**The Response to Truth**

**Introduction:**

At the end of Paul’s sermon on Mars Hill in Athens, the listeners responded to the truth of his message in three different ways. (Acts 17:32-34) People haven’t changed in the past 1900 years. Those responses to the truth of the gospel are still seen.

Unfortunately, many Christians today believe we should “tone down” our message so as not to offend. It is not our responsibility to make sure that people never feel troubled or uncomfortable when the truth is presented. The Scriptures make clear that the gospel will trouble people today just like it did in the first century.

What kinds of people will be troubled when the truth is presented?

**Body:**

1. **The Hypocrites (Pretenders)**
* Matthew 23:25-28 These scribes and Pharisees went to great lengths to appear religious and spiritual. Jesus repeatedly throughout His ministry denounced them for their hypocrisy. When He taught them the truth, instead of repenting; they tried to kill Him. (Matthew 12:1-7, 14)
1. **The Worldly (Comfortable)**
* Setting: City of Ephesus (Acts 19:1-10) Paul presented the truth to them.
* Paul performed great miracles. (Verses 17-20) The truth caused them to repent.
* This caused quite a disturbance. (Verses 23-27) Demetrius’ lifestyle was threatened; his financial security was in danger; his god was being dethroned.
* Was it Paul’s fault for the riot that followed? Of course not! The gospel challenged the existing culture. Many didn’t like it. They were comfortable with how things were. This will always happen when people’s way of life (financial, religious, political. . .) is challenged by the truth of the gospel. (Acts 16:16-21)
1. **The Compromisers**
* In the first century, there were men who wanted to bring in beliefs, ideas, and practices from other religions. (Acts 15:10-11)
* Paul was greatly disturbed that many in the churches of Galatia were changing or distorting the true gospel. (Galatians 1:6-10)
* Today people are doing the same. They are willing to alter the gospel to accept teachings both secular and religious. They accept evolution, abortion, homosexuality, multiple ways of salvation, all religions and faiths are equal. . .
* The more we insist on the exclusiveness of the gospel, the more we will be shunned. The truth is very narrow.

**Conclusion:**

Jesus said of Himself, “I am the way, the truth and the life; no one comes to the Father except through Me.” (John 14:6) Jesus is the only way, the exclusive way. That truth is troubling to many people. Jesus knew it would be. (Matthew 10:34)

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