

Speaking the Truth in Love

When Jesus had called the multitude to Himself, He said to them, "Hear and understand; not what goes into the mouth defiles a man; but what comes out of the mouth, this defiles a man." Then His disciples came and said to Him, "Do You know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this saying??" (**Matthew 15:10-12**)

Have you ever offended anyone?? Has anyone ever offended you?? Offense is one of the hardest things in our lives to overcome!!! If you go back to the beginning of **Matthew 15**, Jesus is dealing with the religious leaders of the day. The Pharisees and the scribes had confronted Jesus about His disciples not washing their hands before they had eaten! Now this is one of the things I love about Jesus the most, He threw it right back at them!! He asked them about their teaching of honoring your father and mother!! The religious leaders were telling people they did not need to take care of their parents because they should be giving to God instead or the temple in this case. They were lining their pockets while others did without!!

Jesus tells them, "For the sake of your tradition you have MADE VOID the Word of God!!" And it gets even better!! Jesus calls them "Hypocrites!" He told them that **Isaiah** had prophesied about them saying "This people honors Me with their lips but their heart is far from Me; in vain do they worship me teaching as doctrines the commandments of men!" Wow! Do you think they were offended?? You better believe they were!! I would bet that no one had ever talked to them that way before and who was this guy anyway?? He was a carpenter's son, what did He know?? The nerve of speaking to them that way!! And then calling them "Hypocrites!"

Notice after that Jesus calls the multitude to Himself, He wanted them to hear and understand what He was saying. He was telling them a truth that He never wanted them to forget!! And the most interesting thing about it was that He told them right in front of the Pharisees and scribes themselves!! Jesus was brave!! Jesus was not afraid of the religious establishment. Actually, Jesus was not afraid of anyone or anything

because he knew who He was and He knew who His Father was!!

So many times fear will keep us from speaking the truth to others. The Pharisees and scribes were very arrogant and did not love the people the way Jesus instructs us to love others. So they were offended when Jesus brought it out in the open!! Especially in front of those they had manipulated and intimidated for so long. Satan uses those same tactics to keep us under his thumb. He wants to speak lies to us to keep us from taking our rightful place in our Lords kingdom!! The place that Jesus has given us. The place that Jesus paid the ultimate price for!

As believers we must understand that we will offend others with the gospel. Get used to it!! Do not let the enemy of your soul tell you to lay down and roll over!! Don't let him tell you to not make waves, that peace at all cost is better!! Is it better that those we love never know Jesus because we have never shared it with them?? Is it better for them to die without Jesus?? Do we understand what that means for eternity?? Do we love them enough to take the risk and tell them THE TRUTH? Jesus spoke TRUTH and nothing else. He was always trying to set us free from the bondage of religion, the bondage of intimidation, the bondage of manipulation and in doing so He offended the religious leaders of the day and they hated Him.

It's time church to rise up and speak TRUTH! It is the only thing that will set the captive free!! We are to walk in power, in the authority of the gospel of Jesus Christ, speaking the truth in great love!! It is that love that will drive us to tell others about our risen Lord and why we love Him! It is that love that helps us to be strong and courageous and rise up to step out in faith, knowing there is a chance that what we carry will offend.

Is it worth it?? Only you can decide. As Jesus calls you to himself, just like He did the multitude, you will have to make a decision! **Joel 3:14** that says "**Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision!**"

Yes, we are in the valley of decision. What will it be?