

## ***A Costly Faith:***

Since the time of Christ, thousands of Christians have been martyred for their faith. From the Apostle Paul who gave us the very words “to die is gain” to Charlie Kirk who bravely and unashamedly shared the Gospel to those who probably hated him the most ... there has been a seemingly unending roster of Christians willing to die for their faith.

As I pondered that thought this past few weeks, I asked myself how I would respond

- Would I die for my faith?
- Would YOU die for yours?
- How much are we willing to INVEST in our faith?

Faith in Jesus costs something, ESPECIALLY when you live your faith and it produces fruit  
The example of someone “living a costly faith” is Pastor Artur Pawlowski  
Let’s watch a video of him in action

### **SLIDE: NAZI VIDEO**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d\\_M2eg\\_imrs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d_M2eg_imrs)

What you just witnessed is Pastor Artur Pawlowski, chasing the Calgary police out of HIS church on Passover Sunday. They were there to tell him to shut his services down – he obviously DISAGREED!

What followed his ACTIONS is documented in THIS BOOK titled “Lions Do Not Bow”, but let me give you a quick highlight of the next 2 years

### **SLIDE: ARTUR STREET PREACHING**

- A month after this video he was arrested by Calgary police, tried and found guilty of holding church. He was thrown "like a piece of meat" into a police vehicle, forced to lie handcuffed on his side for over an hour, and later held on cold concrete without a mattress, blanket, or pillow. He was denied sleep, access to a Bible, and communication with his lawyers while in custody.
- January 2022 arrested again for protesting unconstitutional actions of the Canadian Health org
- February of 2022 he delivered a 19 minute message to the truckers freedom convoy. He was then arrested and was jailed again and accused of inciting mischief. He was placed in a filthy, solitary confinement cell without running water, something he could only compare to a "dog kennel," and denied water for two days
- All in all he spent 51 days in prison, much of it in solitary confinement

It’s fair to say that Pastor Artur Pawlowski was willing to invest in his faith

Question for the MOC this morning, ... **What would you do to INVEST in your faith?**

In other words, if the Christian faith “costs” something, what price would you be willing to pay for it?

Artur Pawlowski was arrested, imprisoned and tortured for these 3 things:

1. Preaching in the streets
2. Feeding the homeless and needy
3. Holding church services

Put yourself into Canada

- Would you side with Artur?
- If so ... what would that look like

Let's go through a simple exercise to help answer that question.

First I'll review the ACTION we might take, then I'll highlight the potential COST:

|   |                   |
|---|-------------------|
| 1. Would you agree with him "personally"?                           | Cost              |
| 2. Would you discuss it with your wife and share your support?      | Nothing           |
| 3. Would you tell a friend that you support him?                    | Argument          |
| 4. Would you share this with co-workers?                            | Friendship        |
| 5. Would you declare your support on Social Media?                  | Job/Promotion     |
| 6. Would you appear publicly at the prison to protest?              | Isolation/Attacks |
| 7. Would you join Artur in parallel behaviors? (Speeches, protests) | Arrest/Embarrass  |
|   | Imprisonment      |

Where would you draw the line? Remember, the end of the road for Artur was prison

For most of us, the answer is CONVICTING because most of us choose FEAR over FAITH – why?

### **We fear the COST**

We draw a line, because at some point the PAIN or COST overtakes what our flesh will tolerate.

In other words, the world becomes more important and holds more sway in our lives than our faith does. There just is NO "gentle" way to say it ... We see that Artur is paying a steep cost. Therefore the closer we get to his behaviors, the greater chance that WE might pay the same price. ... and, we shrink

AND we feel convicted by that because no Christian desires a weak faith.

BUT ... James 2:26 reminds us of what is TRUE in any Christians walk with Christ

### **SLIDE: JAMES 2:26 KJV**

### **"Faith without works is dead" – James 2:26**

We all know this to be true, because WE KNOW that our FAITH produces fruit of the Holy Spirit

So back to the question of how much we would be willing to invest in our faith, at what LEVEL we might support someone like Artur Pawlowski ... how does this connect to the "works" of our faith??

Here's how – Jesus tells us that the 2 greatest commandments are to love God and love our neighbors

- Artur was preaching publicly and taking the ACTION of sharing the love of God with others
- Artur was feeding the homeless and demonstrating thru ACTION his love for his neighbors

Artur risked prison, torture and even death in the act of loving others. He wasn't threatening murder, he wasn't trying to overthrow the Canadian government, he wasn't manufacturing and selling drugs. He was LOVING others ...

Men. if we can't engage our faith publicly, in support of the 2 greatest commandments from Jesus himself, then our faith IS DEAD!

Artur Pawlowski's son, Nathaniel was here a few Sundays ago ... he's a chip off the old block for sure – AND an example of how a Dad that leads with a bold faith will raise a Son who behaves the same way.

When he was here, he shared this quote with us: "Faith is proven when it's most costly"

**SLIDE: COSTLY FAITH**

You saw the video earlier of Pastor Artur standing up for HIS FAITH

Now, let's watch another video of the COST TO ARTUR PAWLOWSKI for doing so

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jPvXbIPZEKc>

I don't know about you, but when I see Pastor AP being dragged like an animal across that highway, I don't get angry, I feel convicted. I wonder to myself ... "would I be that strong?" "would I pay that cost?" or "would I invest that deeply in my faith?"

Let me summarize what happened to PASTOR Artur Pawlowski FROM THE BEGINNING TO NOW. Because he DARED push back in defense of his faith ... he was arrested multiple times, shoved and dragged across asphalt and concrete, roughly thrown into police cars. He was placed, purposefully into solitary confinement, in a cell for 51 days with no heat - in the winter - in Canada - at times with no clothing and no bedding. He was threatened, his family was threatened, the brakes on his car were tampered with, his home was set on fire, he was fined, he was harassed and he was HATED by the majority of his fellow countrymen.

**SLIDE: WHAT AM I WILLING TO PAY?**

The question we asked this morning remains ... and watching the cost Artur Pawlowski paid reminds us of it:

- What are each of us willing to do in response to what Jesus has done for us?

When Pastor Artur Pawlowski was screaming in the face of evil ... the words he was using were not what you heard ... what Artur was really saying was this:

- Jesus is my King and Jesus rules my life
- Jesus demands worship in ALL occasions, especially during troubled times
- I will NOT BOW to any other who attempts to interfere with that worship
- YOU are trying to insert yourself between me and Jesus and I will NOT let that stand!

Our faith should embolden us to publicly support the Christian label we carry and ... that public part of our faith is the EVIDENCE of our pursuit of holiness

QUESTION: "Where do each of us draw the line on investing in our faith?"

ANSWER: When we share our faith in ways that costs us something AND then trust God to be with us as we pursue His Kingdom work

So how exactly do we do that? How DO we build a faith that's as bold as Artur's?

## **SLIDE: 3 WAYS TO GROW HOLINESS**

The answer is simple ... continue to pursue holiness! Read your bible every single day, praise God and pray to Him OFTEN, and join a Band of Brother small group to strengthen your faith. When you do these things, you will build a BOLD FAITH, just like Artur Pawlowski, where NO ONE, and NOTHING will ever come between you and your savior Jesus Christ

It matters, because a visible faith is backed by ACTIONS that demonstrate God's love to others.

**When we live a COSTLY faith, it's because our faith is bigger than this world, it's stronger than our flesh and it's built on the sacrifice of Jesus ... and the fruit of that faith is what changes the world to HIS GLORY**

As I was finishing up this message last week, God arranged for me to see a social media post by PASTOR Todd Coconatto that was so perfectly linked to this message:

Todd writes:

This Is Not a Time for Business as Usual

There is a weight in the spirit right now that cannot be ignored. We cannot drift back into routine Christianity. We cannot slip into comfort, distraction, or spiritual autopilot. There is a threat at the door that many do not see. There is a spiritual battle unfolding that many refuse to acknowledge. And it is far more significant than most realize.

The Lord is sounding the alarm.

This is not a season for complacency. It is not a time for apathy. It is not an hour for casual devotion or half-hearted surrender. The enemy has been positioning quietly, subtly, strategically. While many have been distracted with lesser things, the battle lines have been drawn in the unseen realm.

But heaven is not silent.

The Spirit of the Lord is saying, understand the moment you are in. Discern the times. Do not return to business as usual. Do not allow distraction to occupy the throne of your heart. Do not let apathy dull your discernment.

This is the hour of the watchman.

Now let me add my own words to what Todd wrote ... TAKE ACTION, PUSH BACK and ENGAGE THE WORLD by sharing the fruit of your faith.