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MINISTRIES

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How to Share the Truth

Sharing God’s truth is an important part of our faith. God wants everyone to believe the gospel, the good news of salvation that is available through Jesus (who we call by his Hebrew name, Yeshua). As Christians, we have a responsibility to share this message of salvation with the world. Like Paul said, “[how are they to hear without someone preaching?](#)” (Romans 10:14). In addition to the gospel itself, we are also called to share all of God’s Word. Yeshua said that we should not just do God’s commandments, but also teach them:

Matthew 5:19

[Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.](#)

If you are new to God’s word, and especially if you are just now learning about his commandments, we recommend watching our teaching [Talking Torah](#). It has lots of advice for those who are new to this aspect of God’s Word, or for that matter, new to any aspect of God’s Word. It gives guidance for answering tough questions that people ask, and keeping you out of unproductive arguments that can alienate you from your family and friends.

Whenever you take a stand for something that defies tradition or orthodoxy, you run the risk of losing the respect and friendship of the people around you. While God’s eternal truths are what is most important, we don’t want to destroy our relationships unnecessarily. Our love for others is not dependent on them agreeing with us on every point of Biblical interpretation. Furthermore, it is an abomination to sow discord among brothers (Proverbs 6:16-19). Again, [Talking Torah](#) gives some important direction on how to avoid sowing discord while still maintaining your beliefs. This teaching, however, is directed at those who are well-studied and experienced in their beliefs, and want to fulfill Christ’s admonition to teach God’s Word to others.

So, then, what is the best way to share God's Word? By "best way," we mean what kind of rhetoric should we use? Should we give loud proclamations of God's wrath and judgment, like Yeshua did in Matthew 23? Or, should we be more gentle and understanding like Yeshua was when he spoke to the scribe in Mark 12? Should we present a lengthy logical case with lots of scriptural references like Paul sometimes did (e.g., Romans 1-11)? Or should we instead focus on appealing to emotion and experience like the apostle John? What is the best way to present God's truth?

To start answering this, we can break our approach into two parts. One part is our method, the tactics we use to share information with other people. The other part is our intention, the reason that we are sharing this information. Of these two parts, intention—the reason we share the truth with others—is the more important one. So, we will start our discussion of this topic by focusing on our intent.

Now, why should we share the truth with others? What should our motivation be? All too often, our motivation for sharing the truth can be self-serving. Sometimes we want to share the truth in order to justify ourselves. Because of humanity's sinful nature, righteousness and truth tends not to be very popular. Yeshua acknowledged this when he said:

Matthew 7:14

For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.

Because the truth tends to be unpopular, believing in the truth tends to make us unpopular. It can make us feel like outcasts or can even result in literal persecution. It's especially disheartening when we're cast out from groups of people who claim to be serving God too. In response to this treatment, we sometimes will want vindication for our point of view; that is, we will want to convince others of what we believe so that we will feel justified for believing it. After all, if everyone else rejects what seems right to us, doesn't that suggest that we are mistaken? But, if we can convince other people to think like us, then we will feel better about ourselves, and reassure ourselves that we were right the whole time.

While this is a natural human reaction, unfortunately, it's another manifestation of our sinful nature. Trying to convince others of our position in order to feel better about ourselves is selfish and unhelpful. If we approach others with this kind of attitude, it doesn't really matter what method we use to present our arguments. Our priorities are out of line, and our heart is in the wrong place. We're not going to produce good fruit with that kind of motivation.

So, then, what kind of attitude should we have when we share the truth? The simple answer is, we should have an attitude of love. That is to say, the reason we should share the truth with others is not to benefit ourselves, but to benefit them. Paul explains this in 1 Corinthians chapters 13 and 14. In chapter 13, Paul describes the features of love: how it is patient and kind, does not envy or boast, is not arrogant or rude, not insistent on its own way, not irritable or resentful, and so forth (1 Corinthians 13:4-7). Then, in chapter 14, he says this:

1 Corinthians 14:1-5

Pursue love, and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophesy. For one who speaks in a tongue speaks not to men but to God; for no one understands him, but he utters mysteries in the Spirit. On the other hand, the one who prophesies speaks to people for their upbuilding and encouragement and consolation. The one who speaks in a tongue builds up himself, but the one who prophesies builds up the church. Now I want you all to speak in tongues, but even more to prophesy. The one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues, unless someone interprets, so that the church may be built up.

What Paul says here applies to spiritual gifts, tongues and prophecy to be specific, but it can also apply to sharing the truth generally. Just like prophesying should be done out of love, teaching and sharing God's word should also be done out of love. We share God's word with others for the purpose of building them up. We should have genuine concern for other people, and share things with them so that they will receive a benefit. We should not be concerned with what we personally get out of the situation. This was Yeshua's attitude when he ministered.

Yeshua did not personally benefit from his ministry; in fact, his ministry literally got him killed. But his ministry did a lot of good for others, to say the least, and that's because it was done out of love for them. Yeshua shares the truth with us, not because he wants to build up himself, but because he wants to build up his people. We should have this same approach. As Yeshua said:

John 15:9, 12

As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love...

...This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.

So, again, what we share with others should be done out of love for them, not out of a desire to serve our own interests. This, by the way, is one reason that Paul instructed Timothy to avoid unnecessary and divisive doctrines; to avoid preaching things that are a waste of time.

2 Timothy 2:22-26

So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart. Have nothing to do with foolish, ignorant controversies; you know that they breed quarrels. And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, correcting his opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth, and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, after being captured by him to do his will.

Paul says something very similar in Titus:

Titus 3:9

But avoid foolish controversies, genealogies, dissensions, and quarrels about the law, for they are unprofitable and worthless.

To bring this into the modern day, is it really worthwhile to convince others of our exact view of the shape of the earth, or the genetic makeup of the Israelites, or how God's name was pronounced at some point in history? There are so many lost people in the world, who are walking down a path of destruction. Those people need to repent and be filled with God's spirit so they can be saved and walk in righteousness. Is it more important to turn those people to repentance, or to convince them of our particular doctrinal ideas? Which of these actions is motivated by love for others, and which is motivated by selfishness?

Now, it is certainly true that a false belief in one area can lead to false beliefs in other areas. It is valuable to establish basic truths in certain areas, so that we will not be persuaded by lies, and ultimately end up walking down a destructive path. Yeshua calls himself "the truth" (John 14:6), and clearly truth is a good and valuable thing. But, the fact remains that our salvation is not based on having perfect knowledge of all things. Our salvation is based on having faith in God. God has perfect knowledge of all things, so we can trust that he knows what is best for us. No amount of study will catch us up to God's perfect understanding. We will always have to trust him to know what is best, no matter what our level

of knowledge is. So, it is much more important to teach people to trust in God than it is to convince people of our interpretations.

For a closer look at what kinds of doctrines and issues we should be prioritizing, we recommend our teaching, [Theological Junk Food](#).

So, what should we do if we find ourselves selfishly trying to prove a point or build ourselves up when we minister to others? What do we do if our ministry lacks love and compassion? We should stop and examine ourselves. We should reflect on the love that God has shown to us, and how grateful we are for that love. As John said, “[we love, because he first loved us](#)” (1 John 4:19).

When we are filled with God’s love, it will overflow to the people around us. When we recognize the depth and extent of God’s compassion, we can show that same compassion to other people. When we understand how much God wants us to live, we can have that same desire for others to live. When we can really grasp what it means to “[love your neighbor as yourself](#),” then we can share the truth with genuine love, and be a light to the world.

So, with the understanding that our intentions need to be rooted in love, what kind of methods can we use to share God’s word with others? As we mentioned at the start of this teaching, the Scriptures themselves use a variety of methods to express God’s word. Sometimes they tell stories, and sometimes they use logical arguments. Sometimes they give history, and sometimes they give parables. Sometimes they use harsh, critical language, and sometimes they use gentle language. So, there is no “one size fits all” way to share God’s word. The authors of Scripture used a variety of methods to share his word, and those methods were likely chosen because they were the best way to edify their intended audience. All of these methods were employed in love, with the purpose of building up and helping those who heard the message. So, the short answer to what method we should use when sharing the Scriptures is, we should use whatever method is the most likely to benefit the people who hear it.

Now, that advice is not especially helpful, but there are a few specific things that we can point to. One is, when is it appropriate to use harsh, critical language, like Yeshua and the prophets sometimes did? That kind of language is usually reserved for people who are rebellious and wicked; it is aimed at people who are oppressing others and lying to them, and generally causing harm. Yeshua used harsh language to address the hypocritical Pharisees, who were knowingly teaching false and self-serving doctrines.

This is also how Jeremiah addressed the wicked princes of Judah who freed their unlawfully held slaves in order to look righteous, but then proceeded to enslave them again later (Jeremiah 34:8-22). And this is how Paul instructed Timothy, a leader in the church, to address those in the church who persisted in sin (1 Timothy 5:20). All of these examples of harsh language are situations where the person being addressed is intentionally and unrepentantly wicked.

Now, addressing a person with harsh rebukes and even insults is not usually an effective way to change that person’s mind. In fact, verbally attacking a person tends to make him even more determined to reject your message. So, then, why would this method be used by prophets and apostles, and even by our Savior? Well, Paul answered this question when he instructed Timothy to use this method. He said:

1 Timothy 5:20

[As for those who persist in sin, rebuke them in the presence of all, so that the rest may stand in fear.](#)

Paul says that this harsh rebuke is to be given “[in the presence of all, so that the rest may stand in fear.](#)”

In other words, this harsh message is given for the benefit of others who hear it, not for the benefit of the person who is being harshly rebuked. When people see the severe consequences that come upon a rebellious person, this will serve as a warning to them to avoid being rebellious themselves. This is very similar to the philosophy behind public punishment that is expressed in the Torah:

Deuteronomy 19:18-20

The judges shall inquire diligently, and if the witness is a false witness and has accused his brother falsely, then you shall do to him as he had meant to do to his brother. So you shall purge the evil from your midst. **And the rest shall hear and fear, and shall never again commit any such evil among you.**

We also see it here in Deuteronomy 17:12-13.

Deuteronomy 17:12-13

The man who acts presumptuously by not obeying the priest who stands to minister there before the LORD [YHWH] your God, or the judge, that man shall die. So you shall purge the evil from Israel. **And all the people shall hear and fear and not act presumptuously again.**

Obviously, a person isn't given the death penalty for his own benefit. Capital punishment is for the benefit of others; it should motivate others to avoid the sin that led to the criminal's death. The same idea can apply to the very harsh and critical approach to sharing God's word. This approach is used on someone in the church who is rebellious and wicked, who is intentionally doing evil and has no desire to follow God. This person is not going to change his mind or change his ways, so the purpose of the harsh rebuke is not to benefit him, but to benefit the rest of the church. Again, this is how both Yeshua and Jeremiah approached the wicked leaders in their days. The people they were addressing were not going to change their minds. The prophets publicly shamed them in order to deter other people from following their wicked ways. That is the kind of situation where harsh words would be appropriate.

There are two more things we should note about using harsh and judgmental words. First, we must be absolutely certain that the person we are addressing in this harsh way is in fact rebellious and wicked. If they are not, then we are slandering and humiliating an innocent child of God. Obviously, that is something we should never do. The Scriptures have nothing good to say about those who slander. For example:

Psalms 50:19-22

You give your mouth free rein for evil, and your tongue frames deceit. You sit and speak against your brother; you slander your own mother's son. These things you have done, and I have been silent; you thought that I was one like yourself. But now I rebuke you and lay the charge before you. "Mark this, then, you who forget God, lest I tear you apart, and there be none to deliver!"

We don't want to be someone who "forgets God" and is "torn apart" because we overreacted to something or misinterpreted someone's actions or words. We should be very careful about saying harsh and negative things. For more on this, we recommend our teaching [The Evil Tongue](#).

The second thing to keep in mind is, if the person we are rebuking does deserve our criticism, we must be sure that what we say about them is true. It is never appropriate to falsely accuse someone of a sin, even if he is guilty of committing a different sin. For example, even if we know that someone is a thief, that does not mean we can also call him an adulterer. Our words must be truthful, especially when we accuse a fellow believer of wrongdoing.

If we are not addressing a rebellious and wicked person, then methods other than harsh judgment and criticism are certainly preferred. In these cases, which should be the majority of the time, having a genuine love and concern for that person can often point us toward the best method of presenting God's Word to them. If we know the person, and know that this is a person who values reason and argument, then we can approach them with an emphasis on well-reasoned arguments. If we know that this person is more emotional and sensitive, then we can approach them with more of an emphasis on the emotional weight of our position.

If the person appreciates being confronted with plain and direct language, then we can be very blunt and straightforward in our approach; if they don't, then we can make more gentle suggestions, and leave them for the person to ponder in their own time. If we have a sincere love for that person, then we will be more likely to know what they like, and what they find off-putting. Knowing and caring about those things will help us to more effectively share God's word with them. As Paul said:

1 Corinthians 10:33

...I try to please everyone in everything I do, not seeking my own advantage, but that of many, that they may be saved.

Even if we choose a method that's not the most effective at reaching that person, if we are filled with a sincere love for them, sometimes they will recognize that love despite our clumsiness. Sometimes, if they simply recognize that we love them, that will lead them to be more receptive to what we have to say.

Now, what about when we talk to strangers? How can we love people that we don't know? How can we effectively share the truth with people whom we have no relationship with at all?

For many of us, this is a highly relevant question because a significant number of our interactions with others take place on social media platforms with people that we've never actually met. Thankfully, many of the principles we have already discussed can apply in these situations as well.

First, before sharing God's Word on social media, we should consider our motivation. Is it to glorify God and edify others, or are we serving our own interests? For instance, many people might post online for the sole purpose of trying to gain a following and promote themselves. While having a following is not inherently bad, it is important to ensure that our goal is not to promote ourselves for selfish reasons. We should use any platform God provides for his glory, to serve him and serve others.

On that note, we should avoid promoting unnecessary and divisive doctrines online. While promoting sensational and controversial topics can certainly attract attention, again, that's not to be our goal. If the topics we promote are unfruitful and causing harm rather than good, then it's best to refrain from discussing them and instead focus on the important issues. Again, for more on this, see our teaching [Theological Junk Food](#).

Finally, it can sometimes be a special challenge to determine the best method for reaching the people we interact with online. After all, how can we know what strangers will accept or reject? However, we can still do our best to use the method that we think will be most effective. It would not be a bad idea to pray and ask God for wisdom before posting or commenting. Most importantly, once again, always engage with others online out of genuine love for them. Remember, God is love (1 John 4:8), and to properly present His Word, we must present it in love like God would.

There is one more thing we should mention: when you share God's Word, you are going to face a lot of rejection no matter what method you use to share it. As we discussed earlier, there are few who find the path to life. Yeshua's methods for sharing the word of God were obviously very good methods, and he is the model of how to love others. But, even though he did everything right, and had completely pure and perfect motivation, there were still many people who rejected his message. So, we should not be surprised or disheartened when our words are rejected also. As Yeshua said,

John 15:18-20

If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you: 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they kept my word, they will also keep yours.

So, if you have edifying words from God that you can share in sincere love, then go ahead and share them! Don't be discouraged when people reject what you have to say. When the seed of God's Word falls on good soil, it will grow and produce fruit (Luke 8:4-15). As long as the word we are sharing is really from God, it will not return void. As he says in Isaiah:

Isaiah 55:10-11

For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

God's message will bless those who accept it. So, if we want other people to be blessed, then we should, in sincere love, and using the best methods we can muster, deliver that message to them.

We pray you have been blessed by this teaching. Remember, continue to test everything. Shalom! For more on this and other teachings, please visit us at www.testeverything.net

Shalom, and may Yahweh bless you in walking in the whole Word of God.

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