

Rom. 14:19 So then let us follow after things which make for peace, and things whereby we may edify one another.

John 8:32 and ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.

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“SPEAKING THE TRUTH IN LOVE”

by Jim Stauffer

“but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ,” (Eph. 4:15).

It seems mankind often picks and chooses just what it is he takes from a reading of Scripture. As a result, some wish to speak in love without the truth. This verse says both *truth and love* enable us to be like the Savior.

First, we must give attention to the context of the verse. The apostle begins the chapter with an admonition for brethren to be united in all aspects of the gospel of Christ. He says we must first *.....walk in a manner worthy of the calling in which you have been called.* He then modifies that walk with verses 2 and 3, *“with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love, being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”*

That is followed by a list of things we must be united on. The list is presented as things of which there is only one. One body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism and one God and Father of all.

Having set the context he then proceeds to tell us how God planned to achieve such unity. He cites the resurrected Lord Who has ascended to heaven as the One Who placed in the church, *.....some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ. As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming;” (Eph. 4:11-14)*

It is necessary to the understanding of our opening text we understand these offices were placed in the church to ensure the appropriate attitude prevails in pursuit of the unity for which he calls.

With that understanding we can begin to comprehend all that is contained in the admonition to speak the truth in love while growing spiritually to be like

Christ.

The clear indication is if we will learn to speak the truth in love we can indeed grow in the necessary aspects of our lives as children of God to be like Jesus. The very first step of that is speaking the truth. There is no way we can love our brother and fellow man if we are unwilling to speak the truth.

Imagine visiting your Doctor and he is unwilling to give you the news he has discovered about your health. There is no way you can take the needed actions to correct any deficiencies that have been discovered. Of course the same is true in the spiritual matters which are under discussion in this text. A person cannot change his life until he knows what is wrong about it and the truth God has revealed to correct sin.

Jesus, Himself, said to us, *“If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.”* (John 14:15) Where does the idea come from that leads people to take the word of God so lightly as to think there is more than one faith, hope, Lord, baptism, etc.?

Jesus also said, *“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. ‘Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?’ ‘And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.’”* (Matt. 7:21–23) Please notice He said these folks believed they were doing these things in His name. But He disowned them because they were mistaken. They were led into error by the false teachers mentioned in verses 15-20 of this same chapter. He then follows that with the story of the wise and foolish men who built their houses on the rock and sand respectively. He started that story with these words, *“Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them, may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock.”* (Matt. 7:24) Speaking the truth in love demands we honor and revere His word since it is the very truth we seek.

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The Challenges of the Cross

Jesus said in **Mt 20:25-28**, *“Ye know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. Not so shall it be among you: but whosoever would become great among you shall be your minister; and whosoever would be first among you shall be your servant: even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.”* The Challenge of the Cross for all of mankind is to be a server in a world of men trying to each become rulers. Jesus did not condemn authority. After all, he himself said in **Matthew 28:18** *“All authority in heaven and earth is given unto me. Go ye therefore...”* He is, however, condemning the world’s view and use of power and authority.

We see the effects of worldly power on people every day. People who would otherwise be the most amicable of friends and neighbors turn into petty tyrants when made president of the local Homeowners Association. It happens to preachers, too! Most preachers get a start by volunteering to speak while the regular preacher is away, or just needs a break. He does a good job and gets a few compliments, (as he should!) then it goes to his head and abracadabra we’ve got a tin plated dictator on our hands! He should learn, as should we all, that authority is intended as a means of service and not as an entitlement to dominate. That is true in all fields: the church, business and especially government. Would that those in Washington would regain this perspective of power!

Remember, the Challenge of the Cross is service!

Cleveland Reddinger

Isaiah’s Description of Christ

Isaiah the prophet, has been referred to as “The Shakespeare of the prophets,” “The Paul of the Old Testament,” and as “The Messianic Prophet.” Within the sixty-six chapters of the book he penned by inspiration, there are a great number of prophecies concerning our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The book of Isaiah has been called the miniature Bible. *“The first 39 chapters, like the 39 books of the Old Testament, are filled with judgment upon immoral and idolatrous men. The final 27 chapters, like the 27 books of the New Testament, declare a message of hope”* (Taken from Barnes’ Bible Charts, Interesting Facts About Isaiah). Notice with me one of the prophecies stated by this great man as he describes our Lord. *“For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace”* (**Isaiah 9:6**).

The prophet was so sure of God’s ability and willingness to fulfill this prophecy, he speaks as if this Child had already been born and this Son had already been given. The Son spoken of is the same One he mentioned in **7:14** whose name is Immanuel, God with us (**Matthew 1:22-23**). This Child of whom he speaks, whose government would be upon His shoulder, is King Jesus ruling over His kingdom of which there is no end (**Luke 1:32-33**). Isaiah gives us at least four names by which our Lord is identified – Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace.

Wonderful Counselor – Some translations have a comma between these two words, which indicate two separate thoughts. Yet several others do not, which would imply one thought. When the two words are connected together, one is truly amazed at the advice or counsel which we can receive from our Lord. The way we receive guidance from Him is through His word. Peter said, *“You have the words of eternal life”* (**John 6:68**). Are you in need of salvation? He has the answer. Want to know how to have a happy marriage? Turn to the Bible. Need help raising godly children? He tells us how. Do you need help to overcome some temptation? Instruction is given. Are we worshipping properly? The New Testament supplies the answers. Instead of searching for answers in the writings of men, why not go to our Wonderful Counselor and let Him give us the answers we so desperately need?

Mighty God – This tells us of the deity of Christ. In the gospel of Matthew when speaking about Jesus (**Matthew 1:21**), as he quotes **Isaiah 7:14**, he tells us the virgin would give birth to a son whose name was Immanuel, meaning God with us (**Matthew 1:23**). John, as he describes to us the Christ, calls Him the Word who was not only with God the Father in the beginning but was also God (**John 1:1**). The apostle Paul speaking of the power which Jesus has as the Mighty God to create all things in heaven and on earth, and by Him they also consist (**Colossians 1:16-17**). Not only was He God but He was also Man, robed in flesh. While walking this earth as a Man He demonstrated His deity by restoring sight to the blind, healing those with crippling diseases, casting out demons, calming the raging seas, raising the dead, and forgiving sins, etc.. While in the flesh and facing the same kind of temptations which you and I face daily, He resisted and was without sin. For this reason, He is able to sympathize with our weaknesses, knowing the difficulties we face, and is willing to provide aid, grace and mercy to those who boldly come to His throne for help (**Hebrews 2:17-18; 4:15-16**). What a Mighty God we have as our Savior!

Everlasting Father – This obviously speaks of His

eternal nature. Jesus said, *"I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End ... who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty"* (**Revelation 1:8**).

As a Father He provides for us and protects us. The word "Father" is defined as *"a benefactor or guardian. The Messiah is called the Everlasting Father, Isaiah 9:6"* (Wilson's Old Testament Word Studies, p. 159). He certainly promises to provide our material needs when we seek Him first (**Matthew 6:33**). Yet the greatest provisions which He supplies for us are our spiritual blessings. He willingly died on the cross so His children could be saved. His word was given to comfort, guide, inspire, and to give hope as we face life each day. Our Everlasting Father is always there for us and will never leave nor forsake us (**Hebrews 13:5-8**).

Prince of Peace – He is the ruler or the captain through whom we can experience peace. The word "peace" is defined as *"to be whole, complete; to be at peace, in friendship with anyone"* (Wilson's Old Testament Word Studies, p. 305). We need peace with Jehovah because of our sins. Those iniquities have separated us from Him making us His enemies (**Isaiah 59:1-2; Romans 5:10**). Yet Jesus through His death has made it possible for us to be at peace with our Heavenly Father (**Ephesians 2:13-14**). There is such a beautiful thought expressed in the word shalom (peace). Through what the Christ has done for us we can have tranquility of soul, knowing we have been divinely loved, divinely forgiven, and are assured of our eternal salvation if we are faithful to our Prince of Peace. I can pillow my head at night knowing if I never rise to see tomorrow that all is well with my soul because of my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Thanks be to God the Father who gave Isaiah the words so he could describe to us our Savior and Redeemer. He is a Wonderful Counselor, a Mighty God, an Everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace. Go to Him for counsel, trust in His power, look to Him for provisions and protection, and seek Him for the peace which is offered for the souls of all men.

by Jim Mickells, Lewisburg, Tennessee
Taken from Grow Magazine, growmagazine.site

Admonitions to Parents of Teens

1. Always Be Consistent with Teens.

Don't compromise your standards just because they wear you down with asking.

2. Live What You Expect of Your Teens.

Don't expect something of them you are not willing to do yourself.

3. Don't Beat Your Head Against the Wall When You Fail.

Like adults, teens can be tempted. Evil companions corrupt good morals. It takes lots of time, love and understanding to raise up a child in the way of the Lord. When you fail, pick yourself up and go on.

4. Don't Be Afraid to Say "I Was Wrong."

Oftentimes that is the hardest thing to do, but parents are human and teens will respect you for it.

5. Last, and Certainty Not Least, Pray!

What parent goes to bed without praying for his/her children? Prayer is one of the most important things to help parents make it through the teen's years.

by David Pratt; Taken from Beacon Electronic Issue; Colleevue church of Christ

Upcoming Events of Interest

Sunday, January 5, 2020 will begin a study we obtained from Appian Media, titles **Searching for a King**.

This study is accompanied by film taken on the scenes of Old Testament History. We look forward to this presentation. The class instruction will be by bro. Ron Peck, one of the elders at Lenexa church of Christ. We invite any and all who have interest in furthering your understanding to this section of Old Testament History.

Regular Bible Studies are provided by individuals. Some are currently studying the Book of Ephesians every other Wednesday. That study meets at Denny's Restaurant. The next meeting will be January 15, 2020.

Another Bible Study is conducted on the third Thursday each month. The Study takes place at the Stauffer's residence, 15704 South Madison Dr., Olathe, Ks. 66062. We are studying the Book of Acts and Chapter 18 will be the topic on January 16, 2020. As is always the case, the public is cordially invited to any and all Bible Studies conducted either by the church or its members individually.

We also have Correspondence Courses available for differing levels of study. We have Courses for those who wish to begin at a fundamental level or those who wish for a more in depth study of Scripture. Simply contact us at the email or phone numbers in our email signature.

Psa. 1:1 *Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked, Nor standeth in the way of sinners, Nor sitteth in the seat of scoffers: 2 But his delight is in the law of Jehovah; And on his law doth he meditate day and night. 3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the streams of water, That bringeth forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also doth not wither; And whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. 4 The wicked are not so, But are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. 5 Therefore the wicked shall not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. 6 For Jehovah knoweth the way of the righteous; But the way of the wicked shall perish.*

HOURS OF WORSHIP

Sunday A.M. 9:30 Bible Study

Sunday A.M. 10:20 Assembled Worship

Sunday P.M. 5:00 Assembled Worship

Wednesday P.M. 7:00 Bible Study and Worship

Visitors welcome

We conduct in home Bible Studies

We offer Correspondence Courses

Evangelist and Editor Jim Stauffer

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Deacons: Bill Miller

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SUNDAY BIBLE CLASS: SEARCHING FOR A KING - RON PECK TEACHER

WEDNESDAY BIBLE CLASS: THE BOOK OF JOB - JIM STAUFFER TEACHER

SUNDAY MORNING SERMON: WHY IS GOD SO ANGRY?



What Must I Do To Be Saved?

Hear the gospel - Romans 10:17

Believe in Jesus Christ - Hebrews 11:6

Repent of sins - Acts 17:30

Confess Christ as Lord - Romans 10:9,10

Be Baptized for remission of sins - Acts 2:38

Be Faithful unto death - Revelation 2:10