**Let Us Reason Together (TV program for September 18, 2017)**

We are members of the Oak Ridge church of Christ. We call ourselves Christians ([**Acts 11:26**](http://oakridgechurch.lakesonline.com/passage.asp?v=Acts%2011:26)) and we hold to the Bible as our one and only Truth. Church of Christ is a biblical description of Christians who work together for the cause of Christ ([**Romans 16:16**](http://oakridgechurch.lakesonline.com/passage.asp?v=Romans%2016:16)). We are independent assemblies with no organization beyond our own number as described in [**Philippians 1:1**](http://oakridgechurch.lakesonline.com/passage.asp?v=Philippians%201:1). There are Christians across the world working with local congregations of God’s people such as described in [**Revelation 2**](http://oakridgechurch.lakesonline.com/passage.asp?v=Revelation%202)**-3**. Christians are members of Christ’s body, which is also known as His Church ([**Acts 2:47**](http://oakridgechurch.lakesonline.com/passage.asp?v=Acts%202:47)**,**[**Ephesians 5:23**](http://oakridgechurch.lakesonline.com/passage.asp?v=Ephesians%205:23)). Our mission is to stand for God’s truth (the gospel) and teach it to all people ([**Matthew 28:18-20**](http://oakridgechurch.lakesonline.com/passage.asp?v=Matthew%2028:18-20)**,**[**Romans 1:16**](http://oakridgechurch.lakesonline.com/passage.asp?v=Romans%201:16)**,**[**1 Timothy 3:15**](http://oakridgechurch.lakesonline.com/passage.asp?v=1%20Timothy%203:15)). We are accountable to our one and only Head Jesus Christ ([**Ephesians 1:22-23**](http://oakridgechurch.lakesonline.com/passage.asp?v=Ephesians%201:22-23)**,**[**Colossians 1:18**](http://oakridgechurch.lakesonline.com/passage.asp?v=Colossians%201:18)).

We see a great example of reasoning with those who need to hear the gospel in **Acts chapter 17**. Paul reasoned with the Jews in Thessalonica in the synagogue for three Sabbaths in a row (**Acts 17:1-9**). This was obviously a potentially hostile environment. It eventually resulted in some violence toward Jason and some of the brethren. But the violence was not a result of Paul’s demeanor, but rather the result of the hard heartedness of those Jews (**Acts 17:5**). He explained and demonstrated that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead. He preached Christ to them.

Paul reasoned with the people of Athens as recorded later in **Acts chapter 17:16-17**. His spirit was provoked at the site of how the city was full of idols. In Athens he again reasoned with the Jews and the Gentile worshippers in the synagogue. He also reasoned with those who happened to be in the marketplace. He preached to them about Jesus and the resurrection (**Acts 17:18**). He was mocked, but not because of his demeanor but rather because of the mindset of the Athenians (**Acts 17:19-21**). He then proceeded to find common ground and then taught about judgment and the resurrection (**Acts 17:22-34**).

In both cases Paul had an attitude of reasoning with these folks. Reasoning with them so that they would realize they needed to become disciples of Jesus Christ. There was violence in Thessalonica and there was mocking in Athens. However I want us to be impressed with Paul’s demeanor. He did not neglect to teach these folks. However, he did not debate with them either. He reasoned with them about important things related to their salvation. And in both cases some believed and some did not (**Acts 17:4 and 17:34**).

Today we may see a tendency in some Christians, when they see a hint of a hostile environment or a situation where folks may mock or make fun, that they and we become passive. We are tempted to not make waves by telling folks what they need to hear so they can be saved from their sins. In other times we might be tempted to go into debate mode, where we become more interested in winning an argument rather than winning souls to Jesus.

Paul shows us how to find a proper balance in teaching. He gives us an example of one who is not passive and is not combative. I am not saying that there might be some occasions where we need to be passive for the moment and I realize that at times we do need to defend the gospel and where our heart and hope is. But I believe brethren, that the majority of the time it is most effective to have the attitude of Paul; that is “**Let us reason together**.”

Let us now look at a couple more passages that relate to this type of reasoning:

* Let us reason together (**Isaiah 1:16-20**)
* Our reasoning needs to include the truth that those we are teaching need to hear (**Mark 10:21-22, John 4:17-18**)

The secret is finding the proper balance that is not too passive and not too harsh or combative. There may be times where it is best to be passive and other times when we need to stand firm in the defense of Jesus. But Paul’s example shows us that most of the time the best approach in reaching out to those around us is to reason together. Simply point out what Jesus says and back that up with His Word. Then allow the hearer to make a choice whether or not to follow Jesus.

Maybe tonight the reasoning of the gospel has touched your heart? We encourage you to have the attitude of those who submitted to God’s will on the day of Pentecost (**Acts 2:36-42**). Please respond to the gospel call now, before it is too late!

Please check the scriptures we have covered tonight. We want to help you in any way we can. Contact us for Bible studies, by telephone, e-mail, or simply come to one of our assemblies. Our next live program is planned for October 2, 2017 when we hope to study “**Who Do I Follow?**” We hope to see you next time on **"Speaking The Truth In Love".**