

David Vigil: The Decapitated Church

When studying church history, some of the most fascinating individuals we meet are the martyrs. These are the untold multitudes who, when given a simple opportunity to deny Christ, found it easier to stand for their faith and die rather than disavow the One who was sacrificed in their stead.

They faced agony and torture of a magnitude that so few of us can comprehend. They were flogged, impaled, crucified, eaten by lions, forced to fight to the death in coliseums and decapitated.

Were they not like us? Would they not have loved to live lives of peace and prosperity in the name of Christ instead? Would they not have loved to sit in our beautiful air-conditioned edifices with state-of-the-art sound, lights and videography?

Even today we hear of those across the globe who are killed in the name of the enemies of God. Churches are burned. They are raped and gunned down.

These are our brothers and sisters who lived in love, grace and great courage.

All the while, our churches are filled with religious cowardice—namely, those who carry on a senseless, phariseeistic and legalistic argument. Their sole intention is to be religiously correct. They are mean, brash and judgmental. They sacrifice their victims upon religious altars. Meanwhile, wounded individuals vow never to darken the doors of the church again.

Their victims include the divorcee, the homosexual, the sexually immoral, the fallen minister and those who feel they are not good enough to meet the standards set forth by those

who have hijacked the church. Many have witnessed this treatment of their loved ones. They too know that a God of love would never do such a thing.

It is as if the church itself has been decapitated. Its head (Jesus) is moving in diametric opposition to this branding of a vicious version of a "Christian Islam."

We must follow Christ. How did He respond when the Pharisee attempted to manipulate Him? He faced pressure to do what was "religiously correct." He chose to value the person, not the law.

He then fulfilled the law, and upon His resurrection left us with what is known as "the dispensation of grace."

The direction Christ left us to walk in is that of love and mercy. The mission, if we choose to accept it, is to seek and proclaim salvation to the lost.

We must take a stand for Christ and once again courageously unite with Him. It is our duty to learn from our Savior and understand that the individual matters and not the law.

It is time to rebuke the spirit of religiosity and humiliate the Pharisee. There is no place for the legalistic heart in the body of Christ.

Jesus is the one who died and rose for us. We no longer will be intimidated by those who only "say the right things." They are whitewashed sepulchers. They are filled with dead men's bones.

I will never forget when God called me to begin the ministry of Heal Your Servant. He asked me if I was willing to seek out the minister who is hiding sexual sin. He also asked me to go wherever I must to find the fallen ones whom He called, those who felt as if they have disappointed God. I was asked if I would go wherever I am needed to find the one who has

distanced himself from the people and the things of God.

Religious-minded men attempted to intimidate me. They told me I would be working for the kingdom of darkness.

Our elders and my pastors, Max and Randy, soon approached me. When they heard of my vision, they encouraged me and said, "This is the vision of our church. We are called to be Jesus in every neighborhood, throughout our city and the world. What do you need from us?"

In obedience and with a spiritual covering, I began. As a result, to date we have helped more than 1,200 ministers across the globe.

I would greatly encourage every reader to listen to call of Christ. You are equipped with unique giftings and a wonderful commission. Take courage, be vigilant and be obedient. Shirk the discouraging words of the Pharisee. He presents himself as righteous but is deceived. He is an agent for the kingdom of darkness.

Express love, kindness and goodness. Follow the head, who is Christ, and we will see the miracles which those before us, who sacrificed so much, so deeply coveted.

David Vigil is CEO and founder of . His life focus is to serve those who have been called of God and see to it that they are free to be exactly what they have been designed to be. His ministry is based out of Oak Hills Church in San Antonio, Texas. Under the tender of Randy Frazee and Max Lucado, he serves to restore ministers across the globe.