

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Matthew 28: 18-20, NIV

Jesus charged Christians to

1. Evangelize the world.
2. Disciple Christians.

Obedying Christ entails other aspects, but I would like to share with you one of those aspects that the Church has neglected. That responsibility is to leave our comfort zone and speak up for 1) Jesus the Living Truth and 2) the Bible the Written Truth. The Church is under great pressure from Satan to accommodate sin. We cannot help people find Christ by *lying* to them—this grieves the Holy Spirit.

I love the Jews. God made a special covenant with Abraham and his descendents—the nation of Israel. I am pro-Israel and believe the Abrahamic Covenant is still in effect. However, individual Jews cannot be saved through this covenant and to tell them that they have another way of salvation is wrong—this is a disservice to Jews and can lead them to eternal separation from God. *No one can be saved by keeping the Mosaic Law.* The Law is *good*, but no one can keep it! That is why God instituted the Old Testament sacrificial system. It taught the seriousness of sin and that an animal had to die when one sinned. However, it was but a

*type*

of God's

*lamb*

Jesus who died for our sins. Sacrificed animals could not forgive sin. Only Jesus' sacrifice can.

Jesus is the Messiah who died for us once-and-for-all. His sacrifice is the *only* way to be saved. The Apostle Peter was a Messianic Jew and—under the anointing of the Holy Spirit—clearly

stated:

"Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name [Jesus Christ] under heaven given to men by which we must be saved."

Acts 4:12, NIV

Another way the Church has compromised is to allow couples to cohabitate without being married. This is *fornication*, which is a sin. Some couples who cohabitate are allowed leadership positions in churches! Apparently, one pastor offered a special speaker three girls to "minister to his needs"! He immediately left the building. These practices grieve me, an imperfect human being. How much more is the Holy Spirit grieved!

Some teach *biblical* prosperity, but others teach *covetousness* in disguise. These teachers tell people what their flesh wants to hear and the false teachers receive

*riches*

and

*honor*

as a result:

For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths.

2 Timothy 4:3-4, NIV

Let us take a stand for God and speak the truth in love:

It was he [Jesus] who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming. Instead, *speaking the truth in love* [my italics], we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ.

Ephesians 4:11-15, NIV

Under the Old Covenant, people had a responsibility to speak up for *truth* and *justice*:

" 'If a person sins because he does not speak up when he hears a public charge to testify regarding something he has seen or learned about, he will be held responsible.' "

Leviticus 5:1, NIV

Under the New Covenant, we have a similar mandate to speak the truth in order that people recognize sin, repent and be saved.

Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. For it is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret. But everything exposed by the light becomes visible,

Ephesians 5:11-13, NIV

Agustus Strong shares biblical truth and tells us that we have a responsibly to study God's Word and obey him:

It is our duty to do better than we know. Our duty of knowing is as real as our duty of doing. Sin is an opiate. Some of the most deadly diseases do not reveal themselves in the patient's countenance nor has the patient any adequate understanding of his malady. There is ignorance, which is indolence. Men are often unwilling to take the trouble of rectifying their standards of judgment. There is also ignorance, which is intention. Instance many students' ignorance of College laws.

Strong 1907, 1948

We cannot excuse disobedience by saying: "I forgot." God's commandment is: "Remember" — as in Exodus 20:8; cf. Peter 3:5 — "For this they willfully forget." "*Ignorantia legis neminem excusat* ." Romans 2:12 — "as many as have sinned without the law shall also perish without the law"; Luke 12:43 — "he that knew not and did things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten [though] with few stripes."

## □ A Christian's Responsibility Today

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The aim of revelation and of preaching is to bring man "to himself"

Luke 15:17 — to show him what he has been doing and what he is. Goethe: "We are never deceived; we deceive ourselves." Royce, *World and Individual*, 2:359 — "The sole possible free moral action is then a freedom that relates to the present fixing of attention upon the ideas of the Ought which are already present. To sin is consciously to choose to forget, through a narrowing of the field of attention, an Ought that one already recognizes."

Strong 1907, 1949

The heart of Jesus is broken over the condition of the Church.

What will we be? *Stumbling blocks* to those who need Christ or *Stepping stones* to help people find Christ?

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