

Revolution – Love is Truthful

12/13/20

1 Corinthians 13:6

Sunday AM

I read this week of (2) wealthy yet ungodly brothers who'd do nearly anything to cover up their sinful lives. As part of the charade, they'd give large sums of money to the church they attended to help others think good of them. Unexpectedly, one of the brothers died. Just prior to the service, the surviving brother gave the pastor an envelope w/ a check large enough to pay off the church's debt – w/ (1) caveat. The pastor had to tell those in attendance his brother was a *saint*. The pastor agreed. As the pastor stood over the casket, he said, "Folks, this man was an ungodly, wicked liar. He was unfaithful to his wife, cruel to his children, deceitful in business – a real hypocrite! He likely busted hell wide open! But compared to his brother – **he was a saint!**"

Today, we're finishing our series – **Love Revolution**, based on the familiar passage in **1 Corinthians 13** discussing the activity of God's love. As we've shared thru-out the study, when the Bible speaks of God's *agape* love, it's referring to a kind of love that's only produced by Christ **in** us living **thru** us – which requires that we know Christ as our Savior and walk under His influence as our Lord. (let's read it)

*If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing. Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. **Love does not delight in evil but rejoices w/ the truth.** It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails... Now these (3) remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.*

Today, we're going to close our series by looking at – *love does not delight in evil but rejoices w/ the truth.*

Whenever I read this verse, I immediately think of light/darkness. Truth is light; while anything that's untruthful is darkness. Here's the thing about light and darkness – darkness can't overwhelm light; instead, light always pierces the dark. If you light a match in the dark, it'll be seen. The same is true for truth. Truth pierces untruth – and the truth always establish right from wrong and good from evil – and sets us free.

Is this not the message of Christmas – the Light of God entering into our fallen/dark world to expose the darkness of sin w/in us and to rescue us w/ Truth?

But let's be honest – truth has fallen upon hard times in our nation/world – and in our communities/homes.

Whether living a lie or telling lies, untruth seems to have become *status quo*. It doesn't matter if it's a little white lie or a big black conspiracy, untruth is darkness.

Recent stats reveal most people lie 4x's per day – yet 98% of people say lying is morally wrong, while 96% of people confess to lying on a regular basis as needed.

A lie is intentionally making false claims/actions that leads others to believe something untrue is true.

6 Kinds of Lies

White/Polite – lies to prevent hurting feelings

Exaggerations – lies enhancing the truth

Fabrications – spreading unfounded hear-say

Broken Promises – lies failing to keep commitments

Plagiarism/Cheating – claiming things not your own
Outright Deceptions – lies fully intended to mislead

7 Reasons People Lie

- To save face and avoid getting exposed
- To get something otherwise not obtainable
- To shift blame to avoid embarrassment
- To avoid punishment, criticism, or confrontation
- To get one's way and control a situation
- To avoid getting hurt or hurting others
- To win the admiration of others

Where do most lies occur

40% on Resumes

90% on Dating Sites

W/ this in mind let's re-read 13:6 – *love does not delight in evil (untruth) but rejoices w/ the truth.*

This means *agape* love (God's love) never takes satisfaction from untruth but builds all of life in truth.

I The **TRUTH** About Truth

In case you missed the memo, we're living in a post-modern, post Christian culture that says truth is relative and what is right for one person may not be right for another – unless I say so. The idea is truth is in the eye of the beholder and that I'll can do whatever I want and could care less if you think it's right/wrong.

Such a mentality has a profound effect on how we see life and how we engage others in relationship. But God offers a different choice – He is the truth and we must align our lives to Him if we're to truly be free.

There are (3) pathways to truth, but only (1) works – the others are cul de sacs. The war we find ourselves in today is a battle of (2) opposing world views. **View 1** – We make the rules for ourselves. **View 2** – God made the rules; and we're to follow them.

A **MAJORITY** Does Not Rule

Somewhere along the way, we have bought into the idea that the majority determines right/wrong and sets the rules. This is the plight of our politics.

Is abortion right/wrong? Who says – God or us? Is having affection for your same gender okay or not? It depends on if you align w/ God or follow the majority. Is it okay to murder, steal, cheat, loot, do drugs, commit adultery? It all depends on whether truth and decency are determined by God or by the majority.

Biblically, the problem w/ this ideology is that right and wrong are not determined by popular vote. They are determined by God – not the creation. Right is right, even if nobody's doing it, and wrong is wrong, even if everybody is doing it.

Scripture: *Don't be deceived (popular opinion); bad company corrupts good morals.* 1 Corinthians 15:33

Don't be influenced by the mentality of the mob – rather – *Do your best to present yourself to God as a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the Word of truth.* 2 Timothy 2:15

We're to use God's standard to define right/wrong and good/evil – and then we're to align our lives w/ it.

Blessed is the man who does not walk in step w/ the wicked, or stand in the way of sinners, or sit in the company of mockers, but whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and on it he meditates day/night. He will be like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither – whatever he does prospers. Psalm 1:1-3

B MY Feelings/Opinions Don't Matter

We all suffer from a common malady – we think our opinion matter. We think our view of right/wrong and good/evil matter. Most of us live thru the filter of our own opinions. To make matters worse, thanks to social media, espousing our opinions has become a pervasive issue – and now, people think truth is decided by their opinion – and facts are secondary to feelings.

We've witnessed this first hand over this past yr. in all that has occurred w/ Covid, the elections, w/ the issues surrounding social injustice. Truth was cast aside far too quickly for what was expedient to satisfy an agenda – and w/ it, all sense of decency/decorum.

All this to say – no matter how you spin sin – it will never be accepted by our holy, holy, holy God.

C God is TRUTH

The other option to choose to build your life is on God's truth – and on the grace/mercy found in Jesus.

Listen to Jesus – *Everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against the house; yet it did not fall, b/c its foundation was on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell w/ a great crash. Matthew 7:24f*

1 Truth is ROOTED in God's Character

God is truth. Not only is He truth, but He is holy, perfect truth incapable of untruth.

God takes no pleasure in sin, only truth dwells w/in Him. Psalm 5:4

2 Truth is REVEALED in God's Son

In the N.T., when the Bible speaks of truth, it usually is referring to the embodiment of truth – Jesus.

Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life, no man comes to the Father except thru me. John 14:6

- Jesus SPOKE the Truth
- Jesus MODELED the Truth
- Jesus ESTABLISHED the Truth

3 Truth is RECORDED in God's Word

The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul. The statutes of the Lord are trustworthy, making wise the simple. The precepts of the Lord are right, giving joy to the heart. Psalm 19:6-7

The Bible is God's standard of truth. It tells us what is right/wrong, and what is truth/untruth. It is a holy standard that has stood the test of time, even if humanity doesn't like it or want it.

II For the LOVE of Truth

A Love Never DELIGHTS in Sin

Whether our own sin or that of others – love never takes satisfaction from sin. Doing wrong is bad in itself, but taking joy or bragging about them makes the sin worse. Whether one takes joy in their own sin or if they rejoice in someone falling into sin and getting what they deserve, this isn't *agape* love.

If we love God, what offends God should offend us – what grieves God should grieve us too. If God's love in us is living thru us, then we can't even remotely tolerate evil or rejoice in sin in any way.

B Love Never ASKS People to Sin

If you find yourself asking others to do wrong on your behalf or w/ you, then you have missed the heart of love. Love never asks others to participate in evil.

Classic example is a teenager on a date – His affection goes beyond her comfort zone. She resists. But he tries to persuade her w/ the oldest line in the book – but I love you. I just want to be near you.

C Love Never DESTROYS Godly Convictions

Love never seeks to destroy the positive values in others, but seeks to build them up. We live in a world where sin/misery love company. There are those who want to see you stumble/fall. But God calls His people to build up the convictions/beliefs of others.

Whoever loves a brother or sister lives in the light and will not cause anyone to stumble. 1 John 2:10

Catherine Lawes was the wife of the warden of Sing-Sing in 1921. She was advised by friends to never visit the prison, yet she couldn't help think that she could make a difference in the lives of the inmates. She once said, "My husband and I are going to take care of these men, and I believe they'll take care of us. I'm not worried. She heard an inmate was blind, so she taught him Braille. She heard a few inmates were deaf, so she learned sign language and taught them. For 16 yrs, her love softened the hearts of the hardened criminals. Then, in 1937, the world saw the difference true love makes. News reached the prison that Lewis/Catherine were killed in a car accident. The next day, their bodies were placed in a home a mile from the prison. The prisoners began to congregate at the fence closest to the home. The acting warden made the decision to release the prisoners to walk to the home and pay their respects and to return by evening – They all returned.