

# CHRISTIANITY IN TROUBLED TIMES

## “Exhort and Refute”

Scripture Reading: TITUS 1:7-9

- ) **SLIDE 7.** Scripture reading.
- ) **SLIDE 8.** Today’s message is titled, “*Exhort and Refute.*”
- ) Most of us would agree that we live in troubled times. Why? Is it because of the corona virus? Yes. COVID-19 does contribute to our troubled times. Is it because of the riots, protests, and movements going on? Yes. These things do contribute to our troubled times too.
- ) Why do we live in troubled times? Here’s my answer. The USA has become a substitute society because we suppress the truth in unrighteousness. Therefore, God has reached His breaking point and is removing His restraining grace to allow us to go our own way.
- ) Who’s to blame? My answer? The church. I’m going to explain why today and the next two Sundays. But first, a quick review from last week.
- ) **SLIDE 9.** God cares for His own. In the OT, it was the nation of Israel—God’s chosen nation—His people. Israel became corrupted and did evil in the sight of the Lord because of 1) false prophets were leading the people into evil behavior and false gods, 2) priests failed to enforce the actions of the prophets, and 3) the people were more than happy to follow what their sinful nature desired to follow. That was the OT.
- ) **SLIDE 10.** We live in the NT. God’s own is called the church. The church is the bride the Father will give to His Son. But not all church is the **CHURCH.** Explain. Pew warmers.

- ) If you say you are the church, then here's how you need to think, speak, act, believe, and teach. Why? Because you represent God. Is this happening today? Let's look at what the Word of God says about preachers, teachers, and the people who call themselves the church.
- ) Last week we asked a series of questions concerning the OT prophets and we used DEUT 13 and 18 as the benchmark for what they should do and not do, and what the people should do and not do. Let's ask those same questions today.
- ) **SLIDE 11.** Does God have requirements and expectations of the preachers and teachers of His Word? Yes. Explain.
- ) **SLIDE 12.** What does it mean to exhort and refute? EXHORT: "*to give warnings or advice : make urgent appeals.*" The preacher/teacher is to explain what the Bible is saying. Not what they think it says or what they want it to say. They are to guide the people into Biblical truth and warn them of the consequences when they refuse to obey.
- ) REFUTE: "*to prove wrong by argument or evidence : show to be false.*" It's paramount for the preacher to know the correct interpretation of the Scriptures so they can set straight those propagating false teaching.
- ) **SLIDE 13.** What shall the preacher speak? The Word of God.
- ) **SLIDE 14.** Are there preachers who are not authorized by God who do not speak the Word of God? Yes. The Bible calls the false teachers.
- ) **SLIDE 15.** What do these false teachers teach? Destructive heresies. What is a heresy? Heresy is "*an opinion or doctrine contrary to church dogma.*" Explain.
- ) **SLIDE 16.** They "*secretly*" introduce these heresies. Their words are smooth, and they are usually sugar-coated so they are not **OFFENSIVE**. Their approach is very **SUBTLE**.

- ) Their attitude is **CONVINCING**. Their physical appearance is usually **ATTRACTIVE**. They come in under the **RADAR** over a period of time. They win an **O-S-C-A-R!**
- ) **SLIDE 17**. JUDE supports this.
- ) **SLIDE 18**. What are the destructive heresies they teach? Generalize.
- ) **SLIDE 19**. What is the motive of false teachers? Greed. Greed comes in many forms. It can be greed for the love of **MONEY**. It can be greed for the love of **ATTENTION**. It can be greed for the love of **AUTHORITY** and **POWER**.
- ) These false teachers have an agenda and they use the pulpit to exploit it. God and church and Jesus and religion is a means to their end. They use just enough Scripture to make it sound like something Biblical.
- ) And how can one spot a false teacher? They are the ones who never preach about false teachers. They can't. They will give themselves away. The full counsel of God consists of the good, the bad, and the ugly. Preach it all.
- ) **SLIDE 20**. Is there a penalty for falsely speaking for God? Yes. In the OT, it was death. False prophets were to be stoned to death. In the NT, it is another kind of death. Don't think that God doesn't notice what they false teachers are doing to His church (the bride).
- ) **SLIDE 21**. Should the hearer heed the words of the preacher? Yes. God requires the people to listen and obey.
- ) **SLIDE 22**. Are the people satisfied with sound doctrine? No. People no longer want to hear sound doctrine. They say doctrine divides. Yes, it does. Because sound doctrine is truth and truth divides. Truth will hold a person accountable. And truth will usually make a person angry before it will ever set them free. These people don't want division, therefore they don't want to hear truth.

- ) That's the Biblical background for NT church preachers, teachers, pastors, and people. Preachers have an obligation to speak the Word of God—to preach sound doctrine—to exhort and refute. So, how can one exhort or refute when they don't know the Scriptures and their motives are evil?
- ) Folks, this is serious stuff. We are talking about the eternity of human beings. We are talking about the church being a deterrent to evil and making an impact on our corrupt society. We are talking about the responsibility of every man that stands in a pulpit on a Sunday morning. Exhort and refute.
- ) Not to preach a social gospel. Not to preach a cultural gospel. Not to preach what the family in the church who gives the most money wants to hear. **SOUND DOCTRINE!**
- ) God is concerned about His people, the church—the bride He will be presenting to Jesus at the end of the age. You don't think He wants this institution (the church) to be run correctly and His Word preached without apology?
- ) There comes a time when God reaches His breaking point. That is not a good thing. And God has reached His breaking point with the preachers and teachers and people in the church (those who call themselves God's people. Remember, not all church is the church).
- ) So, what happens when preachers fail to do this? What happens when the church fails to be the church? Just watch the news. Judgment. Wrath.
- ) **SLIDE 23.** HEBREWS 10:31. "*It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*" This verse speaks for itself.
- ) Next week we will look at specific false doctrines presently being propagated in the church. I will probably be naming names, naming denominations, and maybe showing a few YouTube clips of what some people call "church." Come back. It's going to get really interesting.

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