

Speaking the truth in Love when Truth is compromised.

Psalm 119:161-168

New King James Version

161 Princes persecute me without a cause,

But my heart stands in awe of Your word.

162 I rejoice at Your word

As one who finds great treasure.

163 I hate and abhor lying,

But I love Your law.

164 Seven times a day I praise You,

Because of Your righteous judgments.

165 Great peace have those who love Your law,

And [a]nothing causes them to stumble.

166 Lord, I hope for Your salvation,

And I do Your commandments.

167 My soul keeps Your testimonies,

And I love them exceedingly.

168 I keep Your precepts and Your testimonies,

For all my ways are before You.

Hello and thanks for letting me do the Friday Night Devotional here at Vizion Church.

The topic tonight is speaking the truth in Love, when truth is compromised. I chose this because we can all see how rapidly our society is moving away from objective truth and I want to offer you some encouragement to stand firm in the face of increasing pressure to conform to the world and its wicked ideologies.

Whether we are at school or work or just among a group of friends the pressure to conform to the worlds' standards is strong and sometimes we can feel worn down by it all.

Here the Psalmist reminds us that the **word of the Lord is a treasure** in which we can find great delight. When we feel exhausted from swimming against the tide, we can open the Word of the Lord and it will refresh us like summer rain on a hot day. It will satisfy our soul and give us strength and encouragement.

Over the past year we've seen a rapid rise in both transgenderism and the gender identity movement. I think it's fair to say it has spread more rapidly than covid! We are bombarded from every angle by these things with popular high street names adding to the confusion with their celebrations of Pride month and all things wicked.

This has left a lot of Christians confused about how best to tackle these things when we're confronted with them. It's one thing not attending a pride parade or boycotting a coffee shop because of its transgender advertising but what about when it's personal.

What if it's someone we're having a 1-1 discussion with or what if it's someone in our family?

**Firstly**, as Christians we reject the very idea of transgenderism because it denies the distinct identities of a man and a woman who God created as image bearers of Himself. **Genesis 1:27 KJV** So God created man in his [own] image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. So, our gender is not something we decide but rather it's something God decided before we were formed in our mother's womb. It's an immutable characteristic and no amount of medications or surgeries can change it.

What we're seeing today has come about because of the breakdown in the order for society that God ordained. He created us male and female. He created men to be the heads of their households and for women to be their helpers. People of equal value with different roles. He created us to complement one another. That divine order of male and female under the headship of Christ is now something that is scorned and mocked by the average unbeliever.

**Secondly**, we have to remember the source and the seriousness of lying because that's what this is. Affirming a man is a woman or vice versa is lying. It's not kindness and it's not compassion. It's making a mockery of God's ordained order and His perfect design for male and female.

In **John 8:44** Jesus speaking to the Jewish people around Him said "You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer

from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it."

The source of lies is Satan who told that first lie to Eve in the Garden of Eden when he tempts Eve saying, "You will not certainly die". If we lie, we are aligning ourselves with the father of lies. Not something any of us wants. The Psalmist says 'I hate and abhor lying' and we should feel the same way.

Today we live in what is called a post truth society. Objective truth is no longer valued, and instead subjective truth based on emotions and feelings is of higher importance.

We can see this reflected in our culture where almost every taboo has been broken down, embraced, and celebrated. People use the phrase 'live your own truth' but there is no such thing as 'your truth or my truth'. There is only God's truth. It is the only thing we can be 100% sure of because as Hebrews 6:18 remind us "it's impossible for God to lie".

So, when Truth is compromised, what do we do? Let's look again at this Psalm to see how we should respond.

vs 165 says 'great peace have those who love your law and nothing causes them to stumble'.

While it's important to treat people with kindness our first responsibility is to be obedient to the Lord and therefore, we must not lie. If someone tells us they no longer identify as a male or female and they want us to call them the opposite or if they want us to use one of a myriad of other pronouns, then we must gently say 'I'm sorry but I can't do that because it goes against my faith, and I would be lying before the God who created us'.

Speaker, Rosaria Butterfield initially suggested Christians should be kind and just go along with a person's preferred pronouns. At first, she thought this 'kindness' might open the door to witnessing but more recently she repented of this teaching and acknowledged that this was lying and it was wrong in the eyes of the Lord. Furthermore, she acknowledged that people need to hear the truth. If they don't then how will they ever believe the Gospel message?

As children of God, we need to be honest, bold and fearless but not forgetting the words of Colossians 4:6 Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one.

I watched a Ray Comfort video that was broadcast recently that was a great example of this verse from Colossians in action. Ray was witnessing to a young man who was wearing makeup and went by the name Diana. Diana shared openly about his despair of life and that he was contemplating suicide.

Ray was gracious but honest with Diana during the interview and you could see this young man's heart softening as he heard the gospel. At the end Ray asked if he could pray for him and Diana said, 'yes' but before praying Ray asked, 'what's your real name?' to which 'Diana' replied Carlos. This young man's heart was softened as he heard the gospel truth just as...

Ephesians 4:29 says

Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.

**No corrupting talk... no lies.**

Again, we must be like the Psalmist who said in vs 163 **I hate and abhor lying.**

The evangelism team here at Vizion church may have experienced things like this already when they've been out in Rutherglen witnessing to local people. Not every encounter will have the kind of outcome that Ray had. In fact, it's more likely people will be hostile towards us for not affirming their delusion, but we must be bold and we must be honest.

It's wonderful to come to church and to meet together with our brothers and sisters in Christ who are likeminded, but we all live in this fallen world, and we are likely to face increasing challenges as the world moves deeper and deeper into depravity. Don't be tempted to compromise the Truth of God's word in order to appear kind or to fit in with the crowd.

Stay rooted in God's word, stay faithful to Him until the very end.

and let's finish this devotional by looking again at the last two verses of the reading...

Verses

167 My soul keeps Your testimonies,

And I love them exceedingly.

168 I keep Your precepts and Your testimonies,

For all my ways are before You.