



*Striving to present every man perfect
in Christ Jesus through study of
God's unadulterated word!*

Sunday Morning PRELUDE

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Truth in Love, Part 2

Many professing Christians quote the segment of the passage that mentions "speaking the truth in love," but very few are willing to truly understand the concept — most notably being ignorant of the fact that God always speaks the truth in love; hence, God's sent and spoken words always reflect this ministerial concept. In this issue, we'll review examples of "speaking the truth in love" that might not appear obvious to the casual observer.



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About Prelude™

Prelude™ can be used for Sunday School, Bible study, or personal devotion. Each issue contains a total of 12-14 lessons, depending upon the number of Sundays in a quarter. Each lesson consists of the following:

1) Lesson Foundation: The lesson title, a focus verse, and the passage of scripture serving as the context for the lesson.

2) Lesson Insights: Provides a brief synopsis — a bird’s-eye view of critical elements presented in the text from the Lesson Foundation.

3) Practical Perspective: Taking the first portion of Lesson Insights a step further, this section deals with the lesson from the standpoint of actual, everyday living — showing how the lesson can be applied in our lives.

4) Key Vocabulary Words: Words to study from the lesson, to be reviewed in such references as a Strong’s Hebrew and Greek Dictionary.

5) Bonus Assignment: Provides an extra challenge for those who complete the other segments of the lesson.

The challenge is before you: being diligent, noble, and attentive, as well as reviewing and applying these lessons, will help you to enhance and fulfill your discipleship in the Lord Jesus.

This Quarter's Lessons

Ephesians 4:15 says “But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ....” Many professing Christians quote the segment of the passage that mentions “speaking the truth in love,” but very few have a heart to understand the concept — most notably being ignorant of the fact that God always speaks the truth in love; hence, God’s sent and spoken words always reflect this ministerial concept. In this issue, we’ll review examples of “speaking the truth in love” that might not appear obvious to the casual observer.

- Lesson 1: A Line in the Sand
- Lesson 2: One Thing Thou Lackest
- Lesson 3: Obeying the Truth
- Lesson 4: Mine Holy Name’s Sake
- Lesson 5: Sharpness & Edification
- Lesson 6: A Sent Leader
- Lesson 7: Nothing to Boast About
- Lesson 8: Child of the Devil!
- Lesson 9: Such as I Would
- Lesson 10: Sin Exposed
- Lesson 11: Covering Sin
- Lesson 12: Administering Shame
- Lesson 13: Setting Expectations



April 3, 2011

Truth in Love 2.1

A Line in the Sand

(Matthew 10:32-41)

(Matthew 10:34) Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.

32 Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.

33 But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.

34 Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.

35 For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law.

36 And a man's foes shall be they of his own household.

37 He that loveth father or mother more than me is not wor-

thy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

38 And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.

39 He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.

40 He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me.

41 He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward.

Lesson 1 Insights

Jesus said He did not come to send peace on earth, but rather a sword. The word sword speaks figuratively about war or judicial punishment. Another verse in Luke says that He came to bring division. The word division is pertaining to disunion (of opinion and conduct). In other words, Jesus came to draw a line in the sand.

He is not saying that we should be focused on having our best life now, living in the most expensive house, or driving the best car that money can buy. The truth? Jesus is calling for people to confess Him before men, to love Him above all else, and to take up their cross and follow Him.

Consider these “line in the sand” verses:

- (Deuteronomy 30:19) I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live:
- (Matthew 6:24) No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.
- (Ecclesiastes 12:13) Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.
- (Joshua 24:15) And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.
- (Revelation 3:16) So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.



Practical Perspective: *Truth in love says that there is a choice that needs to be made. Either choose to serve God and keep His commandments and make the rapture or choose to serve the devil and end up in hell. Remember the young rich ruler. Matthew 19:20-22 “The young man saith unto him, All these things have kept from my youth up: what lack I yet? Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me. But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions.”*

Key Vocabulary Words: confess, [shall] deny, peace, he that loveth, followeth, he that findeth, reward, set a man at variance

Bonus Assignment: Search for other “line in the sand” scriptures.

Truth in Love 2.2

One Thing Thou Lackest

(Mark 10:17-31)

(Mark 10:21) Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me.

17 And when he was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?

18 And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God.

19 Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and mother.

20 And he answered and said unto him, Master, all these have I observed from my youth.

21 Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me.

22 And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions.

23 And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!

24 And the disciples were astonished at his words. But

Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!

25 It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

26 And they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, Who then can be saved?

27 And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible.

28 Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee.

29 And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's,

30 But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life.

31 But many that are first shall be last; and the last first.

Lesson 2 Insights

In God, we trust. That inscription is on our American currency. When listening to that statement, in God we trust, the question is, which God are they referring? People put their trust in many things – money, other people, job, position. Not a lot of people put real trust in God. Many folks put their trust in what they think is God, but really trusts in the riches of this world by their own imagination, and/or more notably by the god of this world.

In our lesson, Jesus speaks the truth in love to the young rich ruler. The truth about the one thing he lacked. The youngster proved by his response where his real love resided. It was not in the Lord... it was in his riches.

Consider the following scriptures:

- (Exodus 20:3) Thou shalt have no other gods before me.
- (Proverbs 11:28) He that trusteth in his riches shall fall: but the righteous shall flourish as a branch.
- (1 Timothy 6:17-19) Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

We cannot pick-and-choose what to obey with regard to areas we lack in, that can or will prevent us acceptance in the Lord. For many people, if obeying Him is not part of their self-made selection, they will go away as the young rich ruler – grieved. He did not choose to do as the Lord commanded, because it did not fit with his trust in his riches. The Lord did not tell him to go broke to inherit eternal life. He instructed him to distribute to the poor so that he would have treasure in heaven, and to take up his cross and follow Him.



Practical Perspective: *Trust in God. There are trustworthy people in our lives today as well as in scriptures. They are examples to mark and follow after. Nevertheless, we know that our source of trust is in the Lord. Through His word, by way of His sent leaders, we find out the one or more area(s) we lack to bring forth fruit to perfection in Him. How we respond to their speaking the truth in love, can and will determine where we could end up. Let's examine ourselves to make sure that we give the right response(s) – that will (through our submission and obedience) put us in the position to inherit eternal life with the Lord.*

Key Vocabulary Words: loved, lacked, sell, poor, treasure, cross, follow, [them that] trust, riches

Bonus Assignments: 1) Read Matthew 19:16-30 and Luke 18:15-30 and 2) Find other scriptures where God's ministers told people where they lacked in Him, and note their responses.

April 17, 2011

Truth in Love 2.3

Obeying the Truth

(1 Peter 1:13-25)

(1 Peter 1:22) Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently:

13 Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

14 As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance:

15 But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation;

16 Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.

17 And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear:

18 Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers;

19 But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:

20 Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you,

21 Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God.

22 Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently:

23 Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.

24 For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away:

25 But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.

Lesson 3 Insights

Truth. How much of it do you have? How much of it do you want? Do you realize its benefits? Do you realize God's heart concerning truth? Do you realize where you would be without truth?

Consider the following scriptures that illustrate God's prescribed attitude towards truth and the rewards given to those who subscribe to said attitudes and benefits:

- (Proverbs 23:23) Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding.
- (Psalm 25:10) All the paths of the LORD are mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies.
- (Psalm 40:11) Withhold not thou thy tender mercies from me, O LORD: let thy lovingkindness and thy truth continually preserve me.
- (Acts 13:45-46) But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming. Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.
- (John 15:3) Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.
- (John 8:31-32) Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

Lastly, let us consider 1 Peter 1:22. The attitude and call towards truth presented in this passage is "obedience." It goes without saying that we're called to obey truth, but many are unaware of the direct benefits of this obedience. The benefit of obeying per this passage? Those who obey truth will receive purification of their souls. What a benefit!!!!

Purification of the soul. Judging one's self worthy of everlasting life. Cleansing. Freedom. Being built up. Securing our inheritance in Christ. What more must God present to convince us to lay hold on truth and let it not go?!?!? Make sure you're committed to obeying the truth despite how it may make you feel (at times). Your soul will appreciate it.



Practical Perspective: *Truth is a means to an end. For this reason, the child of God MUST be uncompromisingly passionate about acquiring and holding fast to the truth. This same truth serves as a line in the sand, dividing the haves from the have nots when it comes to the things of the Spirit and the kingdom of God as a whole, to the extent that absence of truth will ultimately result in separation from God! How passionate are you towards the truth today?*

Key Vocabulary Words: purified [your souls], obeying, truth, unfeigned, love, pure [heart], fervently

Bonus Assignment: Search the scriptures for additional passages that discuss the benefits of truth.

April 24, 2011

Truth in Love 2.4

Mine Holy Name's Sake

(Ezekiel 36:16-27)

(Ezekiel 36:22) Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went.

16 Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,
17 Son of man, when the house of Israel dwelt in their own land, they defiled it by their own way and by their doings: their way was before me as the uncleanness of a removed woman.

18 Wherefore I poured my fury upon them for the blood that they had shed upon the land, and for their idols wherewith they had polluted it:

19 And I scattered them among the heathen, and they were dispersed through the countries: according to their way and according to their doings I judged them.

20 And when they entered unto the heathen, whither they went, they profaned my holy name, when they said to them, These are the people of the LORD, and are gone forth out of his land.

21 But I had pity for mine holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the heathen, whither they went.

22 Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord

GOD; I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went.

23 And I will sanctify my great name, which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen shall know that I am the LORD, saith the Lord GOD, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes.

24 For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land.

25 Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.

26 A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.

27 And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.

Lesson 4 Insights

Here we have the Lord saying that He's going to do for the house of Israel what He's going to do, not for their sake, but for His holy name's sake. The house of Israel had defiled the land He gave them and profaned His holy name. However, even though they were profane everywhere they went, He had pity on them for His holy name's sake.

Let's look at what the Lord did for His name's sake:

- Sanctify His great name
- Take Israel away from among the heathen
- Sprinkle clean water upon them to clean them from all their filthiness, and from all their idols
- Give them a clean new heart, and a new spirit by taking away the stony heart and giving them a heart of flesh for His name's sake
- Cause them to walk in His statutes, and keep His judgments and do them



Practical Perspective: *To think of the compassion of the Lord for the house of Israel reminds me of the scripture that says, our sins are forgiven us for His name's sake (1 John 2:12). As the Lord, according to Psalm 106:8 saved them for His name's sake, that He might make His mighty power to be known, He is doing the same thing today. Let's be found trusting in the mercy of God, learning His judgments, keeping them, and doing them.*

Key Vocabulary Words: pity, profaned, sanctify, clean, [and ye shall be] clean, filthiness, idols, cleanse, [the] stony, statutes, judgments

Bonus Assignment: Read Deuteronomy 7:6-11, Jeremiah 32:36-44, Ezekiel 36.

Truth in Love 2.5

Sharpness & Edification

(2 Corinthians 13:1-11)

(2 Corinthians 13:10) Therefore I write these things being absent, lest being present I should use sharpness, according to the power which the Lord hath given me to edification, and not to destruction.

1 This is the third time I am coming to you. In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established.

2 I told you before, and foretell you, as if I were present, the second time; and being absent now I write to them which heretofore have sinned, and to all other, that, if I come again, I will not spare:

3 Since ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me, which to you-ward is not weak, but is mighty in you.

4 For though he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God. For we also are weak in him, but we shall live with him by the power of God toward you.

5 Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?

6 But I trust that ye shall know that we are not reprobates.

7 Now I pray to God that ye do no evil; not that we should appear approved, but that ye should do that which is honest, though we be as reprobates.

8 For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth.

9 For we are glad, when we are weak, and ye are strong: and this also we wish, even your perfection.

10 Therefore I write these things being absent, lest being present I should use sharpness, according to the power which the Lord hath given me to edification, and not to destruction.

11 Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you.

Lesson 5 Insights

Sharpness. It's a methodology that many are uncomfortable with — whether one is the speaker or the hearer/recipient of certain words. In 2 Corinthians, Paul speaks of using sharpness ACCORDING TO THE POWER WHICH THE LORD HATH GIVEN ME...!!! Interesting, isn't it? God sends sharpness. This is completely contrary to the mindset of mainstream professing Christians.

Many feel that sharpness (Greek: being harsh, severe) is NEVER appropriate, but God begs to differ. Why? In many cases, the sharp word is used to jar/prick the hearts of the hearers and goad them into action. Such words are edifying, and in such cases, God does not spare and is not concerned about how people might respond. If harsh measures are not taken where appropriate, those who would have benefitted will become victims of their circumstances.

Consider the following passages that are reflective of sharpness that leads to edification:

- (Proverbs 27:5-6) Open rebuke is better than secret love. Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.
- (Galatians 2:14) But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?
- (Revelation 3:16-19) So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.

Have you ever received a hard word? Were you courageous enough to receive that word? Did that word rub you the wrong way? Can you imagine where you'd be without having heard the hard word?

Praise God for sending the word AND praise God for the courage of the person that delivered said word.



Practical Perspective: *In the minds of many, “speaking the truth in love” involves using soft, kind words that run no risk of offense. The truth, however, is that while a soft answer is appropriate on some occasions, a hard word is the only solution in others. That said, those sent to speak God’s word must be ready and willing to share the sharp words that leads to edification. Being a coward and withholding such words is NOT love and proves counterproductive for the speaker as well as the “targeted” hearer. Make sure that you strive to be courageous — ready to speak God’s word despite the methodology used and/or overcoming the fear of how people might respond.*

Key Vocabulary Words: sharpness, power, edification, destruction

Bonus Assignment: Search the scriptures for examples of sharpness that leads to edification.

Truth in Love 2.6

A Sent Leader

(Romans 10:5-18)

(Romans 10:15) And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!

5 For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them.

6 But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:)

7 Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.)

8 But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach;

9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

11 For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

12 For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek:

for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.

13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

14 How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?

15 And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!

16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?

17 So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

18 But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.

Lesson 6 Insights

Known as the “Roman’s road to salvation”, many people believe that all they have to do to be saved is confess with their mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in their heart that God raised Him from the dead.

Well, that’s just not how it works. You must have faith in order to believe with all of your heart. Faith only comes by hearing and hearing the word of God. There has to be a sent leader in order to hear the word of God so that we can have faith to believe. A sent leader is someone that God has set apart and commissioned to go forth and preach His word.

Consider the following scriptures regarding a sent leader:

- (2 Timothy 4:2) Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.
- (Isaiah 61:1) The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;
- (2 Peter 1:21) For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.
- (Acts 20:27) For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.
- (1 Timothy 4:6) If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.
- (Ezekiel 3:17) Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me.

Some characteristics of a sent leader:

- Is anointed by God
- Full of power and of the Holy Ghost
- Preaches the word of God
- Declares the whole counsel of God and does not withhold
- Brings the people into remembrance of the things they have already heard
- Is a watchman and gives warnings from God

And the list goes on...



Practical Perspective: *Without faith it is impossible to please God. Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God. When you hear faith it usually means someone is speaking. If the person is not speaking what thus saith the Lord then that person is not sent by God. Be sure you know who and what you are hearing so that you can increase in faith.*

Key Vocabulary Words: faith, preach, [shalt] confess, call upon, sent, beautiful, believed, heard, bring glad tidings

Bonus Assignment: Search the scriptures to find examples of sent leaders versus those that were not sent (but went).

Truth in Love 2.7

Nothing to Boast About

(2 Corinthians 10:7-18)

(2 Corinthians 10:13) But we will not boast of things without our measure, but according to the measure of the rule which God hath distributed to us, a measure to reach even unto you.

7Do ye look on things after the outward appearance? If any man trust to himself that he is Christ's, let him of himself think this again, that, as he is Christ's, even so are we Christ's.

8For though I should boast somewhat more of our authority, which the Lord hath given us for edification, and not for your destruction, I should not be ashamed:

9That I may not seem as if I would terrify you by letters.

10For his letters, say they, are weighty and powerful; but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible.

11Let such an one think this, that, such as we are in word by letters when we are absent, such will we be also in deed when we are present.

12For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.

13But we will not boast of things without our measure, but according to the measure of the rule which God hath distributed to us, a measure to reach even unto you.

14For we stretch not ourselves beyond our measure, as though we reached not unto you: for we are come as far as to you also in preaching the gospel of Christ:

15Not boasting of things without our measure, that is, of other men's labours; but having hope, when your faith is increased, that we shall be enlarged by you according to our rule abundantly,

16To preach the gospel in the regions beyond you, and not to boast in another man's line of things made ready to our hand.

17But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

18For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth.

Lesson 7 Insights

Many people love to boast of themselves, especially concerning their accomplishments. They must let somebody know what great service(s) they have done. For they really feel good enough in their own mind to think that they have done something worthy of bragging rights. Even many ministers, for instance, love to boast of their knowledge of the scriptures, and how much influence they have on members of the congregation, or on people in general, based on their type of ministry. However, the truth is as the scripture says, “he that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory...”

So they're boasting about themselves with the number of those who “commend themselves,” and the Lord God, in the meantime, is not glorified. They do not seek the honor that comes from God only. Hence, Paul speaks the truth in love by letting them know that there is nothing to boast about.

Consider the following:

- (Judges 7:2) And the LORD said unto Gideon, The people that are with thee are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me.
- (Jeremiah 9:23-24) Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD.
- (1 Corinthians 13:4-7) Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.



Practical Perspective: *How do you judge yourself worthy of boasting of yourself? We really have nothing to boast about except as Paul, who did glory in his infirmities that the power of Christ might rest upon him. We should do excellent in service(s), whatever that might be, but not at the expense of dishonoring the Lord. Ecclesiastes 3:13 says, “And also that every man should eat and drink, and enjoy the good of all his labour, it is the gift of God.” Colossians 3:23-24 says, “And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.” Remember, “he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.”*

Key Vocabulary Words: boast, things without our measure, measure, rule

Bonus Assignments: 1) Do a concordant study on the Strong's Greek number G2744, and 2) Do a concordant study on the word “boast” in both Testaments.



May 22, 2011

Truth in Love 2.8

Child of the Devil!

(Acts 13:1-12)

(Acts 13:9-10) Then Saul, (who also is called Paul,) filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him, And said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?

1 Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

2 As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

3 And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.

4 So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus.

5 And when they were at Salamis, they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews: and they had also John to their minister.

6 And when they had gone through the isle unto Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was Barjesus:

7 Which was with the deputy of the country, Sergius Paulus, a prudent man; who called for Barnabas and Saul, and desired to hear the word of God.

8 But Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith.

9 Then Saul, (who also is called Paul,) filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him,

10 And said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?

11 And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand.

12 Then the deputy, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord.

Lesson 8 Insights

Did you know that there's such a thing as a "child of the devil?" Did you used to believe that everybody was a child of God? Do you know the difference? Did you know that the failure to identify a child of the devil can have consequences? In Acts 13, we are presented with a scenario where the associated truths and some of the fruit of the aforementioned "class of person" are presented.

While presenting the gospel to one Sergius Paulus, a sorcerer named Elymas (also known as BarJesus) attempted to hinder Paul's activity. He sought to turn Sergius Paulus away from the faith (i.e., he sought to keep the prudent man from salvation and achieving the initial stage of gaining the inheritance of the righteous). His deeds wouldn't last long however.

Though BarJesus' efforts continued, Paul, being filled with the Holy Ghost turned and did something that many people today would classify as unloving, self-righteous, and just plain mean. Paul turned to BarJesus and made the following declarations:

- He declared BarJesus to be filled with all subtility and mischief.
- He called to BarJesus as A CHILD OF THE DEVIL!!!
- He stated that BarJesus was an enemy of all righteousness.
- He presented a rhetorical question — Wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?
- He declared that BarJesus be smitten with blindness for a season.

Again, Paul was filled with the Holy Ghost when these things were done. As a result of his speaking the truth in love, many were astonished at the doctrine of the Lord Jesus and many believed.

Oh, that men would be filled with the Holy Ghost and make such declarations today. We are short on such "filled men" and, as a result, the benefits also go lacking.



Practical Perspective: *While many believe that every human being is a child of God, the word of God declares otherwise. The phrase "child of the devil" or "son of Belial" appears in scripture and the traits and fruit associated with each is present even when the phrase is not. Understanding what constitutes a child of God and a child of the devil is a critical faith-point for the true believer, to the extent that John mentions our inability to identify such as a point of deception. Make sure you are skilled at and wise concerning identifying children of God and children of the devil.*

Key Vocabulary Words: filled (with the Holy Ghost), subtility, mischief, child, enemy, pervert

Bonus Assignment: Read 1 John, Chapter 3.

Truth in Love 2.9

Such As I Would

(2 Corinthians 12:11-21)

(2 Corinthians 12:20-21) For I fear, lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I would, and that I shall be found unto you such as ye would not: lest there be debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults: And lest, when I come again, my God will humble me among you, and that I shall bewail many which have sinned already, and have not repented of the uncleanness and fornication and lasciviousness which they have committed.

11 I am become a fool in glorying; ye have compelled me: for I ought to have been commended of you: for in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I be nothing.

12 Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds.

13 For what is it wherein ye were inferior to other churches, except it be that I myself was not burdensome to you? forgive me this wrong.

14 Behold, the third time I am ready to come to you; and I will not be burdensome to you: for I seek not yours, but you: for the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children.

15 And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved.

16 But be it so, I did not burden you: nevertheless, being crafty, I caught you with guile.

17 Did I make a gain of you by any of them whom I sent unto you?

18 I desired Titus, and with him I sent a brother. Did Titus make a gain of you? walked we not in the same spirit? walked we not in the same steps?

19 Again, think ye that we excuse ourselves unto you? we speak before God in Christ: but we do all things, dearly beloved, for your edifying.

20 For I fear, lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I would, and that I shall be found unto you such as ye would not: lest there be debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults:

21 And lest, when I come again, my God will humble me among you, and that I shall bewail many which have sinned already, and have not repented of the uncleanness and fornication and lasciviousness which they have committed.

Lesson 9 Insights

The Corinthians were not living up to the standard of truth and order. Paul, informed of the errors that continued even after he had rebuked them for their wrong doings, wanted to find them cleared of their errors and moving on to higher heights in the Lord.

Paul did not want to have the Lord humble him in their presence to administer severe discipline to the many folks who had sinned already, and had not repented of the multiple offences they had committed.

Consider the following:

- (2 Corinthians 1:23-24) Moreover I call God for a record upon my soul, that to spare you I came not as yet unto Corinth. Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for by faith ye stand.
- (1 Corinthians 4:21) What will ye? shall I come unto you with a rod, or in love, and in the spirit of meekness?
- (2 Corinthians 10:2) But I beseech you, that I may not be bold when I am present with that confidence, wherewith I think to be bold against some, which think of us as if we walked according to the flesh.

Paul was in awe, that perhaps, when he came to visit, he would not find them such as he desired, and at the same time, that he would be found of them such as they should not be.



Practical Perspective: *We have a real pastor and leadership at Remnant Christian Assembly. We thank the Lord for them. When it comes time to speak the truth in love, the leadership of this ministry has no problem addressing. How many times has the pastor been in awe, and not have found some of us such as he would? Let's examine ourselves and make sure that we walk as we ought, to glorify the Lord, and bring forth fruit to perfection in Him. Remember, there is no greater joy for a real pastor than to hear that the people whom God have entrusted him with walk in truth.*

Key Vocabulary Words: fear, find, debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults, humble, bewail, uncleanness, fornication, lasciviousness

Bonus Assignment: Read Second Corinthians chapters 1-4.

Truth in Love 2.10

Sin Exposed (S.T. Busted!!!)

(2 Samuel 12:1-14)

(Luke 8:17) For nothing is secret, that shall not be made manifest; neither any thing hid, that shall not be known and come abroad.

1 And the LORD sent Nathan unto David. And he came unto him, and said unto him, There were two men in one city; the one rich, and the other poor.

2 The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds:

3 But the poor man had nothing, save one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and nourished up: and it grew up together with him, and with his children; it did eat of his own meat, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter.

4 And there came a traveller unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him; but took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him.

5 And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, As the LORD liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die:

6 And he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity.

7 And Nathan said to David, Thou art the man. Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, I anointed thee king over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul;

8 And I gave thee thy master's house, and thy master's wives

into thy bosom, and gave thee the house of Israel and of Judah; and if that had been too little, I would moreover have given unto thee such and such things.

9 Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the LORD, to do evil in his sight? thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon.

10 Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house; because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife.

11 Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house, and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbour, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun.

12 For thou didst it secretly: but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun.

13 And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the LORD. And Nathan said unto David, The LORD also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die.

14 Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die.

Lesson 10 Insights

God's testimony concerning David was that he was a man after His own heart. David loved God. Even though he loved God, he made a decision to do wickedly and he despised (disesteemed) the commandment of the Lord.

David saw Bathsheba bathing herself and lusted after her. He had his men bring her to him and he committed adultery with her. Bathsheba ended up pregnant. David went through great measures to have Bathsheba's husband Uriah (who was innocent and faithful towards David) killed in battle. And then God sent Nathan the prophet to expose David's sin. David was convicted and quickly repented of his evil doings. The Lord sees all and there is nothing hid from Him. Consider the following scriptures:

- (Proverbs 15:3) The eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.
- (2 Samuel 12:12) For thou didst it secretly: but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun.
- (Ecclesiastes 12:14) For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.

According to the law, David should have died for despising the commandment of the Lord. But God in His great mercy spared David's life and put away his sin. But that doesn't mean that his sins went without consequences. The repercussions of his sins were great. Consider the following judgments:

1. The sword shall not depart from his house.
2. God will raise up evil from within his own house.
3. His wives will be taken from him and given to his neighbor in the sight of the sun.
4. The child he had with Bathsheba will die.



Practical Perspective: *It is important to keep God's commandments and failing to do so will bring about judgment and even death. David did not value the commandment of the Lord and allowed lust to conceive which in turn produced sin. James 1:14-15 "But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." When lust and other temptations come into our minds we need to destroy them immediately. Second Corinthians 10:5 says "Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." When we do this we will not despise the commandment of the Lord. We will choose to do good and not evil.*

Key Vocabulary Words: despised, commandment, secretly, blaspheme, evil, manifest

Bonus Assignment: Search the scriptures to find other examples of sin exposed.



June 12, 2011

Truth in Love 2.11

Covering Sin

(James 5:9-20)

(1 Peter 4:7-8) But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer. And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.

9 Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door.

10 Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience.

11 Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.

12 But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation.

13 Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms.

14 Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord:

15 And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.

16 Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

17 Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months.

18 And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.

19 Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him;

20 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.

Lesson 11 Insights

Are you familiar with the passage from 1 Peter 4:7-8? In verse 8, Peter is quoting a segment from Proverbs 10:12. The verse in its entirety says “Hatred stirreth up strifes: but love covereth all sins.” James is also quoting Proverbs 10:12, exhorting God’s people to have fervent charity among ourselves.

In general, we understand the concept of sin, but few truly understand charity (i.e., love). In addition, the concept of “covering” is usually misunderstood and, in most cases, misrepresented. Let’s take a quick look at all three:

- **Sin:** Sin is described in scripture as “transgression of the law.” In other words, sin can generally be thought of as operating contrary to the will of God. To expand upon the general concept of sin, we must also consider the fact that there are known sins (i.e., when someone knows he’s sinned) AND sins of ignorance (present sins that someone is not aware of).
- **Love:** Many are taught that there are 3-4 types of love in the New Testament, but careful study reveals a total of 11. These different types of love range from a brotherly love, to a love for children, to having a general affection for someone, to the way we behave based upon said love. It is the latter love (agapao) that moves us to behave or alter our behaviors in certain ways. This is the type of love that moved God to come in the flesh and lay down His life and that guides us to cover (address, facilitate the overcoming of, and minister to) sin.
- **Cover(ing):** The act of covering is a mystery to many. Consider the following: The apostle James uses the word “hide,” but Peter uses the word “cover.” Both, however, come from the same Greek word and refer to the same action. It means “to cause a multitude of sins to be overlooked and not punished.” The concept of covering appears in Psalm 32:1 and refers to “being forgiven.” Isaiah speaks of rebellious people covering with a covering, but not of God’s Spirit. Solomon speaks of how one’s covering of one’s own sins will keep said person from prospering. Confession and forsaking of one’s sins, however, results in mercy and forgiveness — God’s covering.

When the truth in love is presented, any and all sins can be covered — as long as the hearer receives the exposure of his sin with meekness and responds with humility.



Practical Perspective: *Are you truly ready to cover sin? Are you ready to receive the love of the truth when God sends someone to cover sin in your life? The answer to both questions is critical, as this life and death matter is manifested on a daily basis and its actions will determine where the recipients of the coverings will spend eternity.*

Key Vocabulary Words: convert(eth), error, hide, multitude, sins

Bonus Assignment: Search the scriptures for examples of people who covered sin — properly or improperly.

Truth in Love 2.12

Administering Shame

(Acts 2:22-37)

(1 Corinthians 15:34) Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame.

22 Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know:

23 Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:

24 Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.

25 For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved:

26 Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope:

27 Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

28 Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance.

29 Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day.

30 Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne;

31 He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption.

32 This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.

33 Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.

34 For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand,

35 Until I make thy foes thy footstool.

36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.

37 Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?

Lesson 12 Insights

Nobody likes to feel ashamed, especially if others witness the associated shameful act or its words of chastisement in progress. While shame is embarrassing, it behooves us to take a look at everything that's happening in and around the "shame experience" so that we can appreciate what God wants us to look at today.

Consider the dialogue in Acts 2. Initially, the disciples received the baptism of the Holy Ghost and began to speak in languages they never learned. Their speaking was heard. Some recognized the speech and provided insight, but the enemy immediately sowed seeds of discord and false witness, accusing the disciples of being drunk.

In response to the false accusation, Peter, being full of the Holy Ghost, preached a message for the ages. He explained that their speaking in tongues was the Holy Ghost. He explained who Jesus Christ was. Interestingly, however, he didn't stop there. Peter engaged in the administering of shame. After explaining who Jesus really was and what God did, he also laid the charge of Jesus' crucifixion upon the Jews!!! In response, many became..... ashamed.

Peter spoke the truth in love. The end result? Three thousand people entered into the kingdom of God.

Can you imagine what would have happened had Peter held the truth in unrighteousness?



Practical Perspective: *Remember when you were a child and you did or said something you shouldn't have done or said? In such cases, a responsible adult would.... administer shame. These experiences were, no doubt, numerous, but even more important than the quantity was the impact that said experiences had upon our lives. Though the experiences are long over, the etchings left upon our hearts still reside in many of the decisions we make today. Likewise, someone's administering shame in the Spirit in our lives, helps us to be the children of God that He would have us to be. Never despise the administering of shame, for it will determine whether or not one will make the judgment seat of Christ or find himself or herself at the white throne.*

Key Vocabulary Words: heard, pricked, heart

Bonus Assignment: Search the scriptures for examples where shame was administered and note the varied responses.

Truth in Love 2.13

Setting Expectations

(Mark 6:1-13)

(Mark 6:7) And he called unto him the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two; and gave them power over unclean spirits....

1 And he went out from thence, and came into his own country; and his disciples follow him.

2 And when the sabbath day was come, he began to teach in the synagogue: and many hearing him were astonished, saying, From whence hath this man these things? and what wisdom is this which is given unto him, that even such mighty works are wrought by his hands?

3 Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him.

4 But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house.

5 And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them.

6 And he marvelled because of their unbelief. And he went round about the villages, teaching.

7 And he called unto him the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two; and gave them power over unclean spirits;

8 And commanded them that they should take nothing for their journey, save a staff only; no scrip, no bread, no money in their purse:

9 But be shod with sandals; and not put on two coats.

10 And he said unto them, In what place soever ye enter into an house, there abide till ye depart from that place.

11 And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when ye depart thence, shake off the dust under your feet for a testimony against them. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city.

12 And they went out, and preached that men should repent.

13 And they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them.

Lesson 13 Insights

When the truth in love is spoken, the following benefits are provided:

- The perfecting of the saints (i.e., maturity)
- The work of the ministry
- The edifying of the body of Christ
- All those who take heed come into the unity of the faith
- All those who take heed come into the knowledge of the Son of God
- We come into a measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ
- We won't be tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine
- We'll overcome the sleight of men and cunning craftiness
- We'll grow up into Him in all things

Great, isn't it? What folks fail to understand many times, however, is that even ministers are in need of ministry — from the beginning. In Mark 6, we see one of the examples in scripture where people were called and prepared to do ministry. In addition to providing insight of what they should do, Jesus also took time to set expectations for His laborers.

The most notable expectation listed here (for those preparing to speak the truth in love) is that..... everybody will not receive you (so don't assume that they will)!!! Therefore, whether responsible for doing pulpit ministry or the standard ministry of reconciliation, it behooves each of us to have proper expectations and be ready to take the God-prescribed course of action, based on the response of the hearer.



Practical Perspective: *Many testify about being called to ministry, but few prepare to be sent. In addition, very few have a proper level of expectations concerning ministry. Are you called to ministry today? If so, make sure that you (no matter what state or level of your ministry's maturity) are preparing for the next level AND make sure that your expectations are realistic and truthful. Only then can a person fulfill the ministry that he or she has received of the Lord.*

Key Vocabulary Words: called, send, power, unclean

Bonus Assignment: Search the scriptures for passages where God prepared people for ministry and properly set their expectations.

Closing Commentary

As always, here are a few quick highlights from this quarter's lessons:

- **Lesson 1: A Line in the Sand** — Jesus said He did not come to send peace on earth, but rather a sword. Another verse in Luke says that He came to bring division. The word division is pertaining to disunion (of opinion and conduct). In other words, Jesus came to draw a line in the sand.
- **Lesson 2: One Thing Thou Lackest** — We cannot pick-and-choose what to obey with regard to areas we lack in, that can or will prevent us acceptance in the Lord. For many people, if obeying Him is not part of their self-made selection, they will go away as the young rich ruler – grieved.
- **Lesson 3: Obeying the Truth** — Make sure you're committed to obeying the truth despite how it may make you feel (at times). Your soul will appreciate it.
- **Lesson 4: Mine Holy Name's Sake** — The house of Israel had defiled the land He gave them and profaned His holy name. However, even though they were profane everywhere they went, He had pity on them for His holy name's sake.
- **Lesson 5: Sharpness & Edification** — Have you ever received a hard word? Were you courageous enough to receive that word? Did that word rub you the wrong way? Can you imagine where you'd be without having heard the hard word? Praise God for sending the word AND praise God for the courage of the person that delivered said word.
- **Lesson 6: A Sent Leader** — Without faith it is impossible to please God. Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God. When you hear faith it usually means someone is speaking. If the person is not speaking what thus saith the Lord then that person is not sent by God.
- **Lesson 7: Nothing to Boast About** — We really have nothing to boast about except as Paul, who did glory in his infirmities that the power of Christ might rest upon him.
- **Lesson 8: Child of the Devil** — Did you know that there's such a thing as a "child of the devil?" Did you used to believe that everybody was a child of God? Do you know the difference? Did you know that the failure to identify a child of the devil can have consequences?
- **Lesson 9: Such as I Would** — When it comes time to speak the truth in love, the leadership of this ministry has no problem addressing. How many times has the pastor been in awe, and not have found some of us such as he would?
- **Lesson 10: Sin Exposed** — According to the law, David should have died for despising the commandment of the Lord. But God in His great mercy spared David's life and put away his sin. But that doesn't mean that his sins went without consequences. The repercussions of his sins were great.
- **Lesson 11: Covering Sin** — When the truth in love is presented, any and all sins can be covered — as long as the hearer receives the exposure of their sin with meekness and responds with humility.
- **Lesson 12: Administering Shame** — Never despise the administering of shame, for it will determine whether or not one will make the judgment seat of Christ or find himself or herself at the white throne.
- **Lesson 13: Setting Expectations** — Everybody will not receive you (so don't assume that they will)!!! Therefore, whether responsible for doing pulpit ministry or the standard ministry of reconciliation, it behooves each of us to have proper expectations and be ready to take the God-prescribed course of action.

He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit is saying to the church.



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