Thinking

Through The Maze

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I said it years ago.  And man I'm alive and have seen with my own eyes.  Look at what has taken place in the year 2000.  My gosh; just three months into the year and the church appears in many corners to have gone mad!  Many that sat through my sermons and lessons, those that  stayed up listening to late night radio if they are still alive they would be able to say they see it for themselves.   With this new age of Christianity the African American as well as the Anglo American church in America has abdicated biblical orthodoxy for the sham of user friendliness.

What a waste of intellect for now we desire to be loved affirmed and famous.  Can you believe this madness?  Think through with me just for a little while.   We have evolved in our faith to the degree that we now demand  a certain aggressiveness which does away with Christian humility, integrity and passive piety that once waited on God; we have arrived finally, we've made it, success is the cry of the Christian church.  We have gone for the gusto and grabbed it, and love every moment of it!

Our striving for the strange kind of leadership from Pastors and Bishops that preaches a message of achievement and no accountability from anybody.  A take all kind of Christianity that suffers no casualties, for all is positive, affirmative, and latent with Cadillac's, BMW's, and Bentley's.  Our homes are high on the hill as we look down, we must manifest these qualities; if not, our fall from fame has become a sure sign that something is wrong with us.  If we have the material in this life, this is evident token He has manifested His life in us. The shame is that many professing Christian believes it!

Oh how successful we have become.  Look at our children, look at the schools that we send them to, as we dare not send them to those inner city hell holes where the losers attend.  It is like God "we suppose" to have that quality of attainment and achievement, after all we are Christians right?  We have that right?  God has elevated us to that place, Right?  Right!

I must admit, that as a Pastor and leader in the community at times I am ashamed to call myself by the name Christian.  I fear that the masses may look at TBN *(Trinity Broadcasting Network)* and acquaint me with that madness.  I try to smile as I give an answer for the hope that lies within me, then I sway to the left and then to the right when it comes to communicating what it means to be a believer in this user friendly society that we live in.  If an acquaintance of mine who is not a Believer ask me for insight into a better way of living; I would disguise my communication and mention Christian as a last alternative for fear of my friends misunderstanding of what my intentions were as I attempt to disclose my reasons for eternal hope.  After all, Jesus tells us to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves doesn't he?

Many men and women that claim the name of Jesus would shout to the highest mountain top that they would *"defend the faith with a passion that has never been expressed before.*"  These would say that this "John Coleman" has warned us for years, but look at the church, we have never been stronger.  Look at us!  We have broken down all of the barriers that separate us.  Look at us! No longer do denominational lines exist with their simple prejudices concerning those trite doctrinal issues that really don't matter in the first place.  They would yell back at me; "hey John, nobody is listening to you anymore.  You are outdated, your hear is gray, your teeth are falling out, you are not popular with the masses, we have chosen another way to gain the attention of a God that we now define as we change from those outdated doctrines that constrained us."

These would continue their cry; "Hey John", not only are you outdated, we will eventually smash you down, simply because it is easier for the masses to listen to us.  Look at all the glitter that we show them.  You have nothing to show for all of your work, "hey John Coleman"  You may mock us with your accusations of our greed; well it appears that the masses loves it, they keep giving us just what we want.  So keep it up "John Coleman, we are loving watching you fade into obscurity as we increase in our material gain as we hail ourselves as the saviors of mankind.

Nothing could be further from the truth my friends.  You see I know that there will always be more sinners than saints; I am reminded of this fact of life; Matthew 7:13 reads *"Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:"*   Jesus makes it perfectly clear that sinners will out number Saints.  I'm delighted when I see myself as a minority; not only as an African American but as a conservative Christian with time and grade on my side as I strive to proclaim a mean message to the masses who desire an easy approach to biblical Christianity.

I am not alone, or at least I don't think I am.  I recall in my studies years ago in Christian history of the past just before my birth and a short time after it; back in the thirties, a man called Dietrich Bonhoeffer.  This powerful German pastor stood firm amidst almost an entire church that had forsaken the mandate of God during the early stages of world war two.  Listen to his words and allow them to enlighten your hearts as you analyze this present age of cheap grace that we have become a part of by association as well as assimilation.  *"Cheap grace is the grace we bestow on ourselves . . . the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance, baptism without church discipline, communion without confession.  Cheap grace is grace without discipleship . . . Costly grace is the gospel which must be sought again and again, the gift which must be asked for, the door at which a man must knock. . . It is costly because it cost a man his life, and it is grace because it gives a man the only true life."* This great man was only 39 when he died.  The "SS" storm troopers of Hitler's Germany put an end to his earthly stance.  I greatly admire him.  He had the tenacity to say it even in the face of a people that went into a user friendly mentality.  I've gained courage from his life lessons. I see the reformer instinct in him.  I long to see this same instinct in many African Americans as we embrace the Christ that Dietrich did.

Can you see him in that pit in the concentration camp?  Can you see his life blood draining out of his beautiful body for a cause greater than eating steak and driving in a new Lexus?  Can you long to hear his last words as he understood that he would soon be in the presence of his blessed Jesus, his Lord, his love?  Could this great Saint of history past become an example for your life?  Would he embarrass you, would his zeal be asked of you a slight constraint?  Would you say that this German took his faith too seriously?

Oh American Christian, those of you who desire Benny Hinn to blow on your face in order to gain the power to raise dead people.  *(Oh yes, that man has stated as much)*  Oh you silly fool, looking at Fred Price and his Dome and seeking to become a part of success by way of bank.  *(Oh you demonstrate this as you go once a year and pour monies into his account with the hope of your financial recovery some day; "I give and a god will give to me.)*  Oh silly Saint; T.D. Jakes the new Billy Graham?  Cut me some slack brother; have you listened to this guy profess his slick social gospel, the way he twist the very meaning of the text of God's holy word?  Oh silly Believer; our sanctuaries have become entertainment palaces where star like figures, football players; rappers, ex-drug dealers street hustlers have become our pastors?

Oh fallen church age deluded followers of some strange kind of teaching; now we fall prey to Creflo who demands a slamming of the money before him as he brings us to a state of conscious guilt if we do not respond in an open forum to keep him rich.  Come on now people, when was the last time you thought the situation through?  Creflo Dollar?  Get it?

Could it be said that you would love to sat with Creflo and count his dollars than to die with Dietrich in a ditch in Germany; would the choice be difficult for you?  It would not be for me.  Bonhoeffer is indeed my brother.  He is very white and pale in face, me dark, and detached from Africa; both of us loving Jesus with such a passion that we both give up all for the truth of the gospel.  He in glory, me on the way.

We have come to the place where men do not speak like this in this modern era.  We have come to the place that we love to argue theology and defend our end of the conservative or liberal camp.  It is so convenient to do those things rather than to get into the hard core disposition of speaking the truth that will eventually bring us to exposure, condemnation and shame?  Are we as the body of Christ ready to go there?  Have we come to the place that thinking in this way is alien to the Christian faith?  Can it really be said that the faith is one that promises us safety and tranquility?  What faith is this that one speaks of no sorrow of heart?  What is this so called Christianity that brings with it choirs with silver voices but no commitment to life for Christ?  What faith is that that embraces homosexuality in the masses of the congregations and affirm it as a new lifestyle without guilt?  Have we argued our minds into the pit?  Indeed the so called church has, not the elect; no not yet, we are still here reading articles like this one and gaining strength. You see the influence of a static church, I recognized so many men in the church that had the very same tendencies that I possess. It was drilled in me from the start, and I addressed it by rejection of hatred; and the embracing of who I am.

Many in the Church has chosen the path of less resistance.  They have chased after the shadow and arrived at a place in history that no serious Christian could actually say that they are pleased to be called by that name.  If you have not yet arrived at this point, keep reading you really need this note from the desk of a Pastor that is not ready to give in to the actions of an age that has lost its way.

You really need to concentrate on reading the text of scriptures and not listening to men and God forbid; now women who claim to speak for God when in essence they need to repent of their great sin of rejection of all that God stands for in this time of madness in this new century.  *(Let me add Paul the Apostle did know what he was talking about in 1st Timothy 2:11-15)* Get your bibles and look it up.  If indeed God's word was inspired, it remains as such.  This new age church is not ordained of God.  Satan is having his way and so called men of God have given themselves over to this foolishness,  There I've said it; now do you believe it?

Let us look closely at this serious problems that has over taken the church in these few months of this new millennia.  First of all, nobody wants to properly address the false teaching of female pastors.  It appears that we are so frightened by the status quo, those popular theologians that claim to know for many have paved the way for a *"New Thing"*.  Have you disengaged your minds?  Is it true that one cannot come to know a things as being right or wrong unless that popular person has thought through the issue for us?

Stay in the habit of thinking through statements on your own, after studying the text of scripture.  Don't let others think for you.  Do not allow them to quickly read some so called quote without your doing the work of a detective for yourself.  Trust me my friend, you will save thousand of dollars, hundreds of hours and be able to sleep at night.  Listen, don't even trust me without investigation.  If I say something; try it, test it through the word of God.  If I imply something, ask me what I mean by the statement.  Think with me, not against me.  If you find me wrong, prove me as such with that bible in your hand.  You see my friend, you can ask me, you can tell me, you can correct me!  I am not the kind that will tell you that I am so anointed that you ought not dare approach me.  *(Don't fall for that line, are you a slave or what?)*

Care for yourselves you are a professing Christians, care for yourselves lest you find yourselves believing in these dangerous days things only fools would confide in.  Care for the correct doctrinal teachings that you, like so many people will not fall into the trap of a church that teaches that *"Doctrine is what screwed up the church in the first place." As stated by Fred Price*.  Take care for the hero mentality that has taken over the church will not influence you as you attend a fellowship in a state of low self esteem.  Care for yourselves if you are attending a church or a fellowship because some popular person, some worldly figure attends that assembly.

Why are we so impressed with the fact that any child of the world came to know the savior?  *(Are these any better than yourselves in human nature, is it such a task for Christ to save a sinner?)*  Are we taken back by that bus driver who use to beat his wife has come to Christ?  He is saved, would you love to speak of his conversion?  What of the hairdresser that was on crack cocaine last year that attends a small bible study with ten persons on a Friday night as she raises her daughter, will you take out the time and assist her in the development of that human being, her baby?  No you won't, why, because you are impressed with the tragic Magics of the mega churches.  You can't fool me, I see it all the time.

I hear it in the language of this new church, *"Guess who came to church last Sunday, and they sat right next to me?"* Could it have been Satan, and would you have known the difference?  Think with me my friend, is it all about that?  Tell the truth!  I know it is difficult, I've always thought like this as a Believer.  I was born in total poverty.  I was raised in the Will Rodgers County Projects during a time when the poorest of persons in Los Angeles lived there.  God saw fit to pull me up by His power.  Guess what, I still drive through and get out of my car and speak with the real people.

Where do you desire to live?  Would you move in the projects to minister to those whom God is calling if He deemed it necessary for the salvation of a few lost souls?  Are we inclined to move our churches on the west side where things are better?  Come on, you know how it is?  Right!  We don't want to be where God desires of us, we want to be where it is nice and safe.  Think it through with me today.  Get real in your faith.  Break away from the mentality of Jakes and Jones, Ulmer, Blake, Price, and Jackie Wilson, and the rest of the clowns that have taken over in the big city.

Support that lone man in that small congregation that is faithful to the word.  Take the time and make sure you are not falling under the guile of a ministry that is seeking to be popular among the people.  Don't look my way if God is not leading you there.  John Coleman is only one voice in the big city churches yelling loud and clear that danger is on the horizon.  When that call has run its course; John Coleman will be taken off of the scene.  As a matter of fact, he looks forward to the great day when God will say well done, my faithful servant.  *(Living there is better than living here)*

How about it reader?  Are you still thinking with me?  Must I do it alone?  Will you join the ranks of those that use their minds for once and a while?