

SERMON: TELL IT LIKE IT WAS PART TWO

Isaiah 5:20

Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter.

John 8:32

And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

Introduction

Have you ever been in a situation where you were aware of a dirty little secret, but did not know if or when you should reveal it to the people whom it might impact in a negative way? Sometimes there are embarrassing personal secrets that people don't know the right time to tell friends of loved ones-or, if ever. In a new relationship, when do you tell him or her the unflattering truth in your past that might surface again? Will they still trust me if I tell them? Is there a right time to tell them? If I don't tell them and they find out on their own will it be worse than if I had told them? Sometimes we don't know what to do with ugly or awkward truth about ourselves and about others.

Well brace yourself- church history has a lot of dirty little secrets. Some of the secrets are not little; they are big -I mean big. Martin Luther, the 16th-century reformer uncovered some of them.

Now the same questions surface in a new way. If I expose the corruption, errors, and disinformation of church history, will this make some people doubt all Christians? After all, we are living in a post-modern, secular world. They may throw the baby out with the wash water. Will they doubt the truthfulness of the Bible and the validity of our doctrine? Will this drive them farther from the faith?

First, we must realize that anything humans touch, no matter how meritorious and holy initially, will become flawed. That's the way things are in our fallen state. There are no perfect churches. If you can find one that you think is perfect, the second you join it will cease to be perfect. We are not perfect; we are striving for perfection.

Secondly, we must realize there is no real problem with the content of the Bible, but with the hermeneutic or the prism through which we understand the Bible.

Thirdly, we must realize that all things work together for good for those who love the Lord.

Fourthly, we must realize God is still in control.

Before I go any further, let me say I know that there are many great things the church has done. The church has done billions of great deeds over the centuries and is still doing great things. For example, churches in Europe, England, and Africa started hospitals during the plagues and modern hospitals still bear the same names-Saint Joseph and Saint Jude.

There is an appropriate time when in the words of our fore parents, "we must tell the truth and shame the devil." This is especially true now as we study Black history, because many of the distortions in church history were designed to minimize or eradicate from history the accomplishments of Black people. This is also true because of the recent resurgence of White supremacy groups. We must always adhere to Apostle Paul's admonition in Ephesians 4:15, in

which he tells us to tell the truth in love. As with last Sunday's sermon, this may be more of a lecture than a sermon. Please bear with me.

Exposition

1. Connect the Dots and You'll See All the Right Spots

Apostle Paul Was Mistaken for an Egyptian.

Egyptians of that Time Were Black.

Acts 5:36; Acts 21:37-40

2. Change the Name and You'll Start a New Game

Africa Was/Is Changed To The Middle East When The Information Was/Is Favorable.

African (Moorish) Number System Was Changed To Arabic Number System.

African Science, Mathematics, and Art Ushered In the Italian Renaissance.

3. Change The Look And You'll Write A New Book

A Picture Is Worth A Thousand Words.

What Do The Words Say? Are They Positive or Negative?

The First Paintings and Sculptures of Biblical Characters, Including Our Savior, Have African Features.

The Vatican Has Many of These Art Pieces, But Do Not Display Them Often.

Paintings in the Catacombs in Rome Display African Features.

There Was an Aggressive Movement to Give All Biblical Characters Caucasian Features.

As some would say, there was a movement to "whitewash" the Bible and history.

This Movement Included the Removal of the Noses of Many of the Sculptures.

The Thick Noses and Thick Lips Are Dead Giveaways.

The Story Was They All Fell And The Noses and Lips Were Broken Off-Really?

Napoleon Tried To Destroy the Sphinx, but Failed.

Leonardo Da Vinci Used The Image Of His Lover, Cesare Borgia, To Represent Jesus In His Painting Of *The Last Supper*.

To Say The Least, Cesare Borgia Was An Unsavory Figure.

The Other Individuals in the Painting Were Cesare Borgia's Buddies.

They Were Also Unsavory Characters.

The Most Well-Known Picture Of Jesus Was Devised By Warner Sallman, of Chicago, in 1940.

Sallman was an advertising illustrator.

He painted the picture solely to make money. He was broke at the time.

Of course, it had to have White features to bring in the revenue.

It worked because it made him rich.

I wonder if he paid tithe on the revenue.

Closing Thoughts

For those who are hearing this for the first time or for those to whom this is a review, you may experience a plethora of emotions- pride, anger, rage, guilt, surprise, disgust, or disbelief. Some historians do disagree with some of these assertions, but the preponderance of scholarship supports them. No matter how we feel God can help us. I get consolation when I read Luke 8:17. "For nothing is secret, that shall not be made manifest; neither anything hid, that shall not be known and come abroad." I really get consolation when I read Revelation 7:9-10. "After I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindred, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes,

and palms in their hands; And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.” This tells me that God loves diversity. This also tells me no one will lose their ethnic or cultural identity when we get to heaven. The common denominator will be the worship of the Lamb. Our distinct cultures represent the means by which we give honor to God. No group should neglect or put limits on the gifts God has given them. These gifts should be offered to His church and to His kingdom. The vision of the kingdom is incomplete without all ethnic groups worshipping alongside each other as part of one kingdom under the rule of “One Victorious King.” Give God Glory! Give God All The Glory!

End Notes

1. The Moors, who were Black, conquered Europe in 711 A. D. and ruled for the next 600 years. Later European historians called this period the “Dark Ages” and did not write a lot about it because they did not want to disclose that Blacks had ruled them. The influence of the Moors ushered in the Italian Renaissance. The Moors gave Europe its number system. The Moor’s number system, now called the Arabic number system, was unique for the time because it has a separate set of symbols for numbers. All the other systems used the alphabets as numbers, as well as word designators. When symbols did double duty, confusion was rampant. The most important advantage of the Moor’s number system was its use of “zero,” which was a place holder. Without a symbol to stand for “nothing” computation was severely cumbersome. If you don’t believe me try adding, subtracting, multiplying, or dividing Roman numbers. As you can see, before the Moors, they used alphabets for numbers and had no symbol for zero. As human nature would have it, there was miscegenation. Beethoven was of Moorish descent. He was of a light brown hue and was only accepted by his German contemporaries because he was a great composer. Those who were not as talented as Beethoven took extra measures to hide their Moorish physical features. They would powder their faces to cover their dark complexions and wear powdered wigs to hide their “kinky” hair. These powdered wigs are still used in Europe and England for judges and statesmen. Shakespeare let the cat out of the bag when he wrote *Othello, The Moor of Venice*. In fairness, the Incas and Aztecs of South America also developed a symbol for zero.

2. Napoleon tried to destroy the Sphinx in 1798 to erase the Afrocentric features. He used cannon fire to destroy the nose and lips. However, it was so well built that it was disfigured, but not destroyed.

3. The earliest known depiction of Jesus was discovered around the 3rd century A. D. in the St. Callisto catacomb in Rome. He is depicted as a dark-skinned man with what we would call today an afro hair style.

4. The Greek word in Revelation 7:9 which King James translates as nations is *ethnos*. From this we get our word “ethnic.” So it could be translated all “ethnic groups.”

5. This is to add further explanation about a point made in last Sunday’s sermon regarding the geographical proximity of Africa and the Holy Land. The Suez Canal was excavated in 1859. The creation of the canal included the removal of a strip of land that physically connected Israel to Africa. Prior to the construction of the canal Israel was very much a part of the northeastern region of the African continent. This is why traveling between the Holy Land and Africa was so common during the Biblical narratives. In essence, Israel, which we call the Holy Land, is geographically a part of Africa.

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