

Speaking Biblical Truth With Boldness and Love

Introduction

The task of proclaiming God's word requires us to hold two realities in tension: we must speak truth boldly while simultaneously speaking truth in love. These are not competing values but complementary commands. As Bible students and teachers, we're called to declare Scripture's authority, confront error, and do so with the same Spirit that inspired the word we preach. This study examines the biblical foundation for truth-telling, the divine authority behind Scripture, and the Spirit-empowered balance between boldness and gentleness.

I. The Foundation: Scripture's Divine Authority

A. Scripture as God-Breathed

[2 Timothy 3:16-17](#) – "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."

- The term "God-breathed" translates the Greek *theópneustos* (Strong's #G2315): "**inspired by God, breathed out from God.**" This word appears only here in Scripture and **literally means God exhaled Scripture**—it came directly from **His breath, His Spirit**. Note that in [John 20:22](#), Jesus "breathed on them, and saith unto [His disciples], Receive ye the Holy Spirit." This establishes that Scripture originates not from human wisdom but from God Himself. Notice the four purposes listed: **teaching** (doctrine), **rebuking** (confronting error), **correcting** (restoring right understanding), and **training in righteousness** (practical application). This comprehensive scope means Scripture equips us for every aspect of ministry, including the difficult work of correction and reproof.

B. Scripture as Living and Active

[Hebrews 4:12](#) – "For **the word of God is alive and active**. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; **it judges the thoughts** and attitudes of the heart."

- God's word is not merely historical text—it actively works in hearts and minds today. Its penetrating power means it accomplishes what we cannot through human persuasion alone.

[Isaiah 55:11](#) – "So is **my word that goes out from my mouth**: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it."

[John 17:17](#) – Jesus prayed, "Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth."

II. The Spirit of Christ: Unity Across Redemptive History

A. The Spirit of Christ in the Prophets

[1 Peter 1:10-12](#) – "Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, trying to find out the time and circumstances to which **the Spirit of Christ in them** was pointing when he

predicted the sufferings of the Messiah and the glories that would follow. It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the gospel to you by **the Holy Spirit** sent from heaven. Even angels long to look into these things."

- This passage reveals something remarkable: the Spirit of Christ was actively working in the Old Testament prophets. They didn't fully understand what they wrote—they were instruments delivering a message for future generations. The same Spirit inspired both Testaments. Notice also that Peter equated "the Spirit of Christ" to "the Holy Spirit".

B. Divine Origin, Not Human Interpretation

[2 Peter 1:20-21](#) – "Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation of things. For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but **prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.**"

- The prophets were "carried along" by the Holy Spirit—they didn't generate Scripture from their own understanding. This establishes Scripture's origin and therefore its authority over all human teaching.

C. Christ's Words as Spirit and Life

[John 6:63](#) – Jesus said, "The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. **The words I have spoken to you—they are Spirit and life.**"

- Jesus identified His own words as Spirit. This creates a direct connection: the Spirit of Christ in the prophets → Christ's words as Spirit → the writings of the prophets by the same Spirit. Scripture is spiritually alive because it comes from the Spirit of Jesus Himself.

[Galatians 4:6](#) – "Because you are his sons, **God sent the Spirit of his Son** into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, 'Abba, Father.'"

- The same Spirit of Christ who inspired Scripture now indwells believers, enabling us to understand and proclaim the word that Jesus authored.

III. Speaking Truth Boldly

A. The Early Church's Prayer for Boldness

[Acts 4:29-31](#) – After being threatened by religious authorities, the disciples prayed: "Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to **speak your word with great boldness.**" And "they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly."

- Boldness is Spirit-empowered, not self-generated. When facing opposition to biblical truth, we follow the early church's example: pray for boldness and depend on the Holy Spirit.

B. Commands to Proclaim Without Fear

[2 Timothy 4:2](#) – "Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; **correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction.**"

- Notice the command includes correction and rebuke alongside encouragement. We must be prepared to speak truth whether it's convenient ("in season") or not ("out of season").

[2 Timothy 1:7-8](#) – "For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but **gives us power, love and self-discipline.** So do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord." {Jesus Christ, according to Paul, in 1Cor8:6}

[Philippians 1:14](#) – "And because of my chains, most of the brothers and sisters have become **confident in the Lord and dare all the more to proclaim the gospel without fear.**"

IV. Speaking Truth in Love

A. The Balance of Truth and Love

[Ephesians 4:15](#) – "Instead, **speaking the truth in love**, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ."

- This is the foundational principle. **Truth without love becomes harsh and destructive. Love without truth becomes sentimental and compromising.** Both are essential for spiritual maturity.

[Ephesians 4:25](#) – "Therefore each of you must **put off falsehood and speak truthfully** to your neighbor, for we are all members of one body."

B. The Manner of Our Speech

[Colossians 4:6](#) – "Let your conversation be always **full of grace, seasoned with salt**, so that you may know how to answer everyone."

- Grace and salt—both are necessary. Grace provides gentleness; salt provides preserving truth and flavor. Our speech should have both qualities.

[1 Peter 3:15-16](#) – "But in your hearts **revere Christ as Lord**. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But **do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience.**"

- Even when defending truth, we do so with gentleness and respect. The goal is not to win arguments but to honor Christ and serve others.
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V. Confronting False Teaching

A. Testing All Teaching Against Scripture

[Acts 17:11](#) – The Bereans "received the message with great eagerness and **examined the Scriptures every day** to see if what Paul said was true."

- Even Paul's teaching was tested against Scripture. This establishes the principle: **all teaching, regardless of the teacher's reputation, must align with God's written word.**

[1 John 4:1](#) – "Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but **test the spirits to see whether they are from God**, because many false prophets have gone out into the world."

B. The Seriousness of Distorting the Gospel

[Galatians 1:8-9](#) – "But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let them be under God's curse! As we have already said, so now I say again: **If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let them be under God's curse!**"

- Paul's language is shockingly strong because the stakes are eternal. Distorting the gospel is not a minor issue—it affects people's salvation.

C. The Responsibility to Refute Error

[Titus 1:9](#) – An elder must "**hold firmly to the trustworthy message** as it has been taught, so that he can **encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it.**"

- Refuting error is part of pastoral responsibility, not optional. This requires knowing both what Scripture teaches and what contradicts it.

[Jude 1:3](#) – "Dear friends, although I was very eager to write to you about the salvation we share, I felt compelled to write and urge you to contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to God's holy people."

D. The Warning About Itching Ears

[2 Timothy 4:3-4](#) – "For the time will come when **people will not put up with sound doctrine**. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths."

- This describes our current reality. People actively seek teachers who affirm what they want to believe rather than what Scripture teaches. This makes our task harder but more necessary.

Practical Summary

The biblical call to speak truth combines several essential elements:

1. **Authority:** We speak with confidence because Scripture is God-breathed, inspired by the Spirit{[words: Jn6:63](#) } of Christ Himself. It's not our opinion but God's revealed word, through His only-born Son([Jn3:16](#)).
2. **Continuity:** The same Spirit{[words](#)} of Christ who spoke through the prophets, inspired the apostles, and now inspires us. We're part of an unbroken chain of Jesus-empowered proclamation.
3. **Boldness:** We don't shrink from difficult truths or fear opposition. Like the early church, we pray for boldness and depend on the power of God through His Holy Spirit.
4. **Love:** Our boldness is tempered with gentleness, grace, and respect. We speak truth to serve others, not to dominate them.
5. **Vigilance:** We must test all teaching—including our own—against Scripture. When teaching contradicts God's word, we have a responsibility to refute it clearly.
6. **Balance:** We reject both timidity (failing to speak truth) and harshness (speaking truth without love). Both extremes dishonor Christ and harm His people.

As Bible teachers, our calling is to be faithful stewards of God's word—handling it accurately, proclaiming it boldly, applying it lovingly, and defending it courageously. The Spirit of Jesus who inspired Scripture empowers us for this task.

Desiring to live by every word that comes from the mouth of Jehovah ([Deut8:3; Matt4:4](#))

-[Sid Nash](#): 05/16/2026. Latest version: <https://sidnash.org/docs/BoldLoveTruth.html>