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IT'S NOT JUDGMENT. IT'S THE WORD OF GOD!

By Tanya Curren

“Don’t be a hater. You’re so judgmental. Don’t try and force your beliefs on me.” Have you heard any of these before? If you are a Christian and have tried to talk to a non-believer about their lifestyle or lead someone to Christ, you probably have. Often, it is much easier to point the finger at someone and call them names than to face the Sovereign God and admit wrongdoing. When someone is trying to displace their anger or fear, they often try to make you feel guilty and quiet your voice. If you are facing someone in your life like this, be empowered today and know that there is a BIG difference between being judgmental, versus repeating truths from the Word of God.

In our book, *ON COURSE: Strategies For Successful Living*, my husband wrote a powerful chapter called, “Spiritual Castration.” In it he points out the concept of Satan neutering the voice of the Christian because of a secret “pet” sin or a lifestyle that doesn’t bring God glory. If we are engaging in an action that continually opposes God’s Word, it will cut off our spiritual voice and authority; therefore neutering us as effective Christians in our world today.

Just as Satan tries to eliminate our voice, there are people in this world who will try to shut you down by calling you judgmental. This is something you must continually be on guard against and be prepared to stand on the Word of God as you stand up for your Christian beliefs!

Let’s first look at the definition of judgment: “to pass sentence upon; to punish or condemn; to act or decide as a judge; to form a negative opinion about.” Clearly, if any of us finds that we have been reacting or speaking to someone with a judgmental mind-set or tone, then we need to change. God is the ultimate judge of everyone, and it is not our job to try and take on His authority. Romans 8:1 reminds us that, “there is now NO condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death.”

However, if you search yourself and know that you are not a person who passes judgment, but has a deep compassion, love and Godly concern for others, you must walk in your God-given authority and use the voice God gave you to point them to His TRUTH! There are definite ways that you can do this in a passionate and compassionate way without coming off as an elitist know-it-all. There is an art to sharing your faith and speaking truth, and believe me, I definitely had to learn it!

When I was in high school, I was on fire, sold-out, passionately crazy about sharing my faith and all that Jesus had to offer. It was such a wonderful fire and is always so beautiful to see in a young person, yet I had to temper that passion with learning the art of sharing. I used to see people partying and doing all kinds of wild and sinful things, and my first response was to go up to them and say, “You had better stop or you’re

going straight to HELL!” (Not very nice, huh? Believe me, I know.) Needless to say, this is the most ineffective way to witness, it is extremely uncompassionate and it comes off as being super judgmental. My intentions were pure because I deeply cared about their eternal soul, yet my methods and words totally turned off anyone from accepting the free gift of salvation that I was trying to point them to!

Then, in college I went with our youth group to bars to try and witness. Let me just say that we found that extremely ineffective and not the best time to get someone to buy into the “turn or burn” theory. Have you ever tried to reason with someone who is drunk or wasted – let alone try to share truths from the Bible and have them comprehend what you’re saying? It may work for some, but it didn’t work for me.

What I have found throughout my years of studying the Bible and learning about the character of God is that we are to present His life-sustaining truths in love. We are not to tell someone they are going to Hell. Attempting to scare someone into Heaven is not an effective witnessing tool! Instead, we should always speak the truth and be willing to show anyone at anytime how they can have eternal salvation. I have completely changed how I share the love of Christ with others and learned how to combine passion with listening to God’s guidance and timing.

What people who are in continual sin don’t realize is that they are in ultimate bondage. They have been deceived into thinking that they are free, they are their own person who can do anything they want, and that their lifestyle is none of anyone’s business. But, in reality they are running from God’s truths and have no idea of the freedom that they can have if they fully surrender themselves to God. The world has taught so many lies that are wrapped up in the word “tolerance” that many Christians feel threatened to share their voice and speak God’s truths – even if they aren’t popular.

Do you feel this way? You may have seen a celebrity or a person on television stand up for Godly beliefs and then get verbally filleted by the media or the interviewer. I know I have seen these things, and I have watched how non-Christians fuel the flames online and say that the believer is a hater. In reality, nothing could be further from the truth, yet many will believe those who are on the offensive side instead of standing up for the person defending their faith.

If you are speaking truth into someone’s life, remember that God has given you a spiritual voice and authority to show them His words. It’s not your opinion if you are quoting Scripture. You didn’t write the Bible, God did! And if God said it, it is truth. Again, this is not to say that you use Scriptures in the Bible to spiritually berate someone into change. You do your job and the Holy Spirit will take care of the rest. You may point truth out to someone you love, and they may totally reject it. While this can be so hurtful, frustrating and even exhausting, do not give up, my friend! You just keep modeling Christ’s love and allow God to work on their heart and take care of the timing.

I know how hard this can be, because I am a very decisive person who likes a schedule. When I think something should happen, I want it to happen at a specific time. But what I have learned is that God is not working on my timeframe. I have to be open to His timing and be willing to wait until He is ready to act. I have also learned that God doesn’t “make” people do anything. That’s why He gave us free will. But, watching someone you love continuously live in rebellion, sin and do destructive things to their bodies with their free will can be so painful. When you love someone, you want them to be free and know that they will be with you in Heaven eternally. That’s why we can say things that they perceive as being judgmental. Out of our passion for their happiness here on Earth and our concern for the destination of their eternal soul, we can get caught up in trying to beat them over the head with Biblical truths.

**HERE ARE SEVERAL TRUTHS THAT WILL ENCOURAGE AND EMPOWER YOU
WHEN YOU SHARE YOUR FAITH:**

DO NOT FEEL GUILTY FOR USING YOUR VOICE

Satan would love for you to be a pensive Christian – one that always holds back because you don't want to offend anyone. Don't hold back! We have no idea how much time we have left before Christ returns, and we don't have time to waste. Definitely pray before you speak and ask God to guide you in all you say and do, but do not allow fear, guilt or worry to enter into your heart as you live your life for Christ. As you pray and ask for discernment, God WILL give this to you. He will give you the words to say, the perfect moments to share and the boldness to speak.

PRACTICE THE ART OF SHARING YOUR FAITH

Ask God to give you opportunities to point others to truth. Look at the timing of the situation and see if the other person is ready to receive what you are saying. Just like I had to learn from my mistakes of presenting God's truths in an ineffective way, learn how to share God's Word in a loving, compassionate and Christ-like manner.

USE YOUR VOICE TO CREATE CHANGE

Your voice is powerful. I recently read where a major company dropped their advertisement for a new television show because they received so many phone calls and emails from their consumers telling them not to advertise. I was impressed because this company said that their consumers mattered to them, and they listened to their voices. In a world full of billions, your voice is important to create positive change! If there is a television show that offends you, email the station and let them know why you are boycotting it. Then, offer ideas for positive content that you and your family desire. If there is a commercial for a restaurant or store that offends your Christian values, contact the company and let them know you won't patronize their establishment as long as they create negative ads. If there is a movie that has content that runs contrary to Godly beliefs and lifestyles, speak out! Don't be afraid to tell your friends and family about the damaging content. If you post your beliefs on Facebook or Twitter and someone doesn't agree...oh well! Your social media site is yours and is a great way to model Godly living. And remember, you have just as much of a right to post your Godly beliefs as they have the right to disagree.

DO NOT WORRY ABOUT BEING POPULAR

Let's just go ahead and accept this truth: as long as there are differences of opinions in this world, someone is going to oppose you. When you accept that and move on, it is truly freeing! It doesn't matter if what you say is popular if you are speaking the truth. And, it doesn't matter if you have critics and those who oppose you if you are standing on the Word of God. Again, you didn't write the Bible, God did – and His word is infallible, which means perfect, foolproof and flawless. When you are repeating something that is perfect, you don't have to worry about someone else liking it. Of course someone else isn't going to like when their sin is being brought to light. Who would?! But, the Word of God is like a spotlight that searches the deepest corners of our heart and soul. This is not to expose us and make us feel like we're on trial; this is to show us that we need God and there is nothing else in the world that will fill the hole in our soul like only He can.

IT IS NOT UP TO YOU TO SAVE SOMEONE

In our zest and zeal to point others to Christ, we can sometimes take on the burden of believing that we must be the one to bring them to salvation. Your job is to tell them about Jesus and the free gift of salvation. God's job is to soften their heart and bring them to the point of salvation when they have fully surrendered. You can't "make" someone get saved. It just doesn't work that way. When you release the burden of thinking that is up

to you, you will have so much more freedom and peace as you pray for the one you love.

KNOW YOUR BIBLE

This will sustain you! How can we witness to others and stand on God's truths if we don't know what our Bible says? Make sure to set aside quiet, dedicated time with God for prayer and Bible reading. In this time you will deepen your personal relationship with Him, and you will become more familiar with your Bible. You'll be surprised at what you can retain when you start studying! When I was first called into ministry, I freaked out at the thought of speaking in front of a group of people while trying to remember a Scripture reference! While I am still not a Biblical scholar who can spout out hundreds of specific references, I have definitely learned so much more about what the Bible has to offer and says about different areas in our life. I have also been able to retain far more than I ever thought I could because I meditate on what I've read and apply it to my life. The Bible is an unending resource for you and I, and it has SO much to offer! The more you read, the more you will enjoy reading – I promise. This has happened in my life, and I am so thankful that I have this as a guide for practical living and a way to show others more about Christ!

As Christians, we are called to share our faith. It is not a suggestion by God, just hoping that we will; it is a mandate. It is a huge honor and responsibility to represent the King of Kings, our Father and the one we love. Mark 16:15 says, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation." 2 Corinthians 5:20 reminds us that we are, "Christ's ambassadors," and Proverbs 14:25 reminds us that, "a truthful witness saves lives!" In Romans 1:16, Paul said it best: "I am not ashamed of the Gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes." Amen!

Go forth in boldness, share your faith without fear of being labeled as judgmental, and stand fast in the power of Christ. Let nothing or no one sway you or discourage you as you point others to TRUTH!

In Him,

Tanya



Tanya Curren is the co-founder of Boundless Limits International, a ministry of encouragement and empowerment. She is also the co-author of *ON COURSE: Strategies For Successful Living*, which has been distributed worldwide. In 2004 Tanya Curren was in a life threatening coma for 8 days as a deadly infection ravaged her body. Given two hours to live, she survived only to face the ordeal of a painful three year recovery. She is the author of *Broken Places*, *The Proverbs Devotion Guide*, *Embracing Change & Conflict*, and several other CD's. In her conferences and seminars, Tanya shares with others the life-lessons she learned through her journey to restoration. Tanya travels and speaks at local, regional and international venues, and is passionate about guiding others to have a personal, real relationship with Jesus Christ.