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THE SURE WORD By Jonnie Hutchison

“HAVE I BECOME YOUR ENEMY?”

The apostle Paul wrote by inspiration of the Holy Spirit asking the Galatians this very pointed question “Have I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the truth?” (Galatians 4:16). Truth does not change simply because one rejects it. Truth is truth no matter how one responds to it. Paul told the truth to the Galatians, not to make them his enemies, but to save their souls. The truth Paul preached did not originate with him. Galatians 1:11-12, “But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ.” That “revelation of Jesus Christ” is now written down in the New Testament. It is truth, divinely revealed truth. And, like Paul, those who speak God’s revealed truth are often viewed as the enemy of those who reject that truth, but that does not change the truth.

Each person is free either to accept the truth or reject the truth. If one learns something from God’s truth which he or she has not previously known and it contradicts what he or she has always believed, then he or she has a choice to make. Either hold on to what one has always believed or choose to accept and obey the truth. Whichever choice one makes it will have no impact upon the truth. However, it will have an eternal impact upon the one who makes the choice.

Jesus taught, “He **who believes and is baptized** shall be saved; but he who does not believe shall be condemned” (Mark 16:16). Did Jesus speak the truth? What did Jesus say was essential to salvation? Is it belief only without baptism? Or did Jesus include both belief and baptism as essential to being saved? Which is the truth? The truth is clear – Jesus taught that a person must both believe and be baptized to be saved. You may have always been taught and believed baptism is not necessary to salvation, but that does not change the truth Jesus taught. What choice will you make dear reader? Will you accept or reject the truth Jesus taught? This writer is obligated to “speak the truth in love.” Have I become your enemy because I tell you the truth?

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