

CHRISTIANITY IN TROUBLED TIMES

“Suppress the Truth”

Scripture Reading: ROMANS 1:18-23

-) **SLIDE 7-8.** Scripture reading.
-) **SLIDE 9.** Today’s message is titled, “*Suppress the Truth.*”
-) **SLIDE 10.** Two weeks ago, I delivered a message from ISAIAH 5 about how God had spoken through Isaiah and pronounced four woes on the nation Israel. The woe I focused on was found in ISAIAH 5:20: “*Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness; who substitute bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!*”
-) Substitution. We see the same thing in America today. We have become a substitute society. We have substituted good for evil and evil for good.
-) **SLIDE 11.** Last week we talked about when God reaches His breaking point—that time when God says, “*enough is enough*” and He unleashes His discipline and consequences on those who do evil. And we concluded that 1) His judgments are always right, 2) the timing of the discipline He invokes is always perfect, and 3) He can discipline an individual (Uzzah), a family (King David), a city (Sodom), a nation (Israel), or mankind.
-) Since America has become a substitute society, when will God reach His breaking point and say, “*enough is enough?*” Or has He already reached that point? Today I want to put these two thoughts together along with today’s text.
-) **SLIDE 12.** Our text tells us that men (women) suppress the truth in unrighteousness. What does it mean to suppress? Webster defines the word “*suppress*” as “*to restrain from a usual course or action; to exclude from consciousness.*”

-) **SLIDE 13.** Q1. What do men suppress? A1. The truth. Q2. How do men suppress that truth? A2. In their unrighteousness. Their unrighteous actions prove that they suppress (exclude from their consciousness) the truth. In other words, their actions support and reflect their belief system.
-) **SLIDE 14.** Q3. Should men know the truth? A3. Yes, because God has made it evident to them and they are without excuse.
-) **SLIDE 15.** Q4. How did God make the truth known to men? A4. Through nature—by what has been made. There is no excuse to look at creation and say there is no God. And there is no excuse for not pursuing that truth.
-) **SLIDE 16.** Q5. Why do men suppress the truth? A5. Their foolish hearts have been darkened. What kind of hearts?
-) **SLIDE 17.** Q6. How has man responded? A6. They have exchanged the glory of God for the glory of something or someone else. Remember, everybody worships something.
-) BGCC, the unsaved hate God. People suppress the truth. They don't want the truth. They can't stand the truth. They want to eliminate the truth. And they do not like people like us who love the truth. There's a war going on out there, and we are the good guys. But since the world suppresses the truth, we are now the bad guys, at least in their eyes.
-) Let's identify what we see in our 21st century American culture and how the truth has been suppressed—how America has exchanged the true God for the image it would rather have.
-) Our moral standards are in the toilet. Abortions are at a rate of about 1 million per year but somehow black, blue, Asian, Hispanic, illegal alien, and native American lives matter. On the list of lives that do not matter are the unborn which means the most unsafe place to be is inside a mother's womb.

-) Governor Northam, the governor of Virginia in supporting late-term abortion, says this: “*The infant would be delivered, kept comfortable, and then terminated.*” Hippocratic Oath?
-) Is God at His breaking point for America’s stand on human life and how this country has suppressed the truth?
-) Men are changing into women and women are changing into men. It’s no longer about the gender in which we were born, but about how we need to identify ourselves. Radical groups want to become androgynous and wipe out gender roles altogether. But these same groups insist that a woman be in the white house unless you’re Sarah Sanders.
-) The people who preach tolerance are the least tolerant. It’s OK to have your own view on issues, just as long as you agree with their view. Christians are hated by the LGBTQ movement, but Christians are the ones branded as haters.
-) Is God at His breaking point for America’s stand on gender and sexual behavior and how this country has suppressed the truth?
-) **SLIDE 18.** I said the truth will do three things: 1) It will divide, 2) It will set you free, 3) It will hold a person accountable.
-) People no longer want to be held accountable for anything. That’s why they can riot and break into businesses and set places on fire and steal merchandise because these people know that there are no longer any consequences for their evil actions. And if they get caught, it is always somebody else’s fault. They are the victim.
-) So, in an effort not to upset or offend anyone, let’s defund our police force because, chances are, they will only overstep their authority and do harm to these people.
-) Is God at His breaking point for America’s stand on government authority? Is God at His breaking point for both the misuse of that authority and the total disregard for it?

-) The USA was founded on Judeo-Christian principles. And I believe there was a time when the USA was doing a fairly good job of following those Judeo-Christian principles. I also believe that while we were following those principles, God was blessing America.
-) **SLIDE 19.** GW *“It is the duty of all nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey His will, to be grateful for His benefits, and humbly to implore His protection and favor.”*
-) But that was back when governing authorities had integrity, and back when parents were concerned more for their children than for themselves, and that was back when people followed their conscience, and back when churches were upholding the truth.
-) And I would say that the USA did a fairly good job of that up until around 1950—post WWII. To me, that’s when America started sliding into the mess that we are in today.
-) Around 1950 Americans gradually quit following their conscience. Around 1950 American parents gradually took the focus off the family and placed it on self. Around 1950 American governing authorities gradually started being self-serving instead of serving the people. Around 1950 American churches gradually became more like the culture and the world than coming out and being separate from the world.
-) So, what does God think of 2020 America? 2020 America wants God out of our homes, out of our schools, out of our government, out of our businesses, removed from our pledge of allegiance, and removed from our money and currency.
-) And 2020 America wants people who follow God to throw away that antiquated Bible and start thinking just like them because God’s ways just don’t work in our society any longer.
-) What is America’s god today? It’s not the Creator God. Our gods are our jobs and our possessions and our houses and our cars and our drugs and our internet and ... our self.

-) Those are our images of corruptible man, birds, four-footed animals, and crawling creatures that Paul is referring to.
-) If you were God, would you be angry? May I remind you that God terminated the life of Uzzah for just touching the Ark of the Covenant. God has a plan for America. The ungodly actions of people who suppress the truth will make that plan happen.
-) **SLIDE 20.** So, what is God's response to America? Verse 18. The wrath of God. The wrath of God. It's coming folks. The same holy God is in charge now as was in GENESIS 7 when there was a global flood; the same God as in GENESIS 19 when Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed; the same God who exiled Israel to foreign lands in 2KINGS 17 and 24.
-) The same God who terminated the lives of Ananias and Sapphira in ACTS 5 for lying to the Holy Spirit. And it will be the same God who will bring this entire creation to an end some day and create a new heaven and a new earth.
-) If America continues on this path of suppressing the truth, the wrath of God will be inescapable. And folks, I see the writing on the wall. And I'll bet you do too. Do not be deceived. God will not be mocked. A man reaps what he sows.
-) This is not the time for preachers to be preaching the love of God, or seeking worldly happiness, or naming and claiming your prosperous destiny, or the social gospel which is really no gospel at all.
-) This is the time to be telling people we need to be on our knees in repentance, confessing our sins to the Lord, and acting more like Jesus and following His Word than acting like a fool and following the world and suppressing the truth.
-) ROMANS 1:18 starts off by saying "*the wrath of God is revealed from heaven.*" Let's look more at that next Sunday.

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