
Words of Truth

One Speaketh Peaceable To His Neighbor

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The word of God says: *“The simple believeth every word: but the prudent man looketh well to his going”* (Proverbs 14:15). Why is this article starting with that verse? The reason this article is starting with this verse is that simple [naïve] people way too often believe things they should not. They are easy targets. False teachers are to be marked and avoided, partially, so that naïve individuals will not be led astray (Romans 16:17-18).

Think of yourself throughout this article. Examine your mindset (II Corinthians 13:5). What does it take for you to think that someone is “nice”? What does a person have to say to get you to drop your guard? How easily can you be swayed? How much do you trust in what people tell you?

These are important questions. Christians are often preyed upon because others think we are easily tricked. People think that Christians want to see the good in people to a point of a fault. Sadly, that is often true. Naïve individuals can be found in the Lord’s body. That is shamefully true. The question is, are you easily tricked? Do you believe the words of a person if they are the “right words”? We have to consider that when people speak there is often a cloak covering the true meaning of their words.

But In His Heart...

Notice what God said of His people of old: *“Oh that I had in the wilderness a lodging place of wayfaring men; that I might leave my people, and go from them! for they be all adulterers, an assembly of treacherous men. And they bend their tongues like their bow for lies: but they are not valiant for the truth upon the earth; for they proceed from evil to evil, and they know not me, saith the LORD. Take ye heed every one of his neighbour, and trust ye not in any brother: for every brother will utterly supplant, and every neighbour will walk with slanders. And they will deceive every one his neighbour, and will not speak the truth: they have taught their tongue to speak lies, and weary themselves to commit iniquity. Thine habitation is in the midst of deceit; through deceit they refuse to know me, saith the LORD. Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, Behold, I will melt them, and try them; for how shall I do for the daughter of my people? Their tongue is as an arrow shot out; it speaketh deceit: one speaketh peaceably to his neighbour with his mouth, but in heart he layeth his wait”* (Jeremiah 9:2-8).

When you read what is quoted above, doesn’t that make you pause and consider how deceptive even supposed godly individuals can be? There are those who have words that are smoother than butter, but war is in that person’s heart (Psalms 55:21). These individuals speak peace to their neighbors, but mischief is in their hearts (Psalms 28:3). STOP! Read those Scriptures again. We cannot just take an unproven person’s word for things.

Other Scriptures show this too. Notice a few more of those Scriptures: *“Help, LORD; for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men. They speak vanity every one with his neighbour: with flattering lips and with a double heart do they speak. The LORD shall cut off all flattering lips, and the tongue that speaketh proud things... He that hateth dissembleth with his lips, and layeth up deceit within him; When he speaketh fair, believe him not: for there are seven abominations in his heart. Whose hatred is covered by deceit, his wickedness shall be shewed before the whole congregation... For even thy brethren, and the house of thy father, even they have dealt treacherously with thee; yea, they have called a multitude after thee: believe them not, though they speak fair words unto thee”* (Psalms 12:1-3, Proverbs 26:24-26, and Jeremiah 12:6).

How can we read any of the Scriptures cited or quoted above and not understand that we cannot be a trusting people (Micah 7:5 and I John 4:1)? This is most true when it comes to words. Words do not mean anything without action. Action shows whether or not someone’s words are true (Titus 1:16). This is why we have to practice, not just preach, being fruit inspectors.

Inspecting Fruit

Jesus said: *“Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them”* (Matthew 7:15-20).

If you look at the fruit, not just the words or works of an individual, you’ll see a lot. This takes time. However, it is the only way to have some level of assurance that you are not being deceived. Remember, we are expected by God not to be duped (Matthew 24:4 and Ephesians 5:6-11). This is why it is important not to just trust what we’re told. People learn how to tell us what we want to hear. False teachers have been doing this for centuries (II Peter 2:18). Will we learn from these things God tells us?

What Will You Do With This Information?

If you or I sin by being deceived, it will not because God has not warned us. The “beware signs” are posted throughout God’s inspired word (Matthew 10:17, Philippians 3:2, Colossians 2:6-8, etc.). It is on you or I if we fail to read them. Worse yet, if we read them and reject them what do you think will happen in the Judgment Day (John 12:48)?

Conclusion

The world is full of wickedness (I John 5:19). Corruption is among the body of Christ (Jude 1:3-4). People will always seek to deceive us by speaking fair words. We’re told not to believe them. We have to find out what people are really up to. We have to take steps back and examine the fruit of those whom are speaking those words we readily want to hear. Maybe we’d do well to remind ourselves that we are the children of God while those who are sinning are the children of Satan (Matthew 13:24-30; 34-43 and I John 3:8-10).