

Discern....

Let me start with one of my favourite fairy tales, *The Emperor's New Clothes*, written by Hans Christian Anderson. I read this story in school and has never forgotten it.

The story is about a king, who had a great love to dress splendidly. One day two crooks came to him and said they will weave the most resplendent of clothes for the king. They also laid a condition that the fabric they are going to weave will not be visible to stupid folks or those not fit for the post. They demanded a great sum of gold and silk thread and weaved day after day, night after night on an empty loom. Though no one saw anything, they kept telling, " How gorgeous was the dress they were making," otherwise according to the decree of the two crooks, they should be stupid not to see.

The day arrived when these two fellows, stripped the king naked and pretended to clothe him elaborately, making gestures for every action. Every one including the king fearing that they would be called stupid kept on commenting how wonderful the colours mixed and how the fabric was so fine that they could not even feel it etc.. The crooks took the king to the chariot and left him there and slowly ran out of the country. And the king goes on a procession stark naked and the whole town shouted that the king was splendidly dressed. In that crowd a small voice, a voice of the child broke out, " Oh the king is naked, he has nothing on."

Are you laughing or do you pity the king? But this story is a very poignant metaphor, an example for our lives.

Since I know so many young people read this, I again touch upon this topic of DO NOT BELIEVE ALL THAT IS SPOKEN TO YOU. There are so many voices that are whispering around us saying, " if you do not party this weekend you are old fashioned. See how many Christian friends are partying?" "What's wrong if you watch a little porn , watch now and you can repent later on." "

Why care about being chaste, have physical intimacy with your boy friend or girl friend, you can marry later on?" "One drag of dope will do you no harm, it's ok you can quit when you want to."

These are the words that are swirling around young, middle aged and old people constantly these days. Just like the two crooks satan seduces us saying if you don't flow along the popular opinion you are either stupid or not fit to live in the now.

But if we go by this voice of the world and run along, then satan leaves us exposed as a spectacle and a laughing stock before this whole world.

The greatest danger faced by every Christian today is deception, the lies which smother them, which blind the eyes of common sense. I write this with pain in my heart knowing well that so many promising born again men and women are peering into sleazy porn sites day after day. It is not okay my friend. It is not okay to watch all the filth and the dirt. God would not make an allowance for you alone, because you did some ministry or you led worship where people were mightily touched. Do not deceive yourself. God is not mocked.

The lies of satan make you totally exposed and vulnerable. A sin is a sin is a sin. There is no euphemistic word for sin. Though you may term it a weakness or a stumbling stone, nevertheless sin is sin. And this sin had to be dealt with on the body of none other than Jesus Christ Himself. (Romans 8:1-2)

To know whether you are under the cloud of deception, read the Word of God. Do not switch message after message in the internet or tv channel, but take your Bible and read. When you convince yourself fantasising is ok, since I don't harm anyone, you wouldn't be too sure when you come to Mathew 5,28, *But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman*

with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

Very recently a most shocking murder was committed by a Christian leader who later publicly confessed that he committed the murder with his own hands. You know what led to this point. He listened to another Christian friend who 'advised' him to do away with the man, and thus the problem. It was satan speaking through the friend. The leader knew murder is sin, but listening to the voice of deception, he was blinded to the reality, that is God's word. After the deed was done he alone stood exposed, shamed, arrested and maligned.

The word of God is a double edged sword. It cuts you first before piercing into the heart of the other. Hebrews 4,12. Salvation is only through faith, by believing that Jesus died in my place. Sanctification is a life long process, which is only by the word of God.

How can young people keep their way pure?

By guarding it according to your word.

I treasure your word in my heart,

so that I may not sin against you. Psalm 119: 9,11

Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. John 17,17.

My dear friends, put on the armour of light, put on the armour of God

Therefore take up the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to withstand on that evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm.

¹⁴Stand therefore, and fasten the belt of truth around your waist, and put on the breastplate of righteousness. ¹⁵As shoes for your feet put on whatever will make you ready to proclaim the gospel of peace. ¹⁶With all of these, take the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the

flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Ephesians 6: 13-17.

My dear friends I know how difficult it is to live a sanctified life, but do you think God would have set such standards if we cannot make it. Young people also have the strength to say a firm no to temptations . That is why John writes, "I write to you young people because you are strong and the Word of God abides in you and you have overcome the evil one." I John2, 14

God wants every one of you to overcome the evil one and that comes when we incline to the Word of God and abide by it. There is no other way, no other counsel than the Word of God. I challenge all of you to a closer walk with God, shedding all ungodliness and being conformed to the image of Jesus Christ more every day.

Dear Lord, you know how hard it is for us, to live a holy life. But Father you would have never demanded this from us, if it was not possible. Since you lay this down as a standard, make my heart to listen to you, abide in your word and to overcome the evil one. May You resplendent glory cover each of us. In Jesus name we pray. Amen...