

## THE TRUTH N LOVE

Lester Kamp  
Denver, Colorado

“PREACH THE WORD; BE INSTANT IN SEASON, OUT OF SEASON; REPROVE, REBUKE, EXHORT WITH ALL LONGSUFFERING AND DOCTRINE. FOR THE TIME WILL COME WHEN THEY WILL NOT ENDURE SOUND DOCTRINE; BUT AFTER THEIR OWN LUSTS SHALL THEY HEAR TO THEMSELVES TEACHERS, HAVING ITCHING EARS; AND THEY SHALL TURN AWAY THEIR EARS FROM THE TRUTH, AND SHALL BE TURNED UNTO FABLES (**2 Timothy 4:2-4**)”.

Preaching God’s Word is God-ordained, God-approved preaching. This means among other things not holding back anything that is profitable to the hearers (**Acts 20:20**). Something is profitable if it helps those go to heaven who hear and heed. Since all Scripture is profitable (**2 Timothy 3:16**), then those who preach must preach “ALL THE COUNSEL OF GOD” (**Acts 20:27**). To avoid certain passages or to avoid certain subjects is to fail to preach all the counsel of God. God demands that preaching convict people of sin. The fact that a certain sin is popular does not justify not preaching against it.

According to the text above, the Word of God must be preached “IN SEASON, OUT OF SEASON.” Marshall Keeble rightly stated that this means “when people like it and when they don’t.” The indication here is that there will be times when people will not like it when the Word of God is preached. According to God, that is characteristic of the preaching of which God approves. Paul even said that some “WILL NOT ENDURE SOUND DOCTRINE.” They do not want to hear God’s Word, so they find some “preachers” who will preach what they want to hear.

It is not the purpose of preaching to upset folks. But some folks will get upset when the Word of God, the Gospel of Christ, is preached. The Word of God leads us to Heaven and away from those things that will cause us to be lost. Avoiding certain topics or passages of Scripture simply because preaching on those subjects upsets people will cause many to be lost. It will cause those who preach such an edited version of the Gospel to be lost. Rest assured that there are many preachers of this kind. Many congregations seek out and find such preachers. It has always been this way. In Jeremiah’s day, we read: “THE PROPHETS PROPHECY FALSELY, AND THE PRIESTS BEAR RULE BY THEIR MEANS; AND MY PEOPLE LOVE TO HAVE IT SO: AND WHAT WILL YE DO IN THE END THEREOF?” (**Jeremiah 5:31**). Such behavior may be financially profitable for those preachers and may bring temporary comfort to those congregations, but God asks, “WHAT SHALL YE DO IN THE END THEREOF?” There will be a day of accounting, a Day of Judgment. Behavior of this kind will not go unpunished! This behavior may seem to bring success in the here and now, but this disobedience to God’s Word will be punished eternally.

## THE TRUTH N LOVE

Lester Kamp  
Denver, Colorado

“THAT WE HENCEFORTH BE NO MORE CHILDREN, TOSSED TO AND FRO, AND CARRIED ABOUT WITH EVERY WIND OF DOCTRINE, BY THE SLEIGHT OF MEN, AND CUNNING CRAFTINESS, WHEREBY THEY LIE IN WAIT TO DECEIVE; BUT SPEAKING THE TRUTH IN LOVE, MAY GROW UP INTO HIM IN ALL THINGS, WHICH IS THE HEAD, EVEN CHRIST.” (**Ephesians 4:14-15**).

“SPEAKING THE TRUTH IN LOVE” is God-ordained, God-approved preaching. Some have attempted to make this phrase mean that preaching should never hurt feelings, make anyone angry, inflict any pain of conscience (guilt), or disturb anyone. Some have suggested from this passage that God wants preachers to make everyone feel good however contrary to His Word he may be living—all of this in the name of “love.” Those who make this application of **Ephesians 4:15** do not know the meaning of Biblical love nor do they understand the kind of preaching done by Jesus and His disciples in the first century.

Sometimes “love” must be tough love. If a parent loves his child, he will punish that child when necessary (**Hebrews 12:8-10**). If a parent loves a child, he will “REPROVE, REBUKE, AND EXHORT WITH ALL LONGSUFFERING” so that the child might understand the dangers involved in certain actions. The parent who refuses to do so because he is afraid of hurting the child’s feelings at the moment does not truly love the child. Avoiding such instruction for fear of making the child angry or upset will bring the child much greater harm. Love means doing those things and saying those things for the child’s ultimate good, not for the child’s desires or momentary pleasure. “SPEAKING THE TRUTH IN LOVE” does not necessitate sermons with no challenge, no content, and no eternal benefit.

Sermons which are politically correct and tolerant of all things may be desired by some, may even be popular, and may be financially rewarding, but such preaching is condemned by God. Sermons that God approves must sometimes be designed “TO ROOT OUT, AND TO PULL DOWN, AND TO DESTROY, AND TO THROW DOWN.” This is the only way that preaching God’s Word can also “BUILD” and “PLANT” (**Jeremiah 1:10**).

Avoid any subject that may upset or anger? I have known many who have been made so angry and upset by the sermon that they set out to disprove what they had heard. The result was their conversion to Christ. Sometimes a negative leads to a positive. “KNOWING THEREFORE THE TERROR OF THE LORD, WE PERSUADE MEN...” (**2 Corinthians 5:11**). Avoid any subject contained in God’s Word? Certainly Not! Those who please God will not always please men (**Galatians 1:10**). “SPEAKING THE TRUTH IN LOVE” must first be

## THE TRUTH N LOVE

Lester Kamp  
Denver, Colorado

speaking the Truth, all the counsel of God. Some of that Truth will convict of sin those who hear with good and honest hearts and will anger others. Sermons are not to be dictated by the audience, but by the content of God's Word. Preach the Word!

What Jesus said to the rich young ruler disturbed him because "HE HAD GREAT POSSESSIONS" (**Mark 10: 22**). He was grieved and sorrowful. Was Jesus unkind and unloving? Absolutely not! Did Jesus not speak the truth in love? When Jesus rebuked the Pharisees for their tradition, they "WERE OFFENDED" (**Matthew 15:12**). What of **Matthew 23**? Did Jesus speak the truth in love? Absolutely!

When the apostles preached, they, with no apology or embarrassment, convicted their hearers of sin. "THEREFORE LET ALL THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL KNOW ASSUREDLY, THAT GOD HATH MADE THAT SAME JESUS, WHOM YE HAVE CRUCIFIED, BOTH LORD AND CHRIST" (**Acts 2:36**). Those who heard this statement had crucified Jesus and could have killed the apostles, but the Truth had to be spoken. When the apostles had been threatened, beaten, and told not to preach Jesus, their response was, "WE MUST OBEY GOD RATHER THAN MEN" (**Acts 5:29**), And so must we today.

God said, "HEAR, O EARTH: BEHOLD, I WILL BRING EVIL UPON THIS PEOPLE, EVEN THE FRUIT OF THEIR THOUGHTS, BECAUSE THEY HAVE NOT HEARKENED UNTO MY WORDS, NOR TO MY LAW, BUT REJECTED IT" (**Jeremiah 6:19**). Congregations—don't reject God's Word! Preachers—don't reject God's Word! The consequences are eternal. Preach the word,