

DEEPER LIFE CAMPUS FELLOWSHIP, CANADA

INTERACTIVE COUNSELLING/SEMINAR

TOPIC: LIVING IN AN ANTI-CHRISTIAN CULTURE

2Timothy 3:1-5

It is not an overstatement to say that Christians today are faced with the challenges of the perilous times (2Timothy 3:1-5). The challenges that confront the Faith of Christians in our societies continues to rise. Practices that were once considered shameful are now being celebrated in the world. There is a general loss or lowering of God's moral standards (Romans 1:26). Immoral acts are seen everywhere being practiced and approved by the majority and the church is not spared (1Pter 4:17). Degradation of moral standards from immorality to amorality (a state of total loss of morals) and lack of knowledge of God's word is evident in both the secular and spiritual circles.

In most countries of the world today, the influence of the society is huge and cannot be over-emphasized on the growth and development of Christian students/youths (1 Corinthians 15:33). The challenges of living in a non-Christian culture is becoming overwhelming for many Christian youths (2Timothy 3:1-3) and the continual ignorance or failure to learn what is right from God's word has given rise to the ugly pictures that surrounds us today.

In this interactive seminar, we would like to highlight what the world is doing to challenge our Faith and what we are to do as Christians when confronted with these challenges.

Everyday we see the word of God being perverted to create distrust in the Bible and redefinition of God's work in order to present God as imperfect or unjust before men. For example, gender and marriage are being redefined, humans are no more seen as only male and female, marriages are being approved to occur between different categories - father and daughter; mother and son; man and a young boy; a man and many women (polygamy); a woman and many men (polyandry); open marriage (no restrictions); marrying one's self; marriage to dead relatives; temporary marriage; trial marriage; marriage to animals (bestiality); marriage to dollies, etc. All these are beginning to get approval as they are being introduced in our academic curriculum while religious knowledge is completely removed from most schools around the world. This is similar to what the Psalmist saw in his days when he cried *"Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed, saying, let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us"* (Psalm 2:1-3).

All these are contrary to what God instructed in the Bible. God's word is clear about homosexuality. God created human beings as either a male or a female (Genesis 1:27; Matthew 19:4; Mark 10:6; Galatians 3:28) and homosexuality is clearly referred to as an abomination and a detestable act (Leviticus 18:22; 20:13). It is unrighteousness, unnatural, indecent and degrading passion; an act that will not allow anyone to enter God's kingdom (1Corinthians 6:9-10; Romans 1:26-28).

FIRST INTERACTIVE SESSION

- a. It is been argued that some people have their natural orientation towards being homosexual. The question to ask such people is if a person is also born with the orientation to lie or steal, does that make lying or stealing okay? If everyone must be approved based on what they feel about themselves, should lying/stealing-oriented-people also demand national rights based on their orientation and its resultant effect on the society?

- b. Recently a Christian student was asked to remove a Christian article he posted on the notice board in his department because non-Christians are not comfortable reading it while posters promoting non-Christian events on campus was not removed despite the fact that it is not comfortable for Christians either.
- c. In another scenario, pastors/churches who refuse to perform weddings for homosexuals based on their convictions are likely to get sued? However, if a business refuse to do a job for a client or customer based on their policies, no lawsuit is filed against them?
 - o Why do you think sensitivity is not being shown towards the Christians today?

SECOND INTERACTIVE SESSION

Looking at the present societal distress, how can Christians exercise their faith in an anti-Christian society, especially when confronted with any question or issue as to whether right or wrong?

Considering the present societal distress, myriads of temptations of whether right or wrong and the need to walk circumspectly to ensure we do not take any step that would lead us of the kingdom of God, how can Christians exercise their faith in an anti-Christian society? Since Jesus overcame using the word, we too can overcome if we rely on the written word of God.

1. Using the account in Matthew 4: 4,7,10, how can praying regularly and studying the Bible to understand what God wants us to do at every given time help us to take the right decisions in life?
2. According to Romans 1:32, how can we truly understand the nature of sin, to the intent that we would avoid and never support it?
3. In an anti-Christian culture, how can we demonstrate boldness and courage in doing and standing for that which is right as commanded in Proverbs 1:10?
4. It has been noted that if a believer could take time to think and prayerfully examine his/her actions and reactions using the word of God, taking the right decision would be much more practicable. For example, by asking him/herself the following questions:
 - i. Does the word of God command us not to do it (James 4:17)?
 - ii. Will it bring glory to God (Ephesians 3:21; 1 Corinthians 6:19; 10:31)?
 - iii. Whose idea is it? Jesus or the world (James 4:4; 1John 2:15-17; 5:19)?
 - iv. Would Jesus do it or approve it (1 Peter 2:21)?
 - v. Does it have the “any appearance” of evil (1 Thessalonians 5:22)?
 - vi. Does it express a Christ-like attitude (Philippians 2:4-6)?
 - vii. Could it be an hinderance to my spiritual progress with Jesus (Hebrews 12:1)?
 - viii. Will this action make me an example of a faithful believer (1 Timothy 4:12)?
 - ix. Would it be a stumbling block to others (1 Corinthians 8:9; Romans 14:13, 21)?
 - x. Would it make God happy (Luke 15:7,10)?
 - xi. Will it make you a better Christian (2 Peter 1:5-8)?
 - xii. Will it encourage others to obey the Gospel (John 13:35)?

Students can supply more similar questions that could be used as guidance principles as described above. Do you find this approach helpful? If yes, write down some areas of your life that you will apply them. If not, why?