

Truth is Not Optional
Joseph Herrin (04-24-2011)

Lord help me! I am greatly vexed in spirit. I have had such a burden of late that I am full of agitation inside. I am grieved, wanting to express a tremendous concern, yet feeling incapable of doing so. I want to open blind eyes, and unstop deaf ears, but I find myself impotent, lacking the power in my natural faculties to accomplish such a miracle.

I have sat down to write this post a half dozen times, only to get up in tremendous agitation of soul. Each time I started to write I became daunted at the challenge of awakening a people who are so soundly slumbering. Even an abrupt shaking only stirs them for a moment, half-rousing them, only to watch them roll over and fall fast asleep again.

I have been making a circuit from the computer to write, to my knees to pray, and to my bed where I have lain down in great weariness of mind and soul. Yet, even upon my bed I have found no rest. My mind has been questing for some way to convey understanding, to draw back the blinds in a darkened room, to let in the brilliant light of truth.

As I lay on my bed, some argument, some line of reasoning, would present itself in my mind, and I would arise and sit in front of the computer again, only to consider the seeming impossibility of the task, perceiving all reason and argument to be futile. Only God can open the eyes of the blind. Only He has the power to unstop deaf ears. Consequently, I am thrust back to prayer. "God, will You not help? Will You not reveal Your power? Your people are perishing. They are heading for calamity and destruction. Satan is pouring forth a flood of words to sweep them away. Will You not help them?"

Revelation 12:15

So the serpent spewed water out of his mouth like a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away by the flood.

Picture this scene. The people of God are in a narrow canyon. Flood waters begin to swell the stream running through it. The water begins to rise, but the people are unconcerned. Some enter the water, splashing around, swimming and having fun. The water continues to rise until all are in over their heads. Still they are unconcerned. The water feels good. It is moving and active and exciting to them. Yet a short distance downstream is a huge cataract. The river plunges over a precipice where it dashes everything with violence on the rocks below.

You are on the bluffs overlooking the canyon. You see the peril of God's people. You

take in the whole image and are struck with terror at the lives about to be destroyed. You have only a single rope. You throw it down to the people in the water below, urging them to grab hold of it and pull themselves out of the water. You shout out to them that they must get out now! Yet, they are unconcerned. The water seems fine. They are enjoying themselves. They do not see the peril around the bend.

You become vexed in soul now, not at the water sweeping people to their death, but at the fact that those about to perish will not heed your cries, nor listen to your entreaties. They do not believe the report that disaster is ahead. You are filled with agitation as your words are rebuffed, and no one makes the slightest attempt to grab the rope and pull themselves out of the water. You fall on your knees, crying out, "Father, won't you please help! They will all surely perish!"

I am reminded of the description of Lot as he observed the sinful abominations of Sodom, carried out with complete disregard to the peril of offending a holy God. Can you envision Lot speaking to his future sons-in-law, trying to convince them to flee the city with him?

Genesis 19:14

So Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law, who had married his daughters, and said, "Get up, get out of this place; for the Lord will destroy this city!" But to his sons-in-law he seemed to be joking."

Our Lord said that the days prior to His return would be like the days of Lot. What is described in this encounter between Lot and his sons-in-law is perhaps the most difficult part of these days. The hearing of God's people has grown exceedingly dull. Words of warning and entreaty are discounted as if they were nonsense.

The cause of my present disturbance is the falling away of the people of God from truth. The gospel of Christ and doctrines of the kingdom have been replaced with mush theology. Truth has become passe. Right and wrong, black and white, righteousness and sin, reward and judgment, are subjects assiduously avoided. In their place is a message of encouragement and pop psychology that offends no one. Christ is still proclaimed, but not as the exclusive Way to life. The expression of the hour is that He is "the best way," which is a far cry from the only way.

Acts 4:10-12

"Let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Yahshua Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands here before you whole. This is the 'stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.' *Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.*"

Not only is Christ the narrow gate, but there is an afflicted path that must be walked by all who would attain to life. "Few there are who find it." I have had discussions with brothers and sisters about this topic for years. Three years ago the Father led me to Indiana to share with a group of saints there for a week. I had shared at length with this group of young people about the cost of discipleship, taking up the cross, dying to self, surrender to the Spirit, and the fact that God will make a distinction between His people. I exhorted them to strive to enter by the narrow gate, and walk the strait path that leads to life.

I was greatly disturbed when at the end of the week a number of those who had been in attendance began speaking about the book *The Shack*. It was new at that time, and sweeping across Christendom. I overheard individuals speak with the highest praise about this book. One young woman said it was the best book she had ever read. She spoke of how it was such a positive book, depicting Christ as someone who is always happy.

My heart was grieved. When I looked into the content of the book, I was shocked.

On page 182 of *The Shack* written by William Paul Young, the character meant to represent Jesus says:

"Those who love me come from every stream that exists. They were Buddhists or Mormons, Baptists or Muslims, Democrats, Republicans and many who don't vote or are not part of any Sunday morning or religious institutions". Mack (the main character) asks for clarification. "Does that mean...that all roads will lead to you?" "Not at all,' smiled Jesus... 'Most roads don't lead anywhere. What it does mean is that I will travel any road to find you.'"

Jesus then goes on to say *"I am the best way any human can relate to Papa or Sarayu (the character representing the Holy Spirit)."*

Speaking of these *"Buddhists or Mormons, Baptists or Muslims....,"* the Christ character proceeds to say, *"I have no desire to make them Christian, but I do want to join them in their transformation into sons and daughters of my Papa, into my brothers and sisters."*

What deception is in these words! It sounds so nice to say, "most roads don't lead anywhere." This makes sin, and life apart from Christ, sound quite unremarkable. There is nothing to be alarmed at here. There is no acknowledgment that all men apart from Christ are headed for death, and destruction. By describing Christ as "the best way," it is inferred that there are other ways to become sons and daughters of God. These ways are just not the best way.

The Shack has sold fifteen million copies.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_best-selling_books

Truly, the error of Satan has infiltrated the body of Christ like a flood. Around the same time that this book came out, Joel Osteen, author, and megachurch pastor from Houston, Texas, was interviewed by Larry King on his evening broadcast. Following is an excerpt from that interview.



KING: What if you're Jewish or Muslim, you don't accept Christ at all?

OSTEEN: You know, I'm very careful about saying who would and wouldn't go to heaven. I don't know ...

KING: If you believe you have to believe in Christ? They're wrong, aren't they?

OSTEEN: Well, I don't know if I believe they're wrong. I believe here's what the Bible teaches and from the Christian faith this is what I believe. But I just think that only God will judge a person's heart. I spent a lot of time in India with my father. I don't know all about their religion. But I know they love God. And I don't know. I've seen their sincerity. So I don't know. I know for me, and what the Bible teaches, I want to have a relationship with Jesus.

CALLER: Hello, Larry. You're the best, and thank you, Joe -- Joel -- for your positive messages and your book. I'm wondering, though, why you side-stepped Larry's earlier question about how we get to heaven? The Bible clearly tells us that Jesus is the way, the truth and the light and the only way to the father is through him. That's not really a message of condemnation but of truth.

OSTEEN: Yes, I would agree with her. I believe that. . .

KING: So then a Jew is not going to heaven?

OSTEEN: No. Here's my thing, Larry, is I can't judge somebody's heart. You know? Only God can look at somebody's heart, and so - I don't know. To me, it's not my business to say, you know, this one is or this one isn't. I just say, here's what the Bible teaches and I'm going to put my faith in Christ. And I just I think it's wrong when you go around saying, you're saying you're not going, you're not going, you're not going, because it's not exactly my way. I'm just...

KING: But you believe your way.

OSTEEN: I believe my way. I believe my way with all my heart.

KING: But for someone who doesn't share it is wrong, isn't he?

OSTEEN: Well, yes. Well, I don't know if I look at it like that. I would present my way, but I'm just going to let God be the judge of that. I don't know. I don't know.

KING: So you make no judgment on anyone?

OSTEEN: No. But I...

KING: What about atheists?

OSTEEN: You know what, I'm going to let someone -- I'm going to let God be the judge of who goes to heaven and hell. I just -- again, I present the truth, and I say it every week. You know, I believe it's a relationship with Jesus. But you know what? I'm not going to go around telling everybody else if they don't want to believe that..., that's going to be their choice. God's got to look at your own heart. God's got to look at your heart, and only God knows that.

You can watch this interview online:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pKF_QgNezBY&NR=1

In this interview Joel Osteen says that he cannot say that Muslims and Jews (who rejected the Messiah) are wrong. He says that he does not know whether the Hindus in India are wrong. He says that they are sincere, and only God can judge their heart. What Joel is expressing is that he has been raised to believe Jesus is the One He should believe in, but he cannot say others who believe in other gods, or no god at all, are not going to go to heaven.

What Joel Osteen has just described is a "WIDE GATE." He is unwilling to say that mankind can only come to God through His Son Yahshua the Christ. As long as the people are sincere, and good folks, that seems to be adequate in Joel's view. He

doesn't want to "judge" anyone.

The issue is not about *our* judging anyone. It is about accepting God's judgment. He has told us what is true. We must either receive it as truth, or reject it. The Son of God spoke the following words to Thomas.

John 14:6

Yahshua said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."

In another place He said:

John 10:1-9

"Most assuredly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. Yet they will by no means follow a stranger, but will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers..." Then Yahshua said to them again, "Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. All who ever came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture."

These words of Christ are very plain. HE is the door. He is the only door. A man cannot enter in through Mohammed, or the myriad of gods of the Hindus. He cannot enter in as a Jew who has rejected the Messiah. The Bible says, "The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God." Atheists are not going to enter the kingdom of God. There is only one gate to enter the kingdom, and Christ is that gate.

All the Law and the Prophets looked forward to that time when God would send His only begotten Son to reconcile mankind to the Father. Yahweh has only one plan of redemption, and there is only one Redeemer.

There is no other name than Yahshua the Messiah by which men can be saved. Why would Joel Osteen not say this? Why would Joel not say that Mohammed will not lead people to the kingdom of God? Why would he not say Buddha will not lead men to the kingdom of God? Why would he not say that the Hindu religion will not lead people to the kingdom of God? It is because he doesn't want to offend anyone. Truth offends, so it is being systematically removed from the preaching of Christianity today. It may well offend a Muslim to tell him that Allah, and his prophet Mohammed, will not save them. Truth must be declared.

We cannot re-write truth, saying that Christ is the best way, or one way, to the Father. He is the only way. This is not my opinion. It is the testimony of Christ, of the apostles, of the Holy Spirit. It is the doctrine of the Bible. I am not being intolerant, or judgmental, when I say that false religions such as Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, or Judaism apart from Christ, will not lead to the kingdom of God. I am simply agreeing with what Christ and His apostles said.

Joel Osteen has said that he is unable to judge any man, whether he believes in a false god, or no god at all. Surely, however, he should be able to judge the things they say they believe. If a Hindu or Buddhist believes their good karma can save them, how are they different from the Jews who thought that their works were able to save them?

Galatians 2:15-16

We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.

No matter how sincere a person is, belief in that which is false will not make the false become true. Joel Osteen says a very revelatory thing in his interview. He says, "I believe *my way*. I believe *my way* with all my heart." Joel may believe "his way" with all his heart, but the way he described is the wide gate and the broad path. It only leads to one destination, and that is destruction. It does not matter how sincere he is. Joel Osteen can believe with all his heart that he is on the best path, but the destination is still destruction.

I have shared previously that other renowned Christian figures in this hour are making similar statements. Billy Graham was interviewed by Robert Schuller and made very similar statements. Back in 2008 I posted a writing that shared the following:

Some months ago I was made aware of an interview that Billy Graham had with Robert Schueller of the Crystal Cathedral in California. In this interview Billy Graham states that there may be other ways to God other than through Christianity. Robert Schueller was excited to hear Billy Graham declare this, for it fits in well with his own thinking and false doctrines. You can find this interview on YouTube.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=axxlXy6bLH0&feature=related>

Billy Graham made a similar statement in an interview with Larry King.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bx29MRL4L6c&feature=related>

Please understand what is being said. It is being taught that “there is a wideness in God’s mercy.” A person can be a Hindu, or a Muslim, or a Buddhist, and if they are seeking light in the religion they are familiar with, then they belong to Christ. They need not know Christ, or even be familiar with God’s plan of redemption. All they need is to be good people who are seeking light.

[End Excerpt]

More and more, we are observing a departure from truth among professors of Christ today. Yahshua Himself prophesied that this would occur.

Matthew 24:4-5

And Yahshua answered and said to them: "Take heed that no one deceives you. For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many."

There are many proclaiming that Jesus is the Christ, but their message is full of error and deception. It is not enough to say Christ is a Way to God, or even the best way. He is the only Way. It is not my intent to pick on individual personalities. I wish it were only a few who were saying such things, even if they be big names, followed by millions. What I am observing is that this departure from truth is occurring across the board. Not only is the narrow gate being enlarged to include other entry points, but the narrow and afflicted path is being broadened as well.

What Joel Osteen disclosed in his interviews with Larry King is representative of a trend occurring among Christians today. The message of tolerance has been promoted for years from so many sources, both secular and religious, that multitudes are compromising the truth to avoid offending others.

KING: But you're not fire and brimstone, right? You're not pound the decks and hell and damnation?

OSTEEN: No. That's not me. It's never been me. I've always been an encourager at heart. And when I took over from my father, he came from the Southern Baptist background, and back 40, 50 years ago there was a lot more of that. But, you know, I just -- I don't believe in that. I don't believe -- maybe it was for a time. But *I don't have it in my heart to condemn people*. I'm there to encourage them. I see myself more as a coach, as a motivator to help them experience the life God has for us.

Some might defend the above view by pointing out that Christ said He did not come to condemn the world. That is true. He didn't need to. Mankind was already condemned. The wages of sin is death. All men are sinners.

John 3:17-21

“For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. He who believes in Him is not condemned; but *he who does not believe is condemned already*, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God.”

This insipid Christianity is declaring, “I don’t have it in my heart to condemn people.” If the people stand condemned already, should not love and honesty tell them so?

Joel says that *maybe* preaching about hell was okay at one time, but he doesn’t believe in it. Do you know that the person in the Bible who spoke the most on hell was Christ? If we are to be conformed to Christ, will we not speak as He spoke, and live life as He lived?

Mark 9:43-48

“If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life maimed, rather than having two hands, to go to *hell*, into the fire that shall never be quenched - where 'Their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched.' And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life lame, rather than having two feet, to be cast into *hell*, into the fire that shall never be quenched - where 'Their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched.' And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into *hell* fire - where 'Their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched.'”

Christ was very clear in saying that the Way to life was narrow and few would find it. He warned people against continuing in sin, but the church today avoids speaking about sin, feeling that to speak out against sin would present a negative message. This is not godly wisdom. It is the deception of Satan.

KING: How about issues that the church has feelings about? Abortion? Same-sex marriages?

OSTEEN: Yeah. You know what, Larry? I don't go there. I just ...

KING: You have thoughts, though.

OSTEEN: I have thoughts. I just, you know, I don't think that a same-sex marriage

is the way God intended it to be. I don't think abortion is the *best*. I think there are other, you know, *a better way* to live your life. But I'm not going to condemn those people. I tell them all the time our church is open for everybody.

KING: You don't call them sinners?

OSTEEN: I don't.

KING: Is that a word you don't use?

OSTEEN: I don't use it. I never thought about it. But I probably don't.

Notice again, even as the book *The Shack* said that Jesus is “the best way,” ministers today are declaring that walking in the righteousness of God is “a better way.” Christ says “THE WAY” that leads to life is narrow, and few there are who find it. There are not multiple gates, and various paths, that lead to life. God has given mankind One Way.

Why have I been so disturbed recently? It is because I see the saints of God departing from truth. John said:

III John 4

I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.

There is a flip side to this statement. There is no greater sorrow than to hear that the people of God are NOT walking in truth. There are some whom the Father has sent me to speak to in the past years who I know the Father is calling to walk as overcomers. Yet, I am observing among many of these that they are departing from truth. Compromise is entering their lives. What they believe, and declare to others to be true, is no longer the message of Christ and His apostles. The truth offends. In an effort to not offend others, even foundational truths are being treated as if they are optional.

The result of such thinking is that the saint who embraces this broad and liberal view of the path to life will most certainly fail to find the true path. They will see no need to depart from sin, to buffet their body and keep it under subjection, to surrender the rule of their life to be directed by the Spirit of Christ. When truth is discarded, then any belief that appears reasonable will suffice. Some would trade a life of surrender to the Spirit for being a sincere person, and doing treating others nice. Ultimately, however, the soul of man remains in the direction of one's life, and this will not lead any to perfection (maturity) in Christ.

Joel Osteen gave a more recent interview to Larry King. This time he appeared with

his wife Victoria. Following is an excerpt.

Larry King: Since you were last on, we have sworn in our first African-American president. What are your impressions [of Barack Obama]?

Joel Osteen: Well, I think he's doing a great job. I'm impressed with his skill, his calmness, his just strength under pressure. These are tough times for him.

King: And you, Victoria?

Victoria Osteen: I've been really impressed. In fact, I've been impressed [with] the first lady. She stepped up, and she's done a remarkable job.

King: Recent polls show 12 percent of Americans still believe Obama is a Muslim, and 35 percent say they don't know his religion, but to most of them it don't matter. Should it matter?

Joel Osteen: Well, it matters to me. It matters to me that I know he loves the Lord, and I think it's important that he has convictions from his faith. So to me, it matters when I'm making my personal decisions.

King: Does it matter to you, Victoria?

Victoria Osteen: It does. It matters to me. ... I believe he is a Christian.

[S o u r c e :
http://articles.cnn.com/2009-04-08/politics/lkl.osteens_1_victoria-osteen-joel-osteen-larry-king?_s=PM:POLITICS]

It should be noted that this interview occurred AFTER Obama announced his intent to promote both homosexuality and abortion without restrictions. The date of this news article is April 8, 2009. Two months later, Barack Obama made the following announcement.

http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Presidential-Proclamation-LGBT-Pride-Month/

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary
June 1, 2009

LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, AND TRANSGENDER PRIDE MONTH, 2009

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

A PROCLAMATION

Forty years ago, patrons and supporters of the Stonewall Inn in New York City resisted police harassment that had become all too common for members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community. Out of this resistance, the LGBT rights movement in America was born. During LGBT Pride Month, we commemorate the events of June 1969 and commit to achieving equal justice under law for LGBT Americans.

LGBT Americans have made, and continue to make, great and lasting contributions that continue to strengthen the fabric of American society. There are many well-respected LGBT leaders in all professional fields, including the arts and business communities. LGBT Americans also mobilized the Nation to respond to the domestic HIV/AIDS epidemic and have played a vital role in broadening this country's response to the HIV pandemic.

Due in no small part to the determination and dedication of the LGBT rights movement, more LGBT Americans are living their lives openly today than ever before. *I am proud to be the first President to appoint openly LGBT candidates to Senate-confirmed positions in the first 100 days of an Administration.* These individuals embody the best qualities we seek in public servants, and across my Administration -- in both the White House and the Federal agencies -- openly LGBT employees are doing their jobs with distinction and professionalism...

My Administration has partnered with the LGBT community to advance a wide range of initiatives. At the international level, I have joined efforts at the United Nations to decriminalize homosexuality around the world. Here at home, I continue to support measures to bring the full spectrum of equal rights to LGBT Americans. These measures include enhancing hate crimes laws, supporting civil unions and Federal rights for LGBT couples, outlawing discrimination in the workplace, ensuring adoption rights, and ending the existing "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy in a way that strengthens our Armed Forces and our national security...

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim June 2009 as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Pride Month. *I call upon the people of the United States to turn back discrimination and prejudice everywhere it exists...*

BARACK OBAMA

[End Transcript]

Barack Obama's views on this subject, and abortion, were well known prior to the interview Joel Osteen and his wife had with Larry King. Christ said we would know men by their fruits. Barack Obama may say he is a believer in Jesus Christ, but he is not a follower of Christ. Christ was not a champion of homosexuality. Christ said He came to fulfill the Law, not abolish it. He could not have fulfilled the Law if He described homosexuality as a *benefit* to society that *strengthens* the people. He could not have fulfilled the Law by vilifying those who said homosexual behavior is evil.

Leviticus 20:13

If a man lies with a male as he lies with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination. They shall surely be put to death. Their blood shall be upon them.

I don't think I need to persuade those who read this blog that Barack Obama is not a disciple of Christ. His works and words speak for themselves.