles that fall in this camp would be the NLT and NIV.

Optimal Equivalence

- This is a balance of word-for-word and thought-for-thought were needed for the reader to better understand...
- The HCSB would be considered an optimal equivalence approach.

We as Christians seem to want to fight our battles over this stuff!

- **Back to our human punching bag, Stephen Colbert...** Shortly after the video clip of him and Dua Lipa came out, someone unexpected Tweeted support for how he handled the question asked of him... **Timothy Keller**, a well-known evangelical Professor and Pastor...
- The fairly-conservative magazine, *Christianity Today*, has said,

"Fifty years from now, if evangelical Christians are widely known for their love of cities, their commitment to mercy and justice, and their love of their neighbors, Tim Keller will be remembered as a pioneer of the new urban Christians."
- Timothy Keller's Quote:

"This is a brilliant example of how to be a Christian in the public square," ... "Notice the witness, but in a form the culture can handle. We should desire to have more Christians in these spaces and give them grace as they operate."
- He was destroyed for this comment! He eventually replied to those coming after him...

"Please do not make the error: if you cite person X at all you must answer for everything person X ever did or said," ... "That is not fair. I am merely saying, this is a winsome way to answer this question that we should desire to emulate."
- After receiving more pushback, Keller wrote in a follow-up tweet...

"Note: when you quote a person as an example in a particular moment, it doesn't mean you have to answer for that entire person's life for that quote to be valid. It's almost like those who do so don't want to deal with the material at hand."

- Finishing with...
"The recent post I made about Stephen Colbert's partial answer about his faith and the ensuing comments has shown me American Christians still have a long way to go on understanding Col. 4:5-6 'how to be' wise in the ways you act towards outsiders? This is called contextualization...."
- He goes on to teach... What is contextualization?
"Contextualization is... adapting your message to be understandable and compelling to particular hearers without compromising the truth in any way."
- Why contextualizing is important?
"Because it's how we as humans communicate. Everyone already does it, as soon as you choose a language to speak in and vocabulary."
- For example, look how Paul presents the gospel first to Believers in Acts 13, then Blue-Collar Pagans in Acts 14, and then Educated Pagans... in Acts 17.
- Paul is constantly calling us to contextualization without compromise in...

(Vs) 1 Cor. 9:19-23 – "For though I am free from all, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win more of them. ²⁰ To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law, I became as one under the law (though not being myself under the law) that I might win those under the law. ²¹ To those outside the law, I became as one outside the law (not being outside the law of God but under the law of Christ) that I might win those outside the law. ²² To the weak, I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some. ²³ I do it all for the sake of the gospel, that I may share with them in its blessings."

- FYI: Jesus as both God and Man, the incarnation, was itself a kind of contextualizing, so we could understand— He was the Word made flesh. – Touchable!
"Contextualization is making your words touchable."

We are called to be a touchable people... To be a blessing to this world like Christ is a blessing to us...

- Also, like Christ we are called to hold our "touch-ability" ... Our influence, authority, and callings "Openhandedly."
- In this way, we both receive the blessings of His love and share it with others not as a burden, but a blessing....
- The only way I know to do this is by remembering and not forgetting why He came in the first place...

(Vs) Luke 19:10 – "For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."

- That's the ultimate point!
- **Final Encouragement...** To all those who have been abused and kicked around by the Church... Please know that Christ is for you...
- May you also hold your emotions open handedly!

MESSAGE APPLICATION QUESTIONS

PONDER

1. What about the message did I feel...
 - Inspired about?
 - Convicted by?
 - Sadness, grief, or loss about?
 - Curious about?
 - Hopeful for?

EXPERIENCE

2. Did anyone have a "Wow!" moment during the message that resonated in you? If so, what was it? (Could be a new scripture/Bible story you've never heard, a profound concept, etc.)

LEARN

3. What new/fresh thing did I learn about God? What new/fresh thing did I learn about myself?

APPLY

3. How can I challenge myself this week with what I've learned? What might responding well look like?