

MARK JENKINS MINISTRIES

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The Truth In Love

Dear Friend,

I love the Word of God. Everything necessary to live victoriously is within God's written Word. I get excited reading the scriptures, particularly the letters written by the Apostle Paul, because each time I do the Holy Ghost reveals a little more of the understanding contained within those words. Unfortunately, in my excitement, I have at times been guilty of assuming everyone else needed to hear what I learned. (Please pray for Debbie, she's frequently been my "captive" audience, either willingly or unwillingly.)

What's so tremendous about God's Word is that it originated from outside this natural world. Consequently, reading the scriptures is different than reading any other book, because what appears to be words on a page are actually much more. The Bible is God speaking to us. Imagine that, the God of the universe has bridged the gap from His world of the spirit to our natural world to give us His Word.

That's why mental comprehension of God's Word is not enough. The mysteries held within those words must be unveiled to us, beginning in our spirit. This is referred to as a revelation. Anyone who spends time praying in tongues and meditating the Word will soon discover an increase in their revelation knowledge. Praying in tongues is a "revelation gift". One minute it's business as usual and the next, seemingly out of nowhere, revelation comes.

The best illustration I can think of is the old process of film developing. For those that aren't familiar; when a picture is taken with a camera requiring film it must be processed in order to reveal the image. A negative is made from the film. Light is allowed to pass through the negative, thereby exposing photo paper to the image, resulting in the transfer of a latent or hidden image onto the paper. Chemicals are then introduced to reveal the latent image, producing an exact replica of the scene captured by the photographer.

Once the image is transferred to the photo paper, it's there. Although, it's hidden until the chemical reaction causes it to appear. It's this process of revealing the image contained on the photo paper that best describes receiving a revelation from God. The Holy Ghost **illuminates** the Word sown in our hearts causing that latent image to be revealed to our spirit. Then, the understanding of this mystery passes from our spirit to our natural mind. The hidden image contained within the Word of God has completed its journey from God to us.

There is so much to say about revelation knowledge and how it will change a person's life forever. But, what we want to focus on in this letter is more about what we do after receiving the revelation, because that is as important, if not more important than even the revelation itself. There are a few things we must bear in mind so we don't upset too many people's apple carts. I say that as a warning to you because I have upset some apple carts at times and reaped the consequences. If a person is content with their understanding of the scriptures, right or wrong, we must respect that or risk offending them.

First, keep in mind, it may seem like the revelation came to you in a moment, but understand that many things had to take place in order to receive that revelation. For example, any wrong believing had to be exposed. Once exposed, we had to embrace the truth shown to us and reject the false doctrine, no matter how long we believed it. That might not sound like such a big deal until faced with having to turn loose of a belief that has been passed on from one generation to the next.

Second, don't be naïve and fail to appreciate all the time you spent investing in your own spiritual development, which has paved the way to receive this revelation. What might seem to have taken only a moment to happen has most likely required much more than we realize. Often, several other revelations have had to take place in order to lay the groundwork for what we received. It is like putting a jigsaw puzzle together. First the picture has to be framed by locating and assembling all the edge pieces before the interior of the puzzle can be assembled.

It's in the putting together process that we see the necessity of several other puzzle pieces going into place first before the size and shape of the piece connecting all of them together is revealed. By placing this one piece in place it joins all the other pieces and reveals a new portion of the puzzle. Just as one puzzle piece relies on several others being present, so too revelations often require the presence of other revelations in order to facilitate the understanding of the one that connects them all together.

Consequently, in our exuberance to share a new revelation we must keep in mind that the same framework necessary to receive this revelation may not be

present in our audience, whether it's a congregation or our friend at the coffee shop. They may or may not have gone through the same preparation process we have and therefore may not be able to receive the truth we are so anxious to share. Our love for the person and their well-being should trump all else. What wisdom is there in disrespecting a person's long held beliefs to the point that they are offended and hurt and fellowship is broken?

There needs to be respect shown to the listener when a message is shared that we know is going to "rock their world". Otherwise, we risk being guilty of doing harm to them under the guise of giving them truth. In other words, taking a jackhammer to a person's foundation is probably not the right approach.

I can recall the time when Debbie and I were still living in Florida on our way to church one Sunday morning. Our drive to church was quite long so we listened to teaching tapes along the way. On this particular Sunday the preacher we were listening to was one that we had grown to love and appreciate. In his message he began to share a revelation he had received regarding how God views New Testament giving.

To this day, Debbie and I still remember how we both felt at that moment because it seemed as if the rug had been pulled out from underneath us. It was like that area of our foundation had a jackhammer taken to it with very little warning and we were looking for something to hold onto.

I have come to realize that I, as a minister, need to always stay aware of the importance of how I deliver the truth the Holy Ghost has revealed to me. If ever you have felt as though I was taking a jackhammer to your foundation, please forgive me. I see now that the Holy Ghost prefers using a scalpel to a jackhammer and willingness on the part of the patient is crucial.

The writer of the book of Hebrews wrote: (Hebrews 4:12)

"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

Handling the word of God is truly an awesome responsibility. Look at the potential described here to carve with laser accuracy, separating the soul and spirit of a man, like a scalpel. Therefore, the responsibility of handling the revelation knowledge we have received cannot be taken lightly. We must resist the temptation to blurt out a mystery that may have taken weeks, months or even

years to receive, especially to prove ourselves right. Lord Jesus help us. I will be the first one to raise my hand and confess my guilt.

What's worse is when we are called out by the Holy Ghost for our actions and we protest, "But it is the truth." Whether or not we have accurately represented the truth of God's words or totally misrepresented it isn't nearly as important as if it was done in love or not. Love must always accompany truth. Not humanistic, selfish love that is only interested in self-gratification. The love that must accompany truth is God's love. It is love that suffers long and is kind. God's love doesn't envy what the other person has or present itself in a way that builds one's self up while diminishing another.

This love is real love and it's who God is, because God is love. Since God is love and God and His Word are one, look at the picture this paints. **God's Word and love must accompany one another in order to produce the correct results.** It is the reason the Apostle Paul wrote in his letter to the church at Ephesus the necessity of speaking the truth in love while at the same time stressing the importance of maintaining the unity of the Body of Christ. The Holy Ghost had already shown Paul how contention over God's Word would cause the Body of Christ to be fractured and that is not what God wants.

(Ephesians 4:14-15)

"That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; (15) But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ."

Speaking the truth in love is the basis for true ministry. No matter if it's a minister preaching a Sunday morning message or two co-workers sitting in the break room discussing the things of God, any time the truth of God's Word is being shared it is supposed to flow from a heart of love whose only motivation is to bless the hearer. Otherwise, what is at stake is the unity that Paul spoke of with such conviction in the preceding verses. (Ephesians 4:1-6)

"I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that you walk worthy of the vocation wherewith you are called, (2) With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; (3) Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. (4) There is one body, and one Spirit, even as you are called in one hope of your calling; (5) One Lord, one faith, one baptism, (6) One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."

Repeatedly, throughout Paul's letters to the various churches he warned them, and subsequently us, by the Holy Ghost, to avoid division with fellow believers at all costs. It should be no surprise that immediately following Paul's admonishment to the believers in Ephesus to endeavor to remain in unity that he would instruct them to **speak the truth in love**.

There is a world of difference between **speaking the truth** and **speaking the truth in love**. You might ask, "How do you know this, Mark?". Again, I must confess that I am speaking from experience, unfortunately. I won't ask for a show of hands if anyone besides me has been guilty of this in the past. The fact is, this is where Satan successfully splits more churches and brings more division to the Body of Christ, generally under the guise of wanting to be doctrinally correct.

I like what I heard one older minister say regarding how he approached this issue as a traveling minister. He said he would often touch on certain areas briefly that he thought might be new to the congregation and see what kind of response he received. Often the Pastor would ask him to say more along those lines and so he would. In other words, he was very conscious of his audience and what they were accustomed to hearing. He knew it wasn't his job to go into a church and upset their apple cart, but at the same time he very cautiously shared truth that was new to them. That is wisdom.

What I have learned as I have gone back over Paul's letters is that unity and love seems to come before setting the record straight doctrinally. Last week I felt impressed to read beginning at Acts 13 through Philemon. The reoccurring message without a doubt was the importance of keeping out of division and keeping in unity. At some level we need to be able to connect with any and all born again believers, if at no other point than our shared faith in the blood of Jesus.

I believe we are going to be quite surprised when we are in heaven together and see all who make up His Body. Yes, His Body, a Body united. What He wants is His Body united here and not fractured over such issues as; whether or not we are to be baptized in the Name of Jesus or in the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Lord Jesus help us.

My prayer is that the Holy Ghost would teach me how to walk harmoniously with other members of His body and that I would endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. I hope that can be your prayer as well. Let it be said of us that we are people focused more on loving one another and endeavoring to be in unity with each other even though what we believe doesn't always agree, so long as salvation by the blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, remains intact.

Speaking the truth in love eliminates all wrong motivations. Love won't allow a person to drive home a point for the sake of being right. Love seeks not its own, it isn't focused on self. The focus of love is on the other person. What are they able to hear? Will this bless them or just prove them wrong.

The manner in which we answer the following question will always produce the best results:

Since this is His Body, what would Jesus say in this situation?

If you ever find yourself at times at odds, as I have, with others in the Body of Christ, here is what the Holy Ghost showed me. Any position that is taken at odds with another member of the Body is a position taken against Jesus. As I thought about that and I envisioned myself going to that brother and hugging him and telling him I love him, in my spirit I saw myself hugging Jesus.

Finally, the bottom line regarding speaking the truth in love should be about loving the person or people to whom we are sharing this truth. Loving them demands that we be sensitive to the leading of the Holy Ghost as to whether or not they are ready to hear what we have to share. I do thank God for the times when He used anointed men of God to speak the truth in love to me. As a well trained surgeon the Holy Ghost was able to use those Words spoken in love like a scalpel to gently but effectively separate a little more of my soul from my spirit and help me to see some things that before were blind to me. Thank God for truth, but more importantly, thank God for truth spoken in love.

~ Grace be with you

Mark Jenkins