

Words of Truth

“Shew My People Their Transgression”

By: Brian A. Yeager

Generally speaking, people do not like to be told that they are wrong about anything. Therefore, it is pretty common to find Christians who are uncomfortable with telling people they are wrong about things. When you study the Scriptures you find that those whom do not like to learn they are wrong, when they are wrong, are brutish [stupid] in the sight of God (Proverbs 12:1). That individual will die in their sins (Proverbs 15:10). However, the person who refuses to tell another he or she is wrong is not free from punishment. In fact, our silence when the souls of others are stake is outright sinful (Ezekiel 3:18-21, Proverbs 27:5-6, and Acts 20:26-27).

As we continue to see our society grow more and more tolerant of sin, we are going to find it harder to find ears that are open to rebuke. While God says that rebuking someone is an act of love (Revelation 3:19), our society considers such an act of aggression. For example, telling a homosexual that acting upon their desires will lead them to Hell (Leviticus 18:22, Romans 1:18-28, II Peter 2:6, and Jude 1:6-7) is considered a “hate crime” by many. Does that mean we should silence ourselves? As we’ve already noted, our Heavenly Father considers such silence sinful.

With our society preaching tolerance we will continue to find ourselves fighting against the majority. This is not a new problem. The truth has NEVER been an acceptable message by the masses. Those whom speak the truth are often hated (I Kings 22:1-38, II Chronicles 36:14-16, Proverbs 15:12, Amos 5:10, Matthew 23:34, John 3:19-21, John 7:7, Acts 7:51-58, and Galatians 4:16). Just as those of the past did not stop when they were hated, we cannot stop because we become hated.

Articles like this are not written because we do not know these things. Articles like this are written because we need encouraged to keep doing what we already know we have to do. For anyone to be saved the truth has to be published (John 8:32). The church, of which we [faithful Christians] are members of, is responsible for being the foundation supporting and publishing the truth (I Thessalonians 1:7-8 and I Timothy 3:15). The message cannot be heard without someone teaching it (Romans 10:14-17). Therefore, we must maintain the goal of showing those whom are lost their sins and how they can have them forgiven.

Crying Aloud

God said this to the prophet Isaiah concerning Israel of old: “*Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins*” (Isaiah 58:1). The responsibility to proclaim the truth loudly was not the responsibility of just one man in the Scriptures. Notice: “*I have preached righteousness in the great congregation: lo, I have not refrained my lips, O LORD, thou knowest. I have not hid thy*

righteousness within my heart; I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation: I have not concealed thy lovingkindness and thy truth from the great congregation... Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear... Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine... For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake. One of themselves, even a prophet of their own, said, The Cretians are alway liars, evil beasts, slow bellies. This witness is true. Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith; Not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth" (Psalms 40:9-10, I Timothy 5:20, II Timothy 4:2, and Titus 1:10-14).

Now, you have to think of the language of "spare not". Might the truth offend someone? Most likely it will. We've already addressed the fact that many will not want to hear the truth and they will hate you for speaking it. Still, we cannot spare. Every word of God is pure (Proverbs 30:5). All of humanity is expected to live by every word of God (Luke 4:4). Those include the words within God's message that some do not like to hear. We cannot spare because someone might not like what God has to say.

Our goal in sharing the message of the Gospel must be emphasized in our minds. Our goal is not to seek to offend or say shocking things. Our goal with the Gospel is to help those who are lost be saved (Romans 1:16). In helping someone to be saved we have to be clear in showing him or her his or her transgressions.

Clarity With Pure Motives

I have met some people over the years that like to say strong things for "shock value". That should not be our intentions when we clearly show someone the Gospel. We are the vessels that carry the truth to the lost (II Corinthians 4:6-7). Our desire in showing a person that he or she is sinning must be so that they can be saved (Romans 10:1). To do so, we cannot "beat around the bush". The truth must be taught to those whom are lost so that they can clearly know they are in sin (II Corinthians 3:12, II Corinthians 5:10-11, and I Thessalonians 2:1-12). Knowing that the truth offends does not mean we need to set out to be offensive. Nor does it mean we ought to soften the message so that we do not offend. Even when we are dealing with a sin among the brethren the language of how we should deal with such involves the word "rebuke" (Luke 17:3-4) for a reason.

Conclusion

If you go to a doctor and ask him or her to show you what is wrong with your health, what do you expect that doctor to do? Let's say you have a heart disorder. Let's say the doctor takes an x-ray of your heart. He or she displays the x-ray and shows you what your heart looks like. You are ignorant of how to read an x-ray. So, the doctor just tells you that things could be better or worse and then removes the picture. He then tells you to "do better". What did he really tell you? What if he could see a blockage, but didn't want to offend you since you've caused that blockage by eating poorly? How would you feel after you have a heart attack that could have been prevented had the doctor just shown you the issue with your heart? Our task is no different than a doctor. When someone is willing to talk with us about their soul, we have to show that person his or her transgression (Ezekiel 16:2).