**A Time For Truth (Oak Ridge, TN: 10-18-2020)**

Right up front I want to say, one reason for this sermon is to challenge myself and maybe others. I have been thinking about this for a couple months. It was first triggered by Brian’s Corinthian class when we were discussing how we need to be aware of the consciences of others on matters of opinion. This is true when we interact with brethren, when we interact with family, and when we interact with anyone; Jew or Gentile as Paul would put it. When we can honor the consciences of others, while maintaining our faithfulness to God, we need to do that. This is the attitude that should be part of our walk in Jesus. There will come times, however, when our neighbors, friends, family, and each other need the truth.

A few years back I was involved with a study at my house with three gentlemen. We were having a great study and then we came upon a passage that indicated that Jesus is God. I explained to these folks that I believed that Jesus was God and not a created being. This offended them greatly. They were so offended they started calling me names and got very harsh. What was I to do? Back down on my belief in order to honor the consciences of these men? I told them I believe Jesus was God and that I was not ashamed of that. These men needed to hear the truth, as we all do, that Jesus is the Christ, the Creator of the World, eternal God, who died for us, and is now reigning as our King.

There is a time for truth and I want to briefly touch upon some Bible examples of this.

(1) **Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego** (**Daniel 3**) – Daniel’s friends had developed good relationships with all and had been promoted (**Daniel 2:49**). But when it came time for them to bow down to the King’s idols, they took a stand for God and for truth; and as a result, influenced many for good (**Daniel 3:28-30**).

(2) **Daniel** (**Daniel 6**) – Daniel was highly regarded by all, even the King. However, when he is told he could not pray to His God for 30 days, he took a stand for truth; and as a result, influenced many for good (**Daniel 6:25-27**).

(3) **Jesus** (**John 4**) shows us the same approach. He meets a Samaritan woman and takes the opportunity to tell her about living water and in the conversation points out how her life is not right (**John 4:17-18**). This leads to more opportunities to speak the truth to all the Samaritans (**John 4:41**). Later Jesus (**Mark 10**) has a young man come up to Him asking him what He needs to do in order to inherit eternal life. Obviously Jesus is impressed by this young man as it states that He loved him. But Jesus also knows this young man needs the truth (**Mark 10:21**).

(4) **Peter** with Simon the Sorcerer (**Acts 8**) – Simon is enticed when he sees the power that God has given to the apostles. He gives into temptation and needs someone to tell him the truth (**Acts 8:22**).

(5) **Paul** in Athens (**Acts 17**) – Paul interacts with those in the marketplace and becomes known to the philosophers. But even these highly educated people need God’s truth (**Acts 17:23**). And some believe (**Acts 17:34**).

(6) **Paul** with Felix (**Acts 24:25**) – Paul has developed a relationship with Felix. But Paul knows Felix needs the truth on important matters.

I want to be more like these men. In all these examples, there came a time when people needed to know the truth. We need to develop relationships and people need to know that we truly care about them and their soul. There will come a time when they need to know the truth in order to save their soul. These opportunities can be challenging. It takes wisdom, prayer, meditation, boldness, and practice to know how to best share the truth with them, but we know this is what brings glory to God.

* God wants His children to be seeking and saving those who are lost.
* God wants His children to help each other as we walk the path to eternal life.

When these opportunities come along, we may face suffering and persecution, but some will be saved because of it. There have been times in my life and maybe in yours, where, peer pressure or political correctness has tempted me to be ashamed and hold back of what I believe as a child of God. This can happen to young and old!

* We need to be seeking the lost.
* We need to speak the Truth when someone contradicts the teachings of Jesus and not be focused on what the folks around us might think.
* When someone points out or praises something that is in opposition to God’s will, we should not be silent but humbly share God’s Truth on the matter.
* In our Bible studies, we need to show people what they need to know on a matter even though it may not be politically correct.

The bottom line is; Christians never want to be ashamed of God the Father, God the Son, or God the Holy Spirit. We want to be proud of God and live in a way that we honor them. And we also want our neighbor and our brethren to know that we love them, sincerely care about them, and are willing to tell them the Truth that they need to hear. Here are some verses that can motivate us in these goals!

**Psalm 25:20, 31:1, 17, 119:46, 80,**

**Romans 1:16,**

**Philippians 1:19-21,**

**2 Timothy 1:8, 2:15,**

**Hebrews 2:11, 11:16,**

**1 Peter 3:13-17, 4:16,**

**1 John 2:28**

***How About You?***

Maybe you are like me, and need to challenge yourself to share God’s truth more? No better time to decide to do better!

If not a Christian, you need to humbly believe in Jesus, confess that He is the Son of God, repent of your sins, and be baptized to wash those sins away. Because one day you will answer to our Awesome and Merciful God (**Mark 8:38**)!

Please let your wishes be known if we can help you this morning!