

If we, as disciples of Christ, are to live with the faithfulness of New Testament Christians, then one thing we must be willing to do is: Take a Stand. It is a common thread in the Bible that Jesus' followers, in whatever situation, against unnumbered foe, even those closest to them, stand for Truth, for who they are: willing to Say His Name.

This started with the Apostles: **Acts 2:14, 4:1-3, 17-20; 5:40-42** It spread to all disciples of Jesus: **Acts 7:2; 8:4-5**

And so we must be willing to "**stand for the Truth**" as it is often phrased. Be it friend or foe, one or many, stranger or your closest family member, we will stand for Jesus. But, that is infinitely easier said than done!

II Timothy 1:5-8 – Even inspired men like Timothy had to be encouraged to be bold!

Now let me be clear, it is not that we have difficulty identifying WHEN to take a stand. I polled a group of kids last year concerning the issue of standing up for Jesus and they were quick to identify times:

- 1) When someone is using profanity or ungodly speech
- 2) When people are talking about drinking or going to drinking parties
- 3) When people are dressed immodestly or disrespectfully
- 4) When religious people are living in error or teaching their false doctrine

This is a good list and applies to all. And I'm guessing every one here can draw from this list or add your own elements. You can probably even come up with someone or something in your life RIGHT NOW where you ought to stand up for the Truth and confess the will of Jesus.

The real question isn't WHEN, but HOW! Many times in my life I have been timid when I should have been bold; said nothing when I should have said something; stepped back when Jesus wanted me to hold my ground. And for me, it was simply a lack of understanding on HOW to proceed.

Let's discuss a Plan to Stand for Jesus. I only ask that you take a topic with you into the study, a specific area where it is time to do so, and let these principles help you proceed in the name of Jesus.

I. Start with the Bible

- a. Seems overly simple, doesn't it. Yet, many stand and speak without first studying and can get themselves in quite a situation. First I must answer this: Is my position supported by God?
- b. We can often be passionate about things and speak up for them in the name of Jesus without the actual word of Jesus to back them up!
 - i. Example: Immodest dress. Where are the verses to prove attire matters?
- c. **II Timothy 2:14-18** – Anyone can loudly say nothing. Anyone can claim something to be true of God, but none of that makes the stand a good one. STUDY to show yourself approved.
 - i. Example: Want to talk to a friend about language. Pencil, paper, and Bible. It is time to read what the Lord has revealed, then you can prove your stand by showing God's stand.
- d. **II Timothy 3:16-17** – But be aware. Something interesting might happen. You may change your stand! Scripture may open your eyes to the truth and fix your position!
 - i. Example: "I will show my Christian friend social drinking is lawful." Yet your study reveals sobriety passages and research shows Bible wines different.
- e. With Scripture, it is no longer your stand in God's name, but Gods stand through yours.

II. Make Self-Application First

- a. We are all aware of Jesus depiction of hypocrisy, with the man reaching out to take the speck out of another eye while having a log sticking out of his own! (**Romans 2:1** – practice the same things)
- b. **I Timothy 4:11-13** – Sandwiched between TEACH and READ is SHOW YOURSELF!
 - i. **V16** – Do I have some issues that need to be addressed first?
- c. Study should not be: "I'm gonna prove them wrong;" but, "I'm going to find the truth and make sure I am living it, and then share that knowledge with those who need it."
 - i. Again, you may have to change your position first, especially on doctrinal issues:
 1. Example – My previous teaching on Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage.
 - ii. But also, in moral issues, it will render you genuine and sincere:
 1. If I am going to talk to you about faithful worship, I first should measure myself and make sure I am faithful and singing and doing it lawfully. This gives credibility and weight to my stand!

III. Seek Godly Counsel Often

- a. I'm not suggesting that you need to consult others to find the truth, but often times Solomon's proverb is proven true by the passionate but reckless: *"The way of a fool is wise in his own eyes, but a wise man is he who listens to council."* **Proverbs 12:15**
- b. Will my plan pass the 'light of day' test?
- c. Be humble enough to share with others and solicit their advice before asking for the mic.
 - i. Ask God – **James 1:1-5** – He's ready to listen and guide you and give knowledge.
 1. I'm looking to confront a family member about how he is treating his family. I don't know how to handle it. I need to talk to God about that.
 - ii. Ask Trusted People – **Titus 2:3-5** – Lots of untapped wisdom out there.
 1. Turns out, an older preacher has faced the same situation as me and has learned from it and can help me address it well. But will I ask for help?
- d. Again, something may happen here. You may learn something and change your position. In which case you should be thankful for the help. Or they can help with Bible passages and words and can help you firm up your stand and make it with power and precision.

IV. Be Bold, with Love and Humility

- a. Have you ever stood on the right topic and had the right message, but delivered it the wrong way and ... the message was lost? Maybe you were too passive and the message was shoed away. Maybe you were too abrasive and inflexible and it was repelled.
 - i. Example: *Lady holding abortion sign vs. video of woman realizing her child died.*
- b. How would I want someone to approach me?
- c. Approach the person, the situation, the issue, with the right balance of love and authority
 - i. **Ephesians 5:5-12** – That is decisive, strong and important! (With Bible approval)
 - ii. **Ephesians 4:29-32** – The spirit is one of helping, loving concern, and faith.
- d. People will see this immediately and respond to it:
 - i. **Language** at School – "Hey man, I learned this Bible verse at church yesterday." Or even "Why do you use words like that? You know that's not right."
 - ii. **Modesty** – "Listen, I've been shopping at this store where you can look good and be covered." Or "Why are you showing your body like that? Want to borrow my jacket?"
 - iii. **Religion** – "We had a great study on baptism last night, can I show you this verse?" Or maybe "Your church has instruments in worship, where is the authority for that?"

V. Stand FOR, not just AGAINST

- a. I don't want to be the person who is always AGAINST everything, but who stands FOR something
 - i. I'm not just against profanity, I'm FOR using respectful speech and uplifting people.
 - ii. Not just against immorality, but FOR holy living and integrity and being trustworthy.
 - iii. Not just against immodesty, but FOR self-respect, purity and being a good example.
 - iv. Not just against denominationalism, but FOR His One True Church in His Honor.
- b. **Acts 2:14, 33-38** – Not just against the sinfulness of the Jews, but for their SALVATION
- c. What gives us the best chance of a good outcome?
- d. Whether it be sharing the gospel, confronting a family member, speaking to a crowd of peers...
 - i. Stand with conviction and sadness about sin, but with HOPE of penitence and faith.

Conclusion: It is a journey into Scripture, through your own mind, into the minds of others, and ultimately to people in the world who need to hear the Truth... but Taking a Stand is a journey we all must embark upon. Listen to these words: **Matthew 10:32-33** – In your life first, then in the lives of your family and friends, and then even in the hearing of a world who rejects Him... say His name. He's listening for it.