

Speaking the Truth in Love – When “Minding Our Own Business” Violates Scripture and Has Eternal Consequences

Key Words: *Sin, Repent, Death, Believe, Blood, Sacrifice, Resurrection, Forgiveness, Salvation, Judgment*

The title phrase, *speaking the truth in love*, is found Ephesians 4:15. In much of this letter to one of the churches he founded in Asia Minor (Turkey), he was reminding them of who they were before they received Christ as Savior and what their lives should look like now. They should be growing in their faith and strong in their walk with the Lord—not turning back to old sins or listening to false teachers and bad doctrine. Paul had difficult things to say to them at times and he loved them especially because they were his spiritual children. He had to be careful to speak the truth in love to them and encourage them to do the same when speaking with less mature Christians and those who may not have really been saved.

That is what we are going to dive into this week—speaking the truth in love when the subject is hard and one that the hearer may not receive well, if at all, and might to you to mind your own business. But this is eternity we are considering and that is a long time. So it is imperative that these conversations be had when doubts arise whether by word or deed of those whose lives and lifestyles are inconsistent or in conflict with the salvation that Christ preached and brought. For this we press on.

You must understand that Jesus and the apostles Paul, Peter, and John all pointed to the fact that there were people in the

church who claimed to be saved but no evidence of repentance and change of heart, mind, or behavior could be seen. We are not the judge of anyone's heart regarding salvation. God alone is judge. But Jesus gave very clear teaching on how we know someone is truly born-again. As older Christians mature in the faith and faithful in our walk with the Lord, we are both allowed and compelled to observe, instruct, admonish, rebuke, and correct when we see the aforementioned people and lifestyles. We do so out of love and the desire to see a life turned or returned to Christ to make certain that persons salvation and place in eternity.

To that end, I followed up a recent such conversation by providing the following verses as (1) a reminder for those who are in Christ but wayward in their lives and need correction and instruction. (2) a pathway for the lost to Christ and eternity in Heaven with Him and all other saints. They helped me in my development in Christ and reframed my thinking and teaching. If you allow the Holy Spirit to work in and on you as you read and study them, you will realize the world tries to tell you who you are, but He will tell you Whose you are. The first is death; the second life.

Rather than go back to Genesis 3 and the fall of man, I assume you know that sin entered the world thru Adam and Eve, and that curse has been upon all of us since. **Thus the world was broken and with it the relationship between holy God and sinful mankind.** I began with the beginning of the New Covenant – the New Testament. This is the love story of Jesus for people. It is not soft love as some teach it. It is often tough love; difficult to hear and harder to obey and follow. But that is what separates true Christians from spectators who call themselves Christians or the hard core lost who think we are fools. Here is how the redemption love story unfolds.

- **Jesus means Savior.** He was the promised Messiah of the OT. From Genesis 3 to Malachi 4.

"She will give birth to a Son; and you shall name Him Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins."
Matthew 1: 21

- **His message was simple—sin and repentance. “**

From that time Jesus began to preach and say, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” Matthew 4:17

- **His message was His mission.**

“I have not come to call the righteous to repentance, but sinners.” Luke 5:32

- **That does not include me, does it? Everyone** needs Jesus.
No one is “good enough”.

*“for **all** have sinned and fall short of the glory of God”*
Romans 3:23

- **Bad News. Sin brings the death penalty.**

*“**For the wages of sin is death, but the gracious gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.**”* Romans 6:23

- **If we are all sinners, how does anyone get to Heaven?**
(Explain believe.)

*“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever **believes in Him** shall not perish, but have eternal life. “For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. “He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already (our sin), because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.”* John 3:16-18

- **How we receive salvation**

“that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead,

you will be saved; for with the heart a person believes resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. For the Scripture says, "WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE PUT TO SHAME." Romans 10: 9-11

▪ **There must be other ways to find God.**

"Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me." John 14: 6 (Jesus is the ONLY way and that gives many people heartburn.)

▪ **How can Jesus make that claim? Perfect life, blood sacrifice, resurrection.**

*"knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things ..., but with precious blood, as of a **lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ.**" 1 Peter 1:18-19*

"He is not here—He has risen. Remember how He spoke to you...the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men...crucified, and the third day rise again." Luke 24: 6-7

▪ **The Day of Judgment Has Been Set.**

So having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now proclaiming to mankind that all people everywhere are to repent, because He has set a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all people by raising Him from the dead." Acts 17:30-31

Now that we have been reminded of or presented with the absolute Truths of God's word, let's move on to the hardest question you will ever be asked and with which you may or must confront others...

For Christ's sake,

Walter