



# Tallapoosa church of Christ

*"And you shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." John 8:32*

### Welcome Visitors

.....  
We are blessed by your attendance and worshipping with us.

### Prayer Request

- .....
- Jason Rowell
- Teddy Cauthen
- Pete Bridges
- Linda Rider
- Pat Blumer
- Diane Aldridge
- Troy Stapler
- Pepper Daniel
- Marie Crumbly
- Jeremy & Candyce Isabell
- Penny Hicks
- Wilkerson's

### Birthdays & Anniversaries

- .....
- Shane Buchanan 1
- Betty May Mallory 3
- Candyce Isabell 6
- Sarah Stapler 27
- Carlos & Martha Payne 18
- Lupe & Misty Medina 22

### Holding Coats or Showing Love by Offense?

We have grossly distorted the meaning of love. Our modern day expression of "showing someone love" means there should **never** be any reproof, rebuking, or criticism. If someone preaches a "strong" lesson, elders and members often take offense and ask the preacher to stick to messages of "love." If the preacher points out that his sermon was biblical, then those criticizing him fall back on the tried and true, "yes, but it wasn't taught in love. You are supposed to teach the Truth in love." And therefore, the entire message is invalidated, because after all it wasn't taught "in love."



Truth shared properly still may offend. This doesn't mean it should stop being shared.

The social media world is even worse. If someone dares point out bad behavior or sin online then they are immediately inundated with waves of critical comments and they are characterized as the bad guy. Those who are outside the church often join in pointing out that the person is judging and the one verse they are aware of is that people should not judge! If we were living during the time of Moses our generation would add an 11th command: Thou must be nice! And while that sounds good and maybe even feels good to our emotions, we have elevated that command ahead of everything else. "Thou must be nice" trumps everything else.

I AM  
the LORD  
your God...  
You shall have  
NO  
other gods  
before Me.



### God's Plan of Salvation

1. Hearing the Word of God (Rom. 10:17; Acts 16:32)
2. Believe what is taught (Mark 16:16; Heb 11:6)
3. Repentance (Acts 2:38; Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30)
4. Confession (Acts 8:37; Rom. 10:9-10)
5. Baptism (1 Peter 3:21; Acts 2:38; Mark 16:16; Rom. 6:3-4)
6. After the above five steps, faithful

<b>This Week Leading Worship:</b>		<b>Next Week Leading Worship:</b>	
<u>Sunday Morning:</u>		<u>Sunday Morning:</u>	
Announcements	Joe Mallory	Announcements	Tony Hotalen
Scripture	Camp Mallory	Scripture	Brennan Mallory
Song Leader	Cory Payne	Song Leader	Harel Otwell
Opening Prayer	Tony Hotalen	Opening Prayer	Joe Mallory
Table	Kelly Cauthen Caden Mallory	Table	Cory Payne Camp Mallory
Assisting	Korbin Cauthen Brandon Estvanko	Assisting	Troy Stapler Steve Cole
Closing Prayer	Steve Cole	Closing Prayer	Kenny Laminack
<u>Sunday Evening:</u>		<u>Sunday Evening:</u>	
Announcements	Tony Hotalen	Announcements	Cory Payne
Scripture	Brennan Mallory	Scripture	Camp Mallory
Song Leader	Caden Mallory	Song Leader	Caden Mallory
Opening Prayer/Table	Harel Otwell	Opening Prayer/Table	Carlos Payne
Closing Prayer	Cory Payne	Closing Prayer	Tony Hotalen

Have we totally forgotten that souls are at stake? Heaven and hell hang in the balance, and we are all bickering on whether the message was “nice enough.”

Question:

If you see someone running towards the edge of the cliff what is the loving thing to do?

\*Speak quietly because you don't want to offend them?

\*Offer them words of encouragement so you don't hurt their self-esteem?

\*Watch quietly because after all you don't want to judge them.

\*Stand by and “love” them (aka be nice), and hope they turn away at the last second?

While you may think the above responses are silly or ridiculous we have thousands of Christians that respond to sin in that exact same manner. The truth is we dislike confrontation so much that we would rather watch the person go over the edge of the cliff and say how tragic his fall was, rather than get our hands dirty and try to stop the fall. Don't believe me? When is the last time you confronted someone about sin in his or her life or for an inappropriate social media post? When is the last time you watched elders get in a pulpit and rebuke members for sin? When is the last time your congregation practiced church discipline? While I know it does occasionally occur, the truth is, confrontation has become extremely rare these days.

Yes, 1 Corinthians 13 shows us the importance of speaking the truth in love (see also Ephesians 4:15). But that should also show us that speaking the truth and loving someone can still go hand in hand! People today equate speaking the truth with being unloving. Paul did not see them as mutually exclusive. Sometimes love means we say the hard things. Sadly, Christians do not do this much today.

Instead, we hide under the veil that we “love” the person—meaning we never make them upset. We cling tightly to the 11th command of being nice, and hope that our kind behavior will change or alter the sin in their life. [Side note—this is one of the downfalls of friendship evangelism. At some point if you are going to convert a lost person you MUST point out sin and its consequences. It is godly sorrow that brings about true repentance (2 Corinthians 7:10). Friendship evangelism rarely points out sin.] We are, like Paul, standing around holding coats at the stoning of Stephen. We are just bystanders watching all the drama unfold around us. All the while, we try and assume the moral high ground, because our silence is presumed to be the most loving act.

It has been said that, “silence is golden.” But that is not the case for Christians. When are we going to discuss the sin of remaining silent? There is a saying that “silence gives consent.” That's exactly what the Bible says Paul was doing at the stoning of Stephen. According to Acts 8:1 Paul's silence was consenting to the death of Stephen. Some might say he was just holding coats, but his silence meant he was giving consent.

### **Reminders:**

**No bible study on Wednesday**

[www.tallapoosacoc.com](http://www.tallapoosacoc.com)

[facebook.com/tallapoosachurchofchrist](https://facebook.com/tallapoosachurchofchrist)

Sunday Bible study: 10AM

Sunday Worship: 11AM

Sunday Afternoon: 1:30PM

Wednesday Bible study: 7PM

Joe Mallory, Minister

770-597-5009

Cory Payne, Bulletin

770-328-1745

Listen soberly to the words of Ezekiel 3:18-19, “When I say to the wicked, ‘You shall surely die,’ and you give him no warning, nor speak to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life, that same wicked *man* shall die in his iniquity; but his blood I will require at your hand. Yet, if you warn the wicked, and he does not turn from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but you have delivered your soul.” The prophet Isaiah would not be well received in our modern culture. He would probably be unfriended or blocked by many on social media. Isaiah (like many of the prophets) had to say hard things. We read,

“Cry aloud, spare not; Lift up your voice like a trumpet; Tell My people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins” (Isaiah 58:1).

We live in an age where any negative words cause outrage—even if those negative words are the truth. Let me ask: Is your doctor unkind, unloving, and judging you just because he delivers the news that you have cancer? Would you prefer he not tell you the truth and just “be kind.” Would he be more loving to keep your cancer quiet?

Yes, there are times when gentle correction is adequate and works (Galatians 6:1; 2 Timothy 2:22ff). For instance, we see this with Jesus and the woman at the well (John 4). At other times Jesus instructed others to rebuke those who had sinned (Matthew 18:15ff; Luke 17:3-4). Notice, when hearts were hard, Jesus intensified his language, scolding those in sin (Matthew 23; see also 1 Corinthians 5; Acts 2:36-37). A Christian who truly “loves” someone will assess the condition of the heart, respond accordingly, and confront the sin. But notice this—Jesus never just stood idly by and allowed sin to continue or gave his approval through silence.

We see it all throughout Scripture—people standing idly by while sin takes place. For instance, all the way back in the Garden of Eden we learn that Adam was with his wife when she ate of the tree of knowledge of good and evil (Genesis 3:6). Did he speak up? No, he allowed his wife to run off the cliff and then followed after her. What about Aaron when he saw Moses disobeying God and striking the rock twice (Numbers 20:11). No, he allowed Moses to run off the cliff and then was scolded by God, along with Moses, in the very next verse!

Please read—without forming an emotional defense—Paul’s words to the Christians at Corinth

It is actually reported *that there is* sexual immorality among you, and such sexual immorality as is not even named among the Gentiles—that a man has his father’s wife! And you are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he who has done this deed might be taken away from among you. For I indeed, as absent in body but present in spirit, have already judged (as though I were present) him who has so done this deed. In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when you are gathered together, along with my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

Your glorying *is* not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us. Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened *bread* of sincerity and truth (1 Corinthians 5:1-8).

Paul assessed their hearts and then scolded Christians at Corinth. He rebuked them. He told them to get rid of the sinner—kick him out. He used strong words. Now, notice how he followed this up in his second letter to them:

For even if I made you sorry with my letter, I do not regret it; though I did regret it. For I perceive that the same epistle made you sorry, though only for a while. Now I rejoice, not that you were made sorry, but that your sorrow led to repentance. For you were made sorry in a godly manner, that you

might suffer loss from us in nothing. For godly sorrow produces repentance *leading* to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death (2 Corinthians 7:8-10).

Paul loved these people enough to say the hard things and those hard words lead to godly sorrow! “Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who *are* spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted.” Galatians 6:1

Why do we call someone out?

1. We want them to go to heaven.
2. We want God to be glorified.
3. We want to obey His commands
4. Because we love people.

Church, it is time we go back and study what it means to love! It is time we discover that love and reproof are not mutually exclusive. If a child is about to stick their fingers in an electrical socket we don't just sit idly by and remain quiet because we don't want to offend them. We don't offer them words of encouragement to protect their self-esteem. No, we quickly (and often loudly) tell them not to stick their fingers in that or else they will get hurt. If they continue to reach for the electrical outlet we might even pop their hand. We understand this as parents—but for some reason, we lose reason and understanding when it comes to spiritual danger and dealing with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Rather than getting all caught up in emotion (which tends to be our normal response these days), how about we allow God's Word to speak. What does it mean to be loving? According to 1 John 4:8, “Whoever does not love does not know God, because **God is love.**” So rather using the word love as our culture does, Christians need to remember that God is love. In that same book, John wrote, “For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome” (1 John 5:3). In John 14:15 we read, “If ye love me keep my commandments.” Paul further defines love in Romans 13:10, by saying “Love does no harm to a neighbor, therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.”

To “love” is to do what God says to do in the way He says to do it. In other words, to be loving is to be lawful and to obey God's commands. So according to Scripture love and reproof are not mutually exclusive. Love should compel Christians to take a risk in their relationships and say something if it will save another's soul!

In his letter to the Christians in Ephesus Paul wrote, “For you were once darkness, but now *you are* light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of the Spirit *is* in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), finding out what is acceptable to the Lord. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose *them*. For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret” (Ephesians 5:8-11). Notice this, Paul says it is not enough to simply abstain from “the unfruitful works of darkness”. He says we must also expose them. John MacArthur wrote, “To ignore evil is to encourage it, and to keep quiet about it is to help promote it. The verb translated as “expose” (from *elegchō*) can also carry the idea of reproof, correction, punishment, or discipline. We are to confront sin with intolerance” (<https://www.gty.org/library/blog/B140220/when-silence-is-sinful>).

Love that does not openly expose the unfruitful works of darkness and oppose sin is not biblical love. Anyone claiming to be a Christian recognizes that Jesus loved everyone. He was the master teacher. And yet, have we overlooked Matthew 23? Jesus is literally ripping the Pharisees up one side and down the other the entire chapter. Listen to a few of His words:

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!”

“Woe to you, blind guides,”

“Serpents, brood of vipers!”

“Blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel!”

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead *men’s* bones and all uncleanness.”

“How can you escape the condemnation of hell?”

If Jesus had posted words like these on Facebook there would have been a massive pile on of negative comments—even by Christians.

“How dare He say something like that about those people.”

“How dare He call them out for sin.”

“How dare He not love them.”

“He claims to love God but He judges people.”

Jesus was the embodiment of love. And yet, He still called people out. Did Jesus love the Pharisees? Absolutely. But when spoke to them He was more concerned about the Truth than their feelings. He was speaking the truth in love—because He didn’t want people dying in their sins. He was bold enough to say the hard things. Sometimes speaking the truth in love means speaking strongly in a means to wake people out of their slumber! [And right about now some are thinking, “Yes, but He was Jesus and you are not.” I’m sorry, but you can’t have it both ways. You can’t claim He was the master teacher and that we should follow His example with commands you are comfortable with and then claim, “But He was Jesus,” on the examples you neglect to follow.] Jesus rebuked the Pharisees because He loved them and knew they were going to runoff a cliff—and so He spoke the Truth strongly and forcefully.

Here is the elephant in the room that no one wants to talk about: In our congregations today we have people dressing immodestly, fornicating, gossiping, posting profanity on social media, treating their spouses badly, enjoying immoral media, forsaking the church, etc. AND YET, NO ONE POINTS IT OUT! (Sure we may quietly talk about it to others behind the back of the offender...but we do not go to the offender.) We don’t practice church discipline. We do not follow Matthew 18 about going to a brother who sins against us. After all, we don’t want to be accused of not being kind. And sadly, we feel like our inaction is justified—because we are upholding the 11th commandment. If we really love others, we will warn them about the consequences of sin!

Friends, Paul told Timothy to “Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine” (2 Timothy 4:2, KJV). Notice reprove and rebuke are what many would call negative words. In Galatians 5:11 Paul wrote, “And I, brethren, if I still preach circumcision, why do I still suffer persecution? Then the offense of the cross has ceased.” Instead of preaching circumcision, Paul focused his attention on preaching the Cross, which he indicated was an “offense” to those who still held to the law of circumcision. Preaching the cross means we confront the reality of sin—and it is offensive to some. But we can’t stop preaching it!

In commenting on the tasks of elders Paul wrote, “This testimony is true. Therefore rebuke them sharply, that may be found sound in the faith” (Titus 1:13). He then goes on to say, “Speak these things, exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no one despise you” (Titus 2:15). Should our elders



stop rebuking sharply because it's not viewed as "nice." If they rebuke sharply will they be viewed as not teaching the truth in love?

I know at this point some are going to say, "Well, you didn't have the relationship to call that person out." Again, where in Scripture does it say we must first spend months forming a relationship? Would it be easier and better if there was a relationship already established? Absolutely! But if someone is running toward a cliff should I patiently wait until a relationship has been formed before I scream out a warning?

Maybe the reason we don't confront sin and evil is because we don't take it seriously enough or we are caught up in it ourselves. Paul admonished Christians to take sin very seriously. He wrote, "Yet *I* certainly *did* not *mean* with the sexually immoral people of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world. But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner—not even to eat with such a person. For what *have I to do* with judging those also who are outside? Do you not judge those who are inside?" (1 Corinthians 5:10-12).

Did you catch the last part? Paul indicates that Christians judge those who are "inside" the church. Which makes sense—considering we are all using the Bible as the standard for right and wrong. It is time we pray for courage and act. It is time we throw ourselves in front of those about to jump off the cliff. It is time we truly love those around us, even if it means we say things that might make us uncomfortable. It is time we pray and practice what God has commanded.

I fear the sin of silence in the church has encouraged the sin of silence outside the church. Christians often remain quiet on topics like same-sex marriage, transgenderism, abortion, and immorality. Instead, we just stand around holding the coats of those who are practicing such things—all the while consenting with our silence.

Brad Harrub