

Today's Sermons

Morning: The Conversion of a Military Officer
Afternoon: Bounds & Limits of Fellowship

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Sunday AM Worship	50
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Number 02

“Speaking The Truth In Love”

James E. Farley

We often see these words on church bulletins. It is an effort, no doubt, for congregations to let those who visit them know that the motive behind what they will hear on the Lord's Day is love. This is good and right, for we should have love as our motive for teaching the unsearchable riches of Christ. We are to be seen as people who love!

There are three good points in this short phrase from Ephesians 4:15.

1) The truth must be spoken. Our religion is a taught religion (John 6:44-45). People must hear the Word taught in order to have faith in God and in Jesus the Christ (Rom. 10:17; Acts 4:4; Acts 18:8). Therefore we are commissioned, “Go...into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mark 16-15). The early Christians did just that (Acts 8:4-5), and within a thirty year period “every creature which is under heaven” heard the Word (Col. 1:23). We still have the great obligation of taking the Word of God to a lost and dying world. God still has preaching as His plan for saving those who will believe (I Cor. 1:18-21). When you investigate a faithful congregation of the churches of Christ, you will find a people who are dedicated to taking the Word to the world.

Continued Inside

“TRAIN UP A
CHILD IN THE
WAY HE SHOULD GO:
AND WHEN HE IS
OLD, HE WILL NOT
DEPART FROM IT.”

HOLY BIBLE
PROV. 22:6

Minister:

Tim Canup

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Times of Services:

Sunday

Bible Study:... 10:00am

AM Worship:...11:00am

PM Worship:...6:00pm

2nd Sunday:.....1:30pm

Wednesday

Bible Study:.....7:00pm

Radio Program

Sunday:.....7:30am

“Back to the Bible”

AM 580 WSKS

93.5 FM

**We Extend A
Warm & Cordial**

**Welcome
To All Our
Visitors!**

2) That which is to be spoken is “the truth” — “the Gospel of Christ.” It is the truth that will set men free (John 8:31-32). In that context it is obvious that “the truth” is the Word of God (compare John 17:17). Paul called it “...the word of the truth of the gospel” in Colossians 1:5. It is God’s power to save mankind for it reveals God’s righteousness — God’s right ways (Rom. 1:17). We are instructed in God’s righteousness through the verbally inspired Word given by God’s marvelous grace (II Tim. 3:16-17; Titus 2:11-12). It must be spoken, preached, taught to every nation (Matt. 28:18-20). The unbelieving Philippian jailer asked what he must do and was told to “believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house” (Acts 16:31). But the Bible does not stop there. The next two verses state, “And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized; he and all his straightway.” The Word of God must be spoken! Churches of Christ believe that the Word must be sowed as seed in this world (Luke 8:11; cf. Matt. 15:13).

3) Here is the motivation, we must love God, Jesus, the Word, the church of Christ and the souls of all men everywhere. Too many people have a wrong idea about real Bible love. As one has put it, “They seem to think love is a feeling they feel when they begin to feel like they have never felt before.” When people have the idea that love is some kind of feel-good emotion, you often hear them criticize sound preachers and Bible teachers for being “too harsh.” We hear them say things like: “You need more of the spirit of Christ. You talk about hell too much, and this does not show forth the loving spirit that Jesus had.” But friends, real love always will sound out a warning of danger. The Word teaches, “open rebuke is better than secret love” (Prov. 27:5). No. We do not ever want to be mean-spirited, but we must sound out warnings about the danger of folks being lost when they will not abide in Christ’s doctrine (II John 9-11).

God loves us (John 3:16), but He certainly warns of danger (Ezek. 3:17-21; Acts 18:6; Acts 20:26-31). God will not accept our claim that we love others, if we do not warn others of hell. Jesus gave STRONG warnings of danger! Someone has suggested that Jesus spoke 13 times more about hell than about heaven. Does this suggest that our Lord was unloving? Read Matthew 13:41-50, 15:7-14, 23:33 and Mark 9:43-44. Did Jesus express a wrong spirit here? To those who were blinded by the world’s riches, Jesus taught about Lazarus and the rich man. Strong warning! Wrong spirit? NO! The God of love has placed into our hands His revealed mind, the Holy Bible. In the Bible we read such passages as II Thessalonians 1:7-10, Revelation 20:15 and 21:8. These things are not pleasant, but people need to face the facts! There is a heaven to gain and a hell to shun!

Churches of Christ are resolved to keep preaching the Truth on these matters by speaking the truth in love. We will do it “in season and out of season...reprove, rebuke and exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine” (II Tim. 4:2). We fully realize that some won’t like it, but we must do it anyway! Compare Galatians 4:16. Love sounds out a warning of danger (II Cor. 5:10-11).

God Gives Us A Choice

Selected

We are made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26). Part of our uniqueness is our ability to reason and the blessing of choice. Even when we ask others to choose for us we exercise choice. With each choice there are consequences.

Cain chose to offer a gift contrary to God’s instructions, and then chose to kill his brother (Genesis 4). We cannot blame God for Cain’s choice - nor for similar choices people make today. It grieves us when a loved one departs from God’s path, but we cannot blame God. When evil comes upon a loved one because they, or even others, have made a bad choice - why blame or even question God? With choice comes the responsibility to choose wisely.

We can choose to live faithful to God, and are encouraged by all who make that choice. This choice brings the abundant life and salvation. What will you choose?

.....
“And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end: That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises. For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself, Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil” (Hebrews 6:11-19).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Jan 8 – Preach & Eat; 1:30 Worship
- Jan 29 – Song Service
- Please give support money for Chinese orphans to Minnie Kennell