

# Stand On The Truth

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And so we have been in two Corinthians. And today what I'm going to go over is Paul's conclusion to a long section in his attempt to defend his own ministry, show the folly of others who would lead people away from the simple christian message. And I just have to re emphasize that this is not necessarily a message that is designed to be exciting or entertaining. And I think everyone could probably agree with that, that this knot has maybe not been looking through this section been so entertaining, but the goal of it is actually to preserve a people focused on the simple message of Jesus Christ. Whether it was entertaining or not is of little importance.

What is important is whether or not a people, when confronted with a false gospel, whether or not they stay with that simple message when put under that temptation, and whether or not our success is not based on whether or not individuals have enjoyed messages or not. Our success as a church comes when that temptation comes upon you and I, when you and I fall under the temptation that is surrounding us in the world. That Paul said to those Ephesians warned you night and day with tears, that even from your own midst people would rise up to draw people away after them, that wolves would come in, not sparing the flock. Our success as a church comes not whether, how much you enjoy Sunday morning, but whether or not in that time of temptation that draws people away from the simple message that is found in Jesus Christ, whether you stand or nothing, not whether you like anyone or any of the elders as people, but whether you stand on the truth of Jesus Christ. In my hope and desire, whether or not necessarily appreciated this message, I hope that you can remember that there is a battle going on for our hearts, and I hope that someone would be

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encouraged to stand strong in a time of temptation that's going to and we are all going to encounter.

Okay, now we're going to go to second Corinthians, chapter 13. This is the conclusion of this lengthy message to the Corinthians to stand true.

Chapter 13, verse seven of second Corinthians.

Second Corinthians 13 710. Now I pray to God that you do no evil, not that we should appear approved, but that you should do what is honorable, though we may seem to be disqualified. For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth. For we are glad when we are weak and you are strong. And this also we pray that you may be made complete.

Therefore I write these things, being absent, lest being present, I should use sharpness according to the authority which the Lord has given me for edification and not for destruction. So I just ask that you would pray with me, you know, in a similar spirit that Paul prayed with those Ephesians, that it would use this time that we've set apartheid for the most benefit as possible for the furtherance of that work which God is doing in our souls. Would you pray with me, oh, Father? Lord, we come to you, Lord, confessing that so oftentimes our mind stray and are desiring other things. Lord, I pray that in this time, Lord, that you'd use this to the most advantage of possible.

Lord, we just ask in Jesus name, amen. Okay, so as we look at this, Paul is going to set a little bit of a pattern in his recap of this several chapter long emphasis on them staying true to the faith. He's going to give a pattern of his ministry, of why he is preaching this way. And so we're going to look at that. I pray that we can look not only in our own lives to see this affect our own hearts, but also as we're given the opportunity and have spiritual authority, we shouldn't be surprised at the direction that God takes us in our desire to bring people along in the christian faith.

That should not be a surprise if we encounter a similar pattern. Okay. And we should see this in our lives if we're walking in the ministry that God has for us. Okay. Verse seven.

It says, now I pray to God that you should do no evil, not that we should appear approved, but that you should do what is honorable, though we may seem disqualified. Paul's prayer here is that people should do no evil. We live in a twisted, upside down world where good is called evil and evil good. Paul is here with a pastoral heart, a cry coming from his soul that people could avoid the temptation, the distraction and the destruction of evil in their lives. I would tend to think that if you have lived any length of time, that there has been at least a moment in your life where you have desired or encouraged evil in your heart.

You purposed after it, you sought it, you encouraged it, you developed it, hoping to experience evil. Paul here is crying out with a heart for the people he has spiritual authority over. I pray that you wouldn't do any evil. You see, evil has an effect on the lives of people that the people themselves are not necessarily aware of. They don't understand.

And we as a group don't necessarily always understand the effect of evil in our hearts. And Paul is showing here as a spiritual authority, as someone over people, that his desire is for them to avoid evil, that that destructive work on them they could avoid. You can see this similar in prayer. Jesus came to save people from their sin. Yeah, from the effect of sin.

Absolutely, from hell, but also from the effect of sin on their lives in this earth. We can hear him praying out with loud and anguished cries in the garden, just wanting to see people's lives saved from the effect of sin. You and I have been brought into this world under the curse. This terrible malady, this deep disease that we suffer from, that tends to think that displeasure or disobedience to God is pleasure. What a tremendous, awful burden to carry.

What a rock, what a stone. What a horrid condition to inherit from your fathers. How could we ever carry this through the life that tend to think that disobedience to God is our pleasure, that warfare, that open rebellion is something to be encouraged. We make ourselves prey to the devil. He comes as a thief.

He comes to steal, kill and destroy. And we are in weakness. We are in a damaged, in a destructive place. We are so open to that thievery. We make ourselves available to that destruction.

Oh, what a horrid place that we're in. What a tremendously destructive place. If you look at your own life and you thought on those nights or those circumstances or those weeks or years where you developed or encouraged that temptation to come in your life, and you can say, oh, what a waste, what a pain, what a burden, what wasted years, what hurt and awful trials. What kinds of spears did I thrust through my own body? Because I have been subject to a curse that I inherited, my fathers that made me available to the thievery of the devil.

We see Paul just crying out, oh, that they wouldn't do evil. I know we're your children. I've heard it so many times from these rap stars or musicians or things. And they write this music about how they love to engage in this debauchery and evilness. And then they have a child and they're like, oh, my God, let me think about this just a minute.

Do I really want my daughter to go experience me somewhere else?

There's got to be a crying heart in people. Oh, save people from their sin. Avoid it. Do not pass by. Go away from it.

Run from it. Turn from it. Run away. The danger and the destruction is more than you can handle. Paul says, I pray to God, I that you should do no evil.

The goal of the christian message of the simple biblical truth is to save people from sin. It is the only message that gives individuals power to overcome the curse that they were born with. Because Jesus became a. A curse for us. He took that curse upon his own body, and he received our curse for us, to free us from that unnatural and ungodly willingness to pursue an enmity with God.

He took it on his own self. The simple message of Jesus Christ saves people from their sin. And when we are willing to follow false teachers, it draws people away from the security. Security, the safety and the power of the christian message. It is vitally

important that the simple message of Jesus Christ remain steadfast and in the center, because it is the only message which saves people from sin.

There are lots of other messages based on philosophy. They are of no value. They don't address the curse, and they don't address your sin. They cannot save from sin. There are religious messages that tried to get people to look good on the outside, but they do nothing on the inside.

There are people who just say, oh, just do carnal things. It does not help. The simple christian message is the only one that saves people from evil. And Paul is steadfast in maintaining the christian message because he firmly believes it is the only one that can save people from the effect of evil on their lives.

Part of the danger that he's going to encounter that in the second part of verse seven, that he says that the reason that we do and we preach this message, this message that actually has power to save from sin, it says in verse seven, not that we should appear approved. There is, as an individual encounters this message that saves people from their sin, there is absolutely a desire and another temptation that we would use that for our own benefit as ministers of the gospel. And Paul is saying, look, the reason we preach this message isn't to. To elevate our own selves. There is a tendency, I would hate to say it, but I pray in humility, to count numbers.

Right. There are in our own hearts a desire to elevate ourselves by a certain number of followers or notches on our bible. Or some say this is saying, look, the reason we preach this is nothing to gain some sort of elevation for our own selves. It's a very real, real temptation for those individuals who are in spiritual ministry, especially ministries that appear effective or attractive, to appear approved. But this is the thing that the Pharisees stumbled at.

This is the leaven of the Pharisees that gets into everyone's lives that they all have to struggle with. Not. But it says, not that we should be approved, but this is what it says. But that you should do what is honorable. The reason is not to elevate any type of worker in christian ministry, but that we should take, hopefully see a people saved

from evil and engage them in a work that is honorable.

The christian message, that simple message which Jesus brought to us, is that which makes an individual's work honorable. I don't know about you or not, but at some point in your life you have to reconcile with the idea about whether your life has any meaning, any substance. If you left the world in any place, that was better for the purpose that you were put here. Right? Everyone, I mean, it's nice to enjoy the ride, but every person has to come to a realization at some point in their life that we are not here just to enjoy the ride.

It's nice to be comfortable. It's nice to have fun and smile and be around friends. But that's not necessarily why God called you. God called you to give you an opportunity to work beside him in a ministry that he is engaged in. He carries a yoke already and he wants to share it with you.

Not because it's a heavy one for you to carry, not because he needs help, not because he's struggling under the load, as if he needed someone to help him with his cross. No, because he's looking for the opportunity to share his riches, to share his glory, to share his strength with people who will yoke up with him. And that yoke is doing a work in the lives of people that is honorable. That is honorable. You and I want to have some sort of meaning in life.

We strive and desire to do something of value. But I am here saying that this christian message, this simple christian message that Paul is defending is the message which comes along with good works, or say that the other way, good works always follow true Christianity. Honorable deeds always accompany that walk which is with Jesus Christ. People care when they walk with Jesus because Jesus cares. People alleviate sufferings of others when they are under the yoke.

With Jesus because Jesus cares. Right. This honorable lifestyle is associated with the simple message of Jesus Christ. As soon as you leave that basic christian message, you leave that emphasis on good works. It becomes something else.

But I think we can also see in the second part of this pattern, it says, but that you do what is honorable. Though we may seem disqualified, the interesting thing about this is as an individual who has spiritual authority over people, sees individual coming, escaping the snare of the devil, seeing their lives come under the influence of good works. It says, though we may seem disqualified, the first thing that the christian minister has to understand it is not for their own glory to avoid the leaven of the Pharisees. But the second thing we should expect is that if there's an effective ministry, oftentimes it's at the expense of the minister, which is strange, but it's a normal pattern. It's something we should expect, that somehow that even we look at Paul in this moment of time, after having created and in the process of doing such a monster, huge spiritual work that is last done today.

He was in jail, disqualified. We look at Jesus at the very eve of doing a work that would transform the whole world, that all of our focus would always point on Jesus Christ at the verge of carrying his cross the next day. That if we're going to have an effective ministry, it's normal to assume that there's going to be trials along with it, that we're not going to be understood. Jesus said that if they called me Beelzebub, so they would also call you. That when Christ's work gains a footing and gains traction, begins to move forward, there is an attack of the enemy that minimizes the individuals associated with it.

That seems difficult. But we have to ask ourselves, like those disciples who Jesus posed the question, do you also want to go away? We come to the verse eight. It says, for we can do nothing against the truth. But for the truth, you and I have to come to the realization of why we do what we do, why we're willing to walk in the way that we are here.

It says, we can do nothing against the truth in romans, just because my mind's going a little other places. It.

It says, because although they knew God, they did not glorify him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts. And their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools. We live in a time currently where truth has

become subjective, that it is changeable, that is unmovable. But in the christian message, truth remains constant.

I encountered, I think I might have said this one more time before, but countered a slogan in a current movement. And it says, love is love. Love is love, right? And I began to ponder that statement. I don't necessarily like to just throw out a statement if it's not true.

I began to think about it and just wonder about it. Is that true love? Is it really love? Is it subjective? And I thought about what love is.

And love is a lot of things. There is a lot of things that I'm very grateful to experience with my wife or with my children or with friends and family. But is love's definition based on what I experienced? Is the romantic love really always love, because we see, oftentimes individuals who may have experienced a tremendous romance and then a day or a year later, in deep anger and bitterness towards the individual they had loved with just a little while ago. So it couldn't be true love.

And so we see it break down on multiple levels. We see individuals who say they love their wife or their family, and then in deep sorrow or bitterness toward that same person. How could we define real love based on experience? The Bible is completely different. It says that God is love.

God is love. Everything about God's nature is love. It's not based on a subjective feeling. It's not based on a passion that you might experience. It's not based on an emotional or physical attraction.

It is based on God's very nature. God does not change. It says that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. It never changed. God is love is so much more of a sure and real definition of love, but truth, an expression of who God is.

Everything that God expresses is always truth. Jesus says, I am the way, the truth and the life. It says, no one comes to the father except by me. You and I are in a culture that is claiming that love and truth are subjective. It is long the same ideas of Pilate

when he says, what is truth?

As any? It's your own truth, but it's not. That cannot be true. God is truth. And you and I have to come to the conclusion when we encounter these difficulties, these things in our lives, these forces that we are up against, we have to be willing to ask ourselves and say to ourselves, no, God is true.

He does not change. His principles are consistent throughout all generations. They stay the same. And some people would say, oh, that is so wrong. But I'm saying it is so sure and loving to have a consistent father.

One of the things that is so damaging in families who have an alcoholic father, right? And I thank God that it may not happen as much as it used to, but it used to be so many times the alcoholism. And even in Capalis, we have four taverns in this town way back when, you know, there was a lot more emphasis on drinking by hearing stories or stories of the children laying in bed, not sure what was going to happen when the father came home, because how he felt determined how he was going to treat the family. What a gracious and kind father we have never to change, to always have the same rules, to always know what he expects, to always know right from wrong. His scale is not sliding, it's not weak, but it also never changes what a beautiful thing to have, one based on God.

Paul comes to the spot in two corinthians. He says, I can do nothing against the truth, but always for the truth. You and I are going to come into a deep and prolonged conflict with individuals who preach a message based on subjective truth. What are you going to do? Do you have the authority to change God's truth based on how you feel today?

Who gave you that right? Who determined that you had the power to decide who God is and what his laws are? Who gave you that right? Aren't we less than the swirling dust in the air? Aren't we less than the smoke that is blown in the wind?

Are we less than the evaporation of water when we zoom out for our universe and see how small we are really in our specific time period? Who gives you that right? I think

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we need to come to the place with Paul. I can only do things for the truth and nothing against the truth. Here we are, just like Peter said to Jesus, to whom else can we go?

You hold the words of eternal life, the last thing Paul is going to bring out to us and to the Corinthians. In this message, it says in verse nine, for we are glad when we are weak and you are strong. And this we also pray that you may be made complete. Last part of this type of authority that is in line with godliness, that it rejoices to see people lifted up higher than you are. It becomes a ministry in which you become a stepping stone to enable other people to reach heights that you never will be able to obtain.

One of the last things that my dad left with me when I left for college is a prayer that I would do something spiritually that he was unable to.

My dad did a lot of good things for us as a family. I appreciate him, but that.

But that prayer is probably.

I'll be just leaving for college, just gonna walk out the door and go to Chicago. It's probably impacted me more than anything else he's done.

Now I have the privilege to have ten children and to be around other people in my ministry. I pray my prayer for my children, for everyone I come in contact with. God, if you just enable them to do more than I can, all the stuff and all the politics, they'll sort themselves out. Lay your life down, let people step on you, build them up, encourage them as they pass by, give them a boost. Make sure that your prayer is always to lift people up, that they might have a fuller ministry, a fuller life than you did, that they might become complete complete.

I'm just going to read verse ten and then we're going to close. And I just. I would like to say, and I pray that your prayer is that there would be an effective Christ honoring, bible believing church in the north beach for a long time. Because there are people who are committed to Christ's simple message and determined that that truth that he preached and he brought to us through his apostles is not one that can change. Let's just read ten and then we'll pray.

Therefore, I write these things, being absent, lest being present, I should use sharpness according to the authority which the Lord has given me for edification and not for destruction. And my last word and my prayer that you, as I have had the chance to share my prayer is that you would hopefully see this is for my edification. This is to build me up. And that's my prayer. So let's pray together.

Father, I thank you for this time in two corinthians. And you know, that it's been necessarily. Hasn't been easy for me. But I pray, Lord, that we would see it as our edification of our growing, of our building, of our moving forward in Jesus Christ. Lord, I pray.

I thank you for this time in Jesus name, amen. I.