

PRESENT TRUTH

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Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth. (2 Peter 1:12 KJV)

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INTENTIONAL OFFENSES

Art Nelson

This may seem like a strange title, for what believer would give anyone an intentional offense? Well, for one, Jesus did! The best example of this is in the sixth chapter of John. Jesus had fed the multitude with the loaves and fishes and had more left over than He started with yet the Jews asked Him for a sign.

So they said to Him, "What then do You do for a sign, so that we may see, and believe You? What work do You perform? "Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, 'HE GAVE THEM BREAD OUT OF HEAVEN TO EAT.'" Jesus then said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread out of heaven, but it is My Father who gives you the true bread out of heaven. "For the bread of God is that which comes down out of heaven, and gives life to the world." Then they said to Him, "Lord, always give us this bread." (John 6:30-34 NASB)

They were asking for something that they could recognize as a repeat of the manna in the wilderness. Jesus addressed the spiritual truth behind the physical provision but they couldn't "hear" it. They grumbled over the issue of what Jesus said about what and who He was. Jesus elaborated further on the spiritual truth of His words and still they did not understand.

"I am the bread of life. "Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. "This is the bread which comes down out of heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. "I am the living bread that came down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread also which I will give for the life of the world is My flesh." Then the Jews *began* to argue with one another, saying, "How can this man give us *His* flesh to eat?" So Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in yourselves. "He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the

last day. "For My flesh is true food, and My blood is true drink. (John 6:48-55 NASB)

Jesus then spoke an intentional offense--"For My flesh is true food, and My blood is true drink." The Jews in their obedience to the Law would not eat pork, yet Jesus was saying that they must become cannibals (in their way of thinking). They could not handle the concept with any spiritual understanding; therefore, their flesh was offended. The sad thing is that not only were the religious Jews offended but so were most of His disciples who knew Him and had walked with Him for some period of time.

As a result of this many of His disciples withdrew and were not walking with Him anymore. John 6:66 NASB

Jesus did not try to hold onto those who were offended. Neither did he try to explain to them how they had misunderstood Him. He simply turned to the Twelve and asked them if they were leaving too! Why didn't Jesus try to make the disciples who left understand what He had said? The answer is simple. He knew their hearts--that they loved their traditions more than the Truth. He knew that those who walk in the natural by the spirit of the world don't understand nor accept spiritual Truth.

Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God, which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual *thoughts* with spiritual *words*. But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised. (1 Corinthians 2:12-14 NASB)

We need to learn from Jesus. We continually try to force spiritual Truth into natural minds and it just doesn't work. The natural mind understands through reason and logic. The spiritual mind understands by the revelation of the Spirit of God.

Truth is always in conflict with lies and deception. Yet, we will go to any lengths to avoid conflict and offense. This is not scriptural. It is not the way of the Lord. Jesus, Himself, told us this.

"Do not think that I came to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. (Matthew 10:34 NASB)

How could the Prince of Peace say that He did not come to bring peace? And if He doesn't bring peace, then, how do we get peace? The scriptures link peace with the government (Kingdom) of God.

There will be no end to the increase of *His* government or of peace, On the throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness From then on and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this. (Isaiah 9:7 NASB)

Since peace is linked to His government, it is also linked to justice and righteousness. We have

so little peace because we don't live under His government. The natural man is a man of lawlessness. He doesn't want government and, therefore, will always stumble when truth is presented and it is in conflict with the things in his heart. Jesus, as Truth, becomes a stumbling block.

This precious value, then, is for you who believe; but for those who disbelieve, "THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE VERY CORNER *stone*," and, "A STONE OF STUMBLING AND A ROCK OF OFFENSE"; for they stumble because they are disobedient to the word, and to this *doom* they were also appointed. (1 Peter 2:7-8 NASB)

The "sword" which Jesus brought is His Word. People stumble when they are disobedient to His Word. When Jesus brings Truth to us, it always reveals our heart. If our heart is filled with tradition, pride, prejudices, sin, or other things, Truth produces instant conflict and can become a stone of stumbling. We can't compromise Truth in order to maintain a false peace (absence of conflict). Our unity is in Truth not in compromise.

I am NOT saying that we need to run around in arrogance with rude and obnoxious behavior intentionally saying things which offend people and make them angry. I AM saying that when we are walking humbly before the Lord in love, there are occasions when people will be offended by the truth, even those close to us. We can do nothing except trust the grace and mercy of God.

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For comments or questions contact Art Nelson at this address:
artnelson@lifestreamteaching.com

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