
Words of Truth

Are You A Troublemaker If You Identify Sin?

By: Brian A. Yeager

Faithful brothers and sisters in Christ are often called troublemakers. Charges, like what you are about to read, are often made when faithful Christians proclaim the truth: *"Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews: And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures, Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ. And some of them believed, and consorted with Paul and Silas; and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few. But the Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people. And when they found them not, they drew Jason and certain brethren unto the rulers of the city, crying, **These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also**" (Acts 17:1-6).*

Men, such as the Apostle Paul, have been charged as being a mover of sedition (Acts 24:5). Faithful brethren have been arrested because of being seen as troublemakers (Acts 16:17-24). The prophet Elijah was charged as being a troubler for Israel (I Kings 18:17). We could continue to establish the fact that the world has often seen those whom stand for the truth as troublemakers. What is really sad though is this behavior has not been limited to just the world. Many of us, whom have faithfully stood for the truth, have been called troublemakers by those whom we think are our brethren.

Sometimes when you are charged so many times with something it tends to stick in your head. I have known brothers and sisters in Christ that have had the label "troublemaker" applied to them often enough that they feel that there is some merit to it. With such thinking, they have become reserved in speaking up or against things they see wrong. For their sakes, and for us all, let's consider some instructions of God that we **MUST** do that may get us called "troublemakers". Let's start with with the commands of God to correct erring saints.

If A Brother Or Sister Errs, We Must Deal With It!

Notice the following commands we have from God: *"Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him... Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted... And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the*

acknowledging of the truth; And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will... Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins” (Luke 17:3-4, Galatians 6:1, II Timothy 2:24-26, and James 5:19-20).

After reading the commands above, what happens if you see a brother or sister err and do nothing? For one, your brother or sister in Christ is in sin and will lose his or her soul if nothing is done about it (Romans 6:23). Secondly, you are sinning by doing nothing about it! Is it worse to say something and potentially be thought of as a troublemaker or to do nothing and allow yourself and others to be lost? Of course, some will then begin to avoid the conflict with the excuse of the fear of starting trouble and nothing being fixed anyway.

What If Nothing Good Comes Of It?

If you talk to a brother or sister in Christ that has erred and they do not respond, the Lord doesn't say it's over. More action must be taken (Matthew 18:15-17 and I Corinthians 5:9-13). If we follow the Lord's plan, the goal is to restore the person (II Thessalonians 3:14-15), unless they are divisive in some way (Romans 16:17-18 and Titus 3:9-11).

At this point, it is very possible that the person in error will make charges against you. You may become his or her enemy (Galatians 4:16). Again, let's consider something. Is it better to allow ourselves to fear the comments of men or should we fear the judgment of God for doing nothing? If we really love our brethren, we will correct them when needed (Revelation 3:19). We cannot allow the words of men to keep us from obeying God.

Don't Let Men Stand In Your Way Of Obedience

When the Apostles were commanded to stop preaching the Gospel, they said: “...We ought to obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29). King Saul allowed, at least as he said, the people to sway him in disobedience to God's will. Go read how that turned out (I Samuel 15:1-35). Whether or not we are found favorable in the sight of men, it is right to point out the errors that may occur amongst brethren (Jude 1:22-23)!

Conclusion

Part of being a Christian involves having false charges thrown at us (Psalms 35:11 and Matthew 5:10-12). People will slander us (Romans 3:8). Let's think about something. Jesus was the most loving man to ever walk the face of this earth. Yet, because He was the light that reproveth darkness men hated Him (John 3:19-21). The Lord says: “Correction is grievous unto him that forsaketh the way: and he that hateth reproof shall die. Hell and destruction are before the LORD: how much more then the hearts of the children of men? A scorner loveth not one that reproveth him: neither will he go unto the wise” (Proverbs 15:10-12). You are NOT a troublemaker if you point out sin. What you are if you point out sin is an obedient child of God who has shown love toward the person you're trying to correct (Proverbs 27:5-6).

Milkshakes

At The End Of The World

By: Brian A. Yeager

After Jesus foretold of the destruction of Jerusalem (Matthew 23:33-24:34), He said this: *"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be"* (Matthew 24:35-39). From the words of Christ we know that His return will be at an unknown time. Therefore, we know there is no Scripture that gives a hint or sign of when He shall return.

When Jesus returns this is what will happen: *"But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord... The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up"* (I Thessalonians 4:13-17 and II Peter 3:9-10).

Since the first century, we have been living in the "last days" (Acts 2:14-21 and Hebrews 1:1-2). People look for an antichrist and all other such things. The antichrists have been and are since the first century (I John 2:18, I John 2:22, I John 4:3, and II John 1:7). People look to the book of Revelation for some hint of when the last days are. The book of Revelation was primarily of things that occurred in the first century. Things that, once written, were shortly to come to pass (Revelation 1:1-3). It is NOW the last times. It has long been the last days. At any moment the world could end.

In the end, Jesus is going to judge all of humanity (Romans 14:11-12 and II Corinthians 5:10). He will decide, based upon judgment according to His words (John 12:48), who is saved and who will spend eternity in Hell (Matthew 25:31-46). They that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation (John 5:28-29).

We should all spend our lives in preparation for the coming of our Lord lest we be found not ready for Him (Matthew 25:1-13). Whether the Lord comes today or in the future, our lives are very short with no promise of tomorrow (James 4:13-16). Live today like it is the day the world will end so that you are always ready to meet our Judge (Mark 13:32-37).