

1 Peter 4:7-11

1Pe 4:7 (NKJV) But the end of all things is at hand; therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers. ⁸ And above all things have fervent love for one another, for "love will cover a multitude of sins." ⁹ Be hospitable to one another without grumbling. ¹⁰ As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. ¹¹ If anyone speaks, *let him speak* as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, *let him do it* as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

We are continuing to look at some of the characteristics of the gift of teaching. One is that the individual who has this gift generally is consumed with the meaning and accuracy of words. Everything for them hinges on the correctness and precision of what is being taught. That is why it is very difficult for the person with this gift to listen to someone who is unprepared simply because they believe that the individual is unqualified. They delight in the research required for teaching more so than actually teaching. Generally, they want to teach in a very systematic way. Over the years I have known many young men desiring to go into the ministry and they just had this kind of "burn" inside of them to teach. They felt that they just had to teach or they would just die. My personal opinion is that they probably do not have the gift of teaching, or at least are not yet prepared to teach. Why? It is because the defining characteristic of this gift is the individual's desire to study, and not to teach. You simply cannot teach something that you do not understand – and they know that. If an individual is not willing to study, they should never try and teach anyone. If they will study, and if they will study diligently, God will provide a teaching venue for them – but not if they are not willing to invest time in the study and research process.

Another basic motivation for someone with this gifting is to discover and validate the truth. Because of this, they are very sensitive to the doctrinal integrity of what is being taught. I think it could be rightly stated that the person with this gift will spend much more time studying than they do teaching, and that is what generally qualifies them to test the knowledge of those who are teaching them. This is the person in the local church who will always keep the church focused on the truth. They are the ones who cannot tolerate either false teachers or false teaching and are passionate about correcting error. When I hear false teaching, I personally just cringe on the inside. When I hear someone get behind a pulpit unprepared, I am actually offended.

Now, before moving on with other characteristics, I want to park here for just a moment and talk about this one aspect of the gift of teaching – this desire, this motivation, this compulsion to guard and protect the truth at all costs. Unfortunately, some pastors seem consumed with building their empires and because of that, Christianity has taken a very dangerous turn towards accommodation and an almost commercial approach to the ministry. As your pastor, my job is to guard this truth from doctrinal and biblical error, and the only way for that to happen is to be consumed with and for the truth. I remember a number of years ago that John MacArthur wrote a book called Truth Matters, and it does. In fact the truth is the only thing that matters. Without the truth, people will die in their sins and be sentenced to a place of everlasting punishment. It is by the truth that you as a Christian will be strengthened and edified. Every one of us should be living for the truth, proclaiming the truth, fighting for the truth.

Just think for a few moments about the world that we live in and where we are relative to truth. People are more than comfortable to live in open sin. In fact, what used to be considered as gross sins of perversion are now widely accepted and judicially protected. If someone rejects the reality of truth, then in essence they have become completely irrational. The entire universe operates and is ruled on fixed truth. We have the laws of nature, the laws of science, and physical laws that are fixed and never changing – and it does not matter what you believe about them because they are always operative. When I get on an airplane and fly somewhere, truth matters to the pilots. When we send people into space, truth matters. When pharmacists prepare drugs, truth matters. When a surgeon does heart surgery, truth matters. None of this is unusual to us simply because we believe in cause and effect that is based on fixed, unchanging laws.¹

Men do everything they can do to insulate themselves from the harm of cause and effect. That is why we wear seatbelts or stop at stoplights or do not jump off of tall buildings. We understand how the universe operates. However, when it comes to the moral and spiritual laws of the universe and of God, all of these are rejected. Why is that? It is simply because when you violate a spiritual law that you rarely if ever suffer the consequences immediately. You can cheat on your taxes or your wife and maybe never get caught. You could have been a homosexual for the last 40 years and never suffered any consequences. However, if you jump off of a tall building, you only have a few seconds to live. If you drink cyanide, you only have a few minutes to live, and so people stay away from these kind of natural laws that work immediately. However, when it comes to the spiritual laws of God, there is a time gap, a delay in the consequences, so everyone feels comfortable in violating them thinking there will be no consequences. One of God's spiritual laws, however, is that **“the wages of sin is death”**. Sin produces all kinds of death, and the worst is spiritual death. According to [Romans 2](#), people are literally **“storing up wrath against the day of wrath”**. Please appreciate that men have become very comfortable living in sin. They parade sin, they snub God and hate Him. Then to make it worse, our country is making laws to protect people living in sin. We live under so much false propaganda that it is almost breath-taking. We are so misinformed by lies, that we can no longer even think critically. The lies that the younger generation is being fed is like a barrage and eventually we lose the will to even fight against it.

I was listening to a message by John MacArthur on this topic of how truth matters and he brought up a great point when he said that sin is now empowered by what he called a “group identity”. If you only had just one or two people running around like loose cannons, it would not matter. However, when you have whole segments of a culture with a group identity, then they feel empowered. Just think of all of the different groups that we have on the immoral side of things – the LGBTQ community, the transgender community, cults, false religions. They are on a team now and they feel empowered. They have people that affirm their sin, that work to make it legal, and that encourage them in it. So, eventually, that empowerment leads to lawmakers making laws to protect sin and to silence those that stand for righteousness. People become insulated in their lies, insulated in their deception, insulated in their hatred of God. As far as the Word of God is concerned to this generation, it is odious, obnoxious, obscene, and you as someone who holds to the truth are seen as being arrogant, intolerant, unloving, and judgmental. In fact, the more that you speak the truth, the more you will be hated and scorned.²

¹ MacArthur, ep.

² MacArthur, ep.

If I were to ask you the question as to what is the only hope for someone who is trapped in their life by the lies of Satan, what would you say? The only hope is the truth. This is what Jesus said in [John 8:31-32](#),

Jn 8:31 (NKJV) Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. ³² And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

This is exactly why the person with the gift of teaching is so adamant about the truth. It is because they know and they understand that you cannot remove the offensive part of truth that does not sit well with those who are living under its illusion. The truth is the only thing that will set them free. Mishandle the truth, compromise the truth, soften the truth, and you have removed the only thing that can actually help the person trapped in the lies and deception of sin. Men and women, we are now the outsiders, and this reality is escalating at such a rapid pace that it is hard to imagine where we will be in one more generation.

So, what happens to a culture that reaches a point where they lose their conscience regarding truth, and completely ignore and eventually abandon truth? Well, [Romans 1:18](#) gives us the answer.

Ro 1:18 (NKJV) For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,

This verse is clear – the more people “**suppress the truth**”, the more unrighteous they are becoming. It is not a rational thing to suppress moral truth. You are a rational person. You know to eat. You know to clean a wound if you are cut. You know to go to a doctor if you are sick. You know to put gas in your car if you want it to run. You are a rational person. You understand cause and effect, and that is how you reason. The ultimate insanity of man and what we might call his ultimate irrationality is seen in his formula that **nobody x nothing = everything**. That is actually a form of insanity. Reason will always take you back to God.³

We have all of these efforts to legalize sin by these identity groups of people trapped in their lies and deception trying to make sin normal and all they are doing is doing is suppressing the truth. I have taught you many, many times that three times in this passage of [Romans 1](#) that it declares that “**God gave them up**” (v24, 26, 28). There is a time when God says I am done with you. It is never immediate, but it is always inevitable. I have said a thousand times that the worst thing God can do is give you what you want and that is exactly what this means. In reality, we are already under God’s judgment. He has already given us up, given us over. Why do we know that? It is because of [Romans 1:24](#),

Ro 1:24 (NKJV) Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves,

This is a sexual revolution, an explosion of immorality – free love, group sex, pornography. [Romans 1:26-27](#) takes it a step further when it declares,

Ro 1:26 (NKJV) For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. ²⁷ Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due.

³ MacArthur, ep.

Lesbianism, homosexuality is running rampant in our culture. It is like Sodom and Gomorrah when the men were so perverted that they wanted to rape the angels in [Genesis 19](#). However, this is not the end. [Romans 1:28](#) says,

Ro 1:28 (NKJV) And even as they did not like to retain God in *their* knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting;

What is a “**debased mind**”? It is a mind that does not function, one that is no longer rational, one that has reached a point of spiritual and moral insanity. It is when you are a man and think that you are a woman. That is insanity, but we have young 4-6 year old children thinking they need to have a sex change! That is insanity!! However, now it has been codified as legal. All of this is an evidence of the judgment of God on a nation that He has given over and given up. Do you think the truth matters? I hope so. People are entombed in their insanity, in their sins, in their lies, and in their deception, and the only thing that will help them is divine truth. The truth has to be clear, understandable, relentless. Will you offend people? Sure, absolutely! Do not be afraid of offending someone with divine truth. You must know the Word of God. Ideas are worthless. You must fight this battle with the Word of God. However, if you do not know the truth and are not willing to speak the truth with forthrightness and boldness, then you simply cannot help anyone. We must attack the lies of the enemy with the truth of God. This is a very long, roundabout way to say that if a man or woman thinks that they have the gift of teaching, but they have no hunger to protect the truth and guard the truth and speak the truth, they simply do not have that gifting. If all they want to do is to teach, they do not have this gift. This is a gift that is bent on knowing and protecting the truth no matter what the cost.

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