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THE SURE WORD By Jonnie Hutchison

“HAVE I BECOME YOUR ENEMY?”

Only the truth revealed by God in His written Word will free one from the spiritual bondage of sin (John 8:32; 17:17). The church of Christ is the “pillar and ground of the truth” (1 Timothy 3:15). Our Lord instructs us to take His truth to every person in the world (Mark 16:15). It is an obligation that faithful Christians take very seriously. Our love for lost souls allows no other option. That is why we strive always to speak the truth in love to as many as will open their minds to listen.

The truth God has revealed in the Bible is not always easy for men and women to hear. The writer of Hebrews tells us, “For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart” (Hebrews 4:12). Such powerful truth impacts every person who hears it. It exposes our true inner self, that part of us which we may hide from our fellow man, but which cannot escape the scrutiny of God’s Word. Often, when God’s truth is taught there is a negative reaction. When Stephen preached God’s truth to the Jews of his day concerning their true spiritual condition the Bible records their reaction in Acts 7:54, 57-58, “When they heard these things they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed at him with their teeth....then they cried out with a loud voice, stopped their ears, and ran at him with one accord; and they cast him out of the city and stoned him.” Stephen died because those to whom he preached the gospel did not want to hear the truth that they were spiritually lost because of their sins. Their reaction was to attack the messenger and ignore the message.

Paul was inspired by the Holy Spirit to write God’s truth to the church. He warned them about accepting a “different gospel” than the original gospel he had preached to them (Gal. 1:6-10). He also warned them against turning again to the “weak and beggarly elements” to which they had once been in bondage (Gal. 4:9, 10). Paul asked this question – “Have I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the truth?” (Gal. 4:16). Paul had no other motive than the spiritual good of his hearers.

Dear friend, you can accept or reject God’s truth. But our love for God and your precious soul will not allow us to do any less than speak the truth regardless of whether it makes you our enemy or not.