

Let Us Hold the Truth with Love

March 8, 2018

by Ben Purves

"In essentials unity, in non-essentials liberty, in all things charity." – Rupertus Meldenius, 1627

Throughout the ages of church history it has been necessary for Christians to practice theological discernment.

- How does one discern between orthodoxy and heresy?
- Are you my brother or sister in Christ?
- Is my brother in error and in need of correction, or is this an issue where there is freedom for private judgment?
- Is this theological difference one that calls for separation, or can we still enjoy fellowship together in the same congregation?

In the stories of church history we see that some disagreements would be concluded with the force of trial and execution. In later centuries we see the emergence of religious liberty and the establishment of multiple denominations. Today we see liberal ecumenicalism that has sought to establish unity without the gospel, and on the other side of things there are many gospel-believing churches that have separated from one another because of lesser differences.

How ought we to relate to one another for the sake of the gospel?

This Sunday we will begin a new Sunday school series -- "Gospel Shaped Theology: Holding the Truth in Love" -- that will span March-April 2018.

We will consider the priority and weight of the gospel, and how we might grow in theological discernment and love for one another. How we hold our doctrine does indeed shape how we love one another!

We want to be faithful to the Scriptures, and we want to be faithful to love one another. In order to do so, we must learn to give proper weight to our doctrines, understand which truths are essential for our faith, which doctrines shape the local church, and where we can and should have levels of freedom in our convictions.

As we are about to begin this new series I invite you to read Albert Mohler's 2005 blog post, [A Call for Theological Triage and Christian Maturity](#). This post will give you a helpful springboard into Sunday's discussion.

I also recommend that you pickup a copy of [Conscience: What It Is, How to Train It, and Loving Those Who Differ](#) by Andrew Naselli and J.D. Crowley.

May God give us wisdom to grow in doctrinal faithfulness and in love for one another!

Pastor Ben