

The importance of upholding the moral code of Scripture and its connection to the preaching of the gospel

1 Background

This Essay is based on the experience of a one year trip around the world. I did this trip with the question on my mind:

„Does it make a difference to be a Christian, or not?“

2 God desires all people to be helped ...

1. Tim 2,4 God desires all people to be saved. The German translation says here, that God desires all people to be helped.

What would that look like? We will give loans to strengthen the economy, initiate developing programs, donate food or organize relief programs.

But God's ways are very different: and to come to the knowledge of the truth. What is that good for? What difference does it make to know that Jesus died for our sins? Lets read a passage from the Bible.

Matth. 11, 28 Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

All who labor and are heavy laden shall learn from him.

I observed, that geography is never the main problem, nor financial resources. Some Examples will make that clear. California has almost identical geographical circumstances as Mexico does. The economy of California is bigger than France's and everybody knows the way it looks in Mexico. The Ukraine has 11 meters of fruitful soil, the area in Germany where I come from has 0.3 m. In the Ukraine a lot of people still can barely survive. Germany has a common history of 1200 years and a separate history of 40 years. The economic situation in the east is not comparable to the situation in the west. This is not the first time in history that this happened. Cultures that were considered unconquerable completely vanished. Babylon was considered to be a biblical myth, until it was discovered in the 20th century, meters below the ground. Without its Pyramids, Egypt would just be one more third world country. Rome completely vanished from the map, Greece is a shade of it self. The former great Spain is being felt pity for, instead of being admired. The notable exception would be England in the 18th century, which in it's squalidness was no less then the ancient world. It

is described very well in the Biography of John Wilberforce and John Wesley. Just through the tireless efforts of men like John Wesley it was possible to save that nation from total destruction and lead it to the high moral time period of the Victorian era. Such a turn around is very unique in human history. There is no nation on this planet that accomplished such a thing without the help of God.

The difference between failure and success is determined in the head, not in circumstances or resources. To be able to make helpful decisions by knowing the laws.

3. A praise to the uniqueness and the great blessing of the Law of God

We would like to see how great the Law of God is. Why was the repentance movement of the English so superior compared to the French revolution. The first thing about the Law of God is, that it is directly from the creator of this universe. Neither did God conquer this planet, not did he press his Law upon it. It just describes the way God created this world. Some of the things that are described are so foolish to the human mind that he would never come up with this from within just by observing. There is no culture on this whole planet that ever came up with the idea that the information that is contained in the ten commandments would be the foundation of every successful society.

Just the ignorance of one commandment, sooner or later, leads every culture into great adversity. So God gave his people Israel a law for their country. That was more than necessary. If they had not gone to Mount Sinai first, after only 40 days they would have founded a new kind of Egypt. After they got the law through Moses it is interesting what they think about their law. Exemplary we would like to quote a few verses. In the meantime we would like to ask our self in which other country on this planet, we would find somebody else that talk's this way about the law of his country?

Jos 1,7 Only be strong and very courageous, being careful to do according to all the law that Moses my servant commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may have good success wherever you go. 8 This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.

Ps 1,2 but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night. 3 He is like a tree planted by streams of water

that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers.

Ps 19, 7 The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; 8 the precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes; 9 the fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; the rules of the Lord are true, and righteous altogether.

Ps 119,16 I will delight in your statutes; I will not forget your word. 17 Gimel: Deal bountifully with your servant, that I may live and keep your word. 18 Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of your law. 19 I am a sojourner on the earth; hide not your commandments from me! 20 My soul is consumed with longing for your rules at all times.

While the word 'law' can mean the Word of God which includes the Gospel, there is no question that to follow God's ways as in his right and wrong brings blessings.

This planet, made by God, perfectly suits humanity. The circumstances are perfect for the children of God. This planet was neither created by the devil, nor does it belong to him. This planet belongs to God and it was made for his children. One can destroy this world and live in adversity but does not have too. To know the laws God revealed, makes all the difference.

4 The miraculous equation.

In between we would like to bring something about laws to our mind. This creation is focused to „make your way prosperous, and to have good success“. There is not one Bible passage that talks about that God created something destructive, nor that he has anything destructive in his mind. There are two factors that create adversity instead of joy, even with the best intentions in mind. The necessary information is not available or the information is wrong. Both will, in the long run, lead to destruction for the majority of the people that are involved. Even the other ones won't feel happy, may be privileged.

The law of God describes the perfect balance between freedom and confinement. The trespassing of the essential set of laws are named as sins in the Bible.

So we determine, that the more we do right, the better for us. The more we do wrong, the worse for us. That is the core feature of right and of wrong. Matt. 1,21 says: She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." That means that Jesus

sets us free from our mistakes, which means from our self-destructive behavior patterns.

A Rabbi once said that, if we discover that we are doing something wrong, it is not enough to change because then we just replace one mistake by another. We have to go back to the ways of God. For me it is very impressive that Is. 53:6 mentions this as the reason of all the misery: All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. This would mean the more we do wrong the worse for us and the more we do right the better for us. God offers here that Jesus will free us from our mistakes. This is a very special offer, that we should do deeper studies on. It is especially interesting in what kind of situation this has been said. I do not think that the clergy of that time had the impression that something was wrong with their theology and that somebody would need to come to save them from their sins. The Pharisees had the impression that everything was just right. They knew exactly what sin was and what not. The actual drama was, that they thought everything was in order. But that was obviously not the case. He came to set them free from their hidden misinterpretations. And there were plenty of them. Reading 10 out 10000 pages of the Talmud is more than enough to understand why it was absolutely necessary that Jesus needed to come.

5 There is no acceptable alternative in the whole world

These destructive elements that are in the Talmud are hidden in every culture. Living outside the western world is a complete misery. Except on vacation, than one might be able to endure but living there with no way out, that is not nice to think about. We have to admit that all cultures on earth right now are by far inferior compared to the Christian culture. We also have to realize that all cultures that were trading their value system by a non-Christian concept, did not have too much luck with it. Otto von Habsburg, as the oldest son of the emperor of Austria, stated, that the European constitution without reference to God would be worthless. He, by far, would have been the last that needed to say that. His ancestors were kings and emperors for more than 700 years in the Holy Roman Empire of German Nations. No one ever had more power than his family but never the less, he makes such statement. The reason why he said so, was, because if the constitution does not refer to God, the government can do what ever is pleasing to it and no one can demand an account. For example a democracy decides that a certain group of people should be eliminated, it can be done by a majority vote.

Secular societies are meeting their limits very soon. The Nazi government collapsed after just 12 years, communism fell apart after 70 years. They were very weak forms of societies but even the Roman empire finally collapsed and completely vanished. Italy by the way is not the successor of the Roman Empire.

If I should summarize; pride, tradition and to blame others, is a very safe way to ruin a culture. And of course to consider the Law of God to be wrong.

In my opinion it is not the superiority of the Jewish or the German race that makes these people so successful all over the world but their strong orientation on the word of God and their consequent way of following.

6 What happens if it is not observed faithfully.

When an engineer discovers that something is not working as he meant to be, he would never come up with the conclusion, that the laws of nature are unjust toward him and that he should interpret them a little more generous. And after he does so, everything will be fine. The opposite is the case, he tries to figure out which law of nature he did not understand right. This way it is with the laws God has revealed too. By the way they are revealed not given. They are laws of nature and it does not make any sense to negotiate them. The only thing one can debate on, is, if one did understand them in the right way. There are denomination that encourage that kind of thinking. The Lutherans are not so good on that.

Ignoring one commandment out of the ten will cause a culture to fall or at least will cause major social/economic and such disadvantages.

7 What does Jesus says about the Law

A few Bible verses will clarify that:

Matt. 5, 19 Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

Matt. 23,1 Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples, 2 Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: 3 All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.

Luke 6,46 And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? 47 Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will shew you to whom he is like: 48 He is like a man which built

an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock. 49 But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great.

The whole case is very easy: But he that heareth, and does not, builds on sand. It can't be more obvious. Just with the awareness, that one is too weak to follow the laws one has not automatically built on rock. And it does not say hearing and trying or hearing and ask for forgiveness. No. It says hearing and doing. It can not be more obvious.

THE rock is Jesus that our faith is built upon. Then we seek to follow Jesus and build further.

8. Without God, there is no escape

To turn away from God, has so many disadvantages, that we have to avoid it by all means. Even if it appears that everything works out just fine and we think we can expand the rules a little bit. To do so, we have to weaken the fact, that the law of the Lord is perfect. That on the other hand has the consequence that we have to solve the next problem by ourselves because we decided that we know better. The next problem will certainly arise. Whenever we think we have everything under control, circumstances will change so dramatically that everything that used to work just does not work anymore. We then have to rethink major parts of our value system. We will face problems that just have no reference in history and can not be solved by reading books from the past. Since we have minimized God as the source of wisdom, we have to find the solution for our problems ourselves. As already mentioned, without turning to God, we subsidize one foolishness by the next.

A change of course for the better is impossible without God. Quit doing a sin will result in such a deficit that one loses faith in that action very easily. Only if we are sure that the maker of heaven and earth created it that way and that he only has the very best for us in mind, will give us the strength to continue as long as necessary, so that we can see the fruit. In addition he will give us the power and strength to proceed. All things are possible through Jesus.

People that try to help in third world countries can observe this pattern very often. Sometimes it is a very strange superstitious belief that

prevents further development very effectively. The fear that the superstitious belief might be true paralyzes whole nations. They tell the helper that all he says may work in Europe but here, there is a totally different situation and it will never work that way. But strangely enough, this is true for the western world too. The European and the North American culture have a hard time to accept advice from each other, even though both cultures are very close to each other.

9 What are our options?

The only option we have, is to expand the sphere of influence of the kingdom of God.

The two big questions for this concern are?

Is God able to? and

Does God want to?

Is God able too?

Yes. Whenever Jesus appears in his ministry, very large crowds are gathering. He equips us also with real power and potential.

Who is aware that we have him as influential and powerful brother on our side. His father created the whole universe in six days. Jesus is the son of God, we are the children of God and so he is our brother. How brothers stand to each other should be known to each one of us. And besides this, God is our beloved father that wants us to call him Abba. In addition to that, when was the last time in our Bible study group that we called ourselves the light of the world? And who would ever come up with the idea that the world would praise God for that??

Matt. 5,14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. 15 Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. 16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

In John 3,16 the Bible says "For God so loved the world (cosmos), that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." The one that wants to change the world has to change the heart of man. Every suffering on this planet, has it's root in a wicked heart of man. When the heart of man is pure through the blood of Christ (as in the beatitude) and listens to God's advice, every problem can be solved.

The question if God wants to, is clearly answered in the great commission.

10 The pastor is, the most important person in a state

We conclude:

The one that hears and that does not do, builds on Sand

The consequence would be that the highest priority of a pastor is, to take care that it is possible to build on rock. If that is not possible everything on this earth is in vain. Every talking, every desire and every acting a pastor does, is in vain. If there is no reliable possibility to build on rock, the whole life is a Sisyphus work. Everything one builds with his hands, one will tear down with his bud.

Jesus gives a clear statement:

Matth. 5,19 Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

What is the difference in the Old Covenant then? In the Old Covenant, the focus seems to be more on obedience with Israel preserved as a nation for Christ to be born. In the New Covenant the focus is much more on that man is also believing what he is hearing and believes that it is the best choice to act in that way. One can be obedient without believing that it is the right choice. If somebody believes that it is good and right he consequently will do so. If not he has to change his statement of what he really believes. So, to believe God is the key to a fulfilling life. This is true even in the Old Covenant. Consider Abraham. Rom 4,3 For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. (Gen. 15,6)

There is, parallel to the experienced world, a kingdom of God in this world. It is a very beautiful kingdom and more and more of its beauty is at hand for the children of God, the more they understand and follow the principles and laws of God. The task of the pastor is to show people how they can enter this kingdom and how to take advantage of its full potential. The gospel (the good news of God) is the power of God for salvation, Rom. 1:16.

Mark 1,14 Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, 15 and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."

Jesus starts to preach the good news, that his father gave him for mankind. Now he tells the good news: The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. At this point, the sermon is over. Now he tells what to do with this information: Repent and believe that: The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. This is the good news and this is what he wants us to believe and believe in, every other way of putting it is a manmade message.