

Lifestyle Evangelism is . . .

. . . Speaking the Truth in Love.

Many people remember Jack Nicholson's line from *A Few Good Men*, "You want the truth? You can't handle the truth." Too often we think that of others in our world today cannot handle the truth. No one can handle the truth anymore. Perhaps that is one of the reasons we have moved not to know what the truth is in our world today.

As Christians, we know the truth. Jesus is *the* truth. As Christians, we can and must speak the truth, God's Word. However, we must speak the truth in love. As Christians we are to build each other up in the body of Christ (1 Thess. 5:11). We are to do the good works which God has prepared in advance for us to do (Eph. 2:10). Yet, we are not to do these tasks while compromising the truth.

And the truth is that there is sin, and there is forgiveness. There is sin in the world because we live in a fallen world. Bad things happen to good people because of sin. Good things happen to sinful people because our Lord is gracious, compassionate and merciful. There is forgiveness, but not without repentance. There is forgiveness, but not without a cost. Certainly the cost for sin has been paid. The cost for sin is death, eternal death and that price has been paid by Jesus' death on the cross.

The eternal punishment (price) for sin has been paid, and much of the temporal punishment (consequences) has been paid as well. However, there may be times when we will have to suffer some of the temporal punishment for our sin. And there may be times that we as Christians may need to explain this reality to our unchurched family members and friends who have a hard time understanding how we may speak of a loving God who they believe, has brought suffering upon them instead of admitting that they bring suffering on themselves by sin.

When we speak of, about, and even for God, we must always do so truthfully, and at the same time, lovingly. Doing so may be difficult, but, as always, at the right time, God will give you the words you will need to give an answer for the hope that you have in Jesus as your Savior.