

Mike Bickle on Kanye's Conversion: 'We Need to Be in a Spirit of Encouragement to Him'

It's exciting: A major celebrity makes a public profession of faith in Jesus. Even better, his new album is called *Jesus Is King* and includes songs that quote Scripture. "Every knee shall bow, every tongue confess, Jesus is Lord" are the lyrics of "Jesus Is Lord," which references Philippians 2:10-11.

What are we to make of Kanye West's testimony? Is it encouraging—something to celebrate with the hope that it will help reach the masses for Christ? Or is it more like a phase or fad—something that will "wear off" when the pressures of this world mount? How do we handle our hearts in response to this big news?

Mike Bickle, director of the International House of Prayer of Kansas City, shares some helpful thoughts on Kanye's profession and dealing with new believers in general, whether they are famous or not.

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Affirm the Testimony

Gratitude as a response to someone's profession of faith in Jesus Christ should be the first attitude we express.

"I look at this man, and I think, *I'm so grateful for your confession*," Bickle says. "[Revelation 12:11, NKJV] says we overcome by the blood of the Lamb and the word of our testimony, and he's giving a bold testimony."

While some can be quick to dismiss Kanye's faith, others go

the way of raising him up to “super saint” status. But Bickle cautions against these extreme views.

“I think our approach should be different from either one of those polarized views,” he says. “I think we look at [Kanye] and say, ‘Here’s a person who is making a confession: “Jesus is King—He’s King of my life.”’ It’s a recent confession, and we need to take it at face value, that it’s sincere, unless he gives us strong evidence in his character in the days to come that it’s false, and it’s public (but even then, we don’t need to have a big opinion on it).”

Focus on Jesus, Not Man

The reason we don’t need to form a strong opinion about Kanye’s salvation, Bickle explains, is that he’s a new believer. Scripture cautions us about too quickly elevating a new believer to a leadership position in the church.

“[The leader] must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil’s trap” (1 Tim. 3:6-7, NIV).

Jesus Christ is our Savior, not a man. And every new believer needs time to grow. The church’s role is to surround and support them in their faith.

“I say ... we need to be in a spirit of encouragement to him,” Bickle continues. “He might find some stumbling and some tripping, like all of us in our early days in the Lord. He isn’t going to come out of ‘the spiritual womb’ in perfect doctrine, in perfect maturity, in perfect humility. No one does. We give each other tons of grace.”

Extend Grace

New believers, like newborn babies, need grace. And famous

people, including Kanye West, likely need more because of all the people forming judgments about them.

“He’s got all this attention that’s negative, meaning opinions,” Bickle says. “I can’t imagine what he’s having to navigate in all of this because he wants to live for Jesus. I say we give him time, as a born-again believer in the family of God.”

Time reveals a lot. When Jesus talked about the four types of soil in Mark 4:1-20, three of the four received the Word of God and began to grow, but adversity came, and only one of those soils produced a great harvest. New growth is exciting, but time and life reveal the soil of our hearts (and soil can change through prayer, repentance and the decisions we make).

Pray

In light of the challenges that all new believers face, including West, prayer is perhaps the most important thing we can do for them.

In Ephesians, Paul exhorts us to “be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might, ... praying at all times in the Spirit, ... *making supplication for all the saints*” (Eph. 6:10, 18, ESV, emphasis added).

Praying for the saints is biblical. So is keeping our attention on Jesus, for He, as the book of Jude says, “is able to keep [us] from stumbling, and to present [us] faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy” (Jude 24, NKJV).

Let that be our prayer for Kanye West, for ourselves and for all believers.

[Click here](#) to watch Bickle’s entire response to Kanye’s *Jesus Is King*.

Which celebrities, if any, do you have a burden to pray for?

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