

The Truth Of God – Demanding A Decision! – Part 1 **Acts 28:16-31**

Introduction:

1. Some people can make the worst out of a good situation. Others can make the best out of a bad situation. This is what the apostle Paul did. He had been unjustly arrested and had appealed to Caesar.
2. After four months of travel, Paul finally arrived at Rome where he was given his own dwelling place with a soldier guarding him constantly. vs. 16
3. Though Paul was a prisoner in Rome, it didn't take him long to get busy in pursuit of his ministry. He immediately called the chief of the Jews together for a preliminary meeting. vs. 17-22
4. They agreed upon a date when they would meet again to allow Paul to explain his beliefs concerning Christianity. At this particular meeting, Paul shared with these Jewish people the truth of God. The reaction was mixed, at best. vs. 23-25
 - Have you ever tried to share Jesus Christ with somebody and got a less-than-favorable response? It happens because people do not want to admit that Jesus Christ and the Word of God are truth! If this is so, they know that they would be required to submit to God's authority.
5. We live in a day and age in which few people believe in absolute truth, yet the Bible emphatically declares itself to be truth. John 17:17; Ephesians 1:13; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 2:15
6. Paul was very committed to the truth of God, even while in prison in Rome.
7. Are you committed to the truth of God? Does it impact your daily life, your home, your decisions, and your relationships? If we are committed to the truth of God, it should be impacting our lives in tangible ways.
8. Every believer must be totally committed to God's truth. Why is this true? Let's examine our text to see why.

First, because the truth of God is distinctive

1. As Paul taught the truth of God, there were two characteristics that distinguished it from all other teaching. It revolved around:
 - The Person of Jesus Christ (the living Word) – John 14:6
 - The Word of God (the written Word) – John 17:17; 1 Thessalonians 2:13
2. If a person claims to be teaching spiritual truth, but his message is not rooted in the Word of God and the Person of Jesus Christ, he is a wolf in sheep's clothing, and you'd better beware!
 - Many Christians get sucked in by false teaching on the TV, radio, at church, etc. It is because they lack a total commitment to God's truth. If they were committed to knowing and understanding God's truth, they would be able to readily detect teaching that does not line up with God's truth.

3. The preaching of Jesus Christ is what landed Paul in prison (2 Timothy 1:10-12, 2:8-9), yet he exhorted his son in the faith, Timothy, to follow his example. 2 Timothy 3:14-15, 4:2
 - The truth of God is distinctive. It revolves around the person of Jesus Christ, the one who declared Himself to be THE truth and life. He is the only one to ever resurrect from the dead. Jesus is truth.
 - If you mention God, or a Higher Being, or Allah, or Mohammed, or Buddha, or the “man upstairs,” people will tolerate it. Mention Jesus Christ and the battle lines are drawn quickly. People are “offended.” They will sing “God Bless America” at a ballgame, but you won’t hear, “Jesus is the Answer.”

Second, because the truth of God is divisive

1. On the surface, this may look like something that is negative. But it is, in fact, positive for the committed believer. Let’s look in our text, and then I’ll explain what I mean.
2. Paul passionately taught the truth of God to these Jewish people. vs. 23
 - “*expounded*” – to make clear so all could see and understand
 - “*testified*” – to attest or protest earnestly
 - “*persuading*” – to try to win over; to convince by reason; logic
3. Do you passionately share the truth of God and stand for God’s truth in your daily life? Is it special to you? Does it mean something to you?
 - Does something stir in you when you hear somebody taking God’s name in vain or blaspheming God’s truth?
4. Paul was passionate about God’s truth, and it showed. There was no doubt where he stood. Everybody knew it, and it created a dividing line.
5. It divided this group into two camps (vs. 24). There were believers and unbelievers. Those will be the two great divisions for all eternity.
 - Mankind divides people by race, nationalities, religious denominations, financial status, political parties, etc. But when it is all said and done, the only division that matters is “*believed*” and “*believed not.*” God will separate mankind for all eternity according to this division.
6. The truth of God is the great divider. Luke 12:51-53
 - This is not meant to be a negative, but a positive for the believer. The truth of God creates a clear division in order to protect the believer.
 - The truth of God creates a dividing line, so that the believer can be protected from bad decisions, destructive actions, unhealthy relationships, corrupt doctrine, etc.
7. If the believer is not totally committed to God’s truth, he will lack discernment, which will lead to very bad decisions in life.
8. The truth of God is the great divider, thereby allowing us to see things for what they really are. 2 Corinthians 6:14-17
 - Even though the truth of God is a natural divider, this does not give the believer an excuse to be rude and obstinate with other people. Some people present God’s truth in an abrasive and offensive way. When it is

rejected, they conclude, “He sure didn’t want the truth of God.” Maybe it wasn’t your position they rejected, but your disposition.

- We have been called to exercise a merciful and compassionate spirit with those who have not come to grasp and accept God’s truth. 2 Timothy 2:25-26
- But even when we do, some will receive it, and some will not.
2 Thessalonians 2:10-12

9. As Christians, we do not try intentionally to be divisive, but we must accept the fact that God’s truth is naturally a divider of mankind – not because of anything that is wrong with the truth, but because of man’s sin and rebellion.