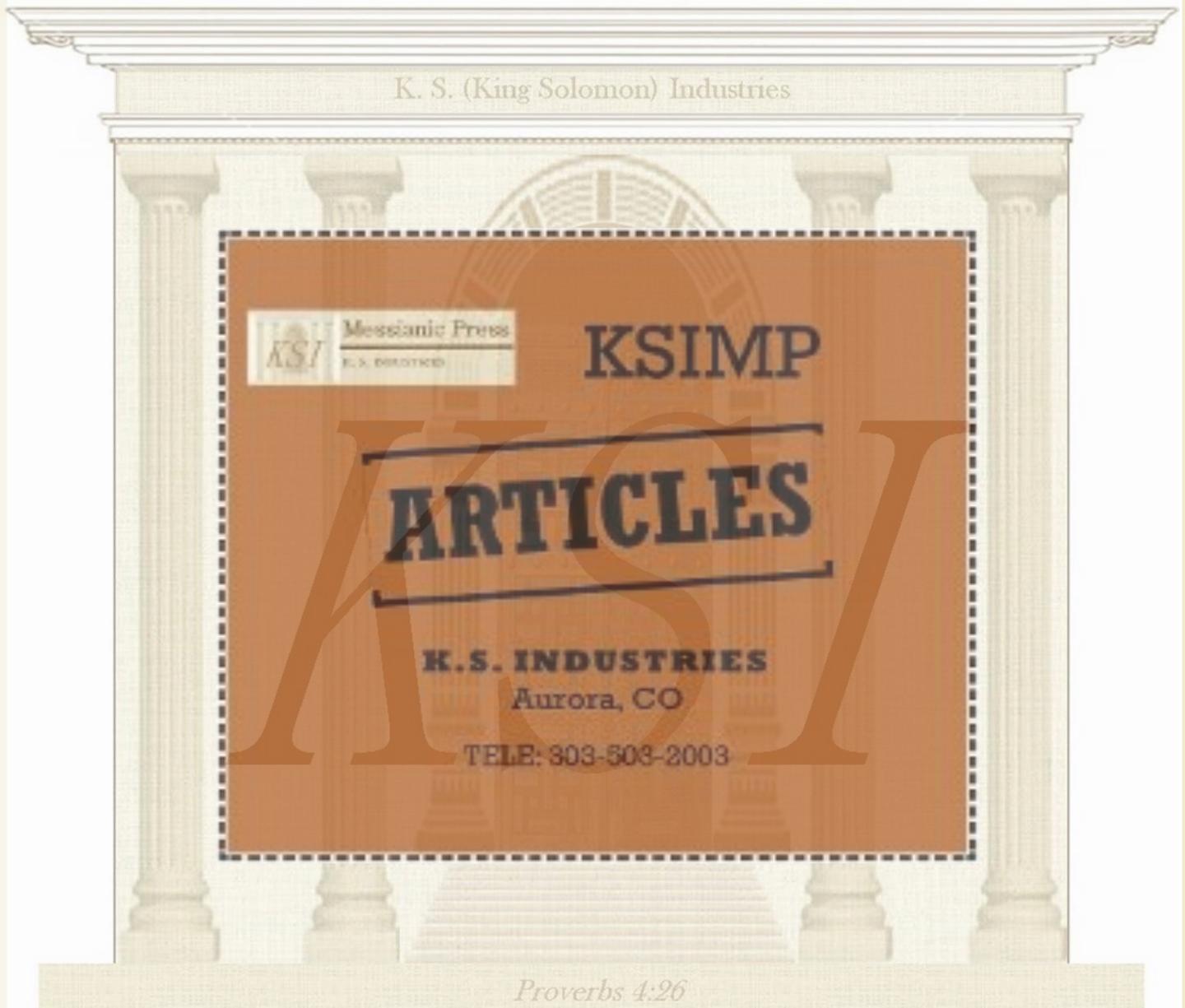


Speaking the Truth in Love

Copyright © 2016 by Vanita Lynn Warren



VANITA LYNN WARREN

Speaking the Truth in Love

Copyright © 2016 Vanita Lynn Warren

*Walk in wisdom toward those who are outside, redeeming the time.
Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt,
that you may know how you ought to answer each one.*
Colossians 4:5-6

Recently, the thought occurred to me: Does my critical attitude towards certain types of sin affect my witness for Yeshua? If I were honest with myself, I would have to say, "Yes!" I found it easy to pray for the homeless, the sick, and the poor; but what about the willful sinner? What about dishonest politicians, homosexuals who come out of the closet, or the inmate on death row who remains content with the rape and murder of his innocent victim? Did I have room in my heart to love and pray for them?

Sin is an issue that concerns all Believers. Yet, I needed to evaluate whether or not my heart was delivering a mixed message to people I came into contact with. Face to face with an unbeliever, I delivered a sensitive, loving message. But when I gathered with fellow believers, discussing the woes of the world, I found myself appalled, angry, and disgusted with some people. Often, I didn't exhibit God's love, or display any understanding of their sinful state. I was wrong, and I needed a Biblical attitude check.

I prayed and asked for God's forgiveness. I asked Him to teach me how to ensure my outer and inner attitudes lined up with His word when I shared my faith. I found five pointers in Scripture. As I applied them to my life, they helped me to become a better ambassador for the Lord.

1. Mind my own business (1 Thessalonians 4:11). My occupation in Yeshua is to love my neighbor and spread His gospel. I cannot change people's hearts. I can only plant the seeds; and God, according to His will, will make them grow.

2. Remember that while I was still a sinner, Yeshua died for me (Romans 5:8). This

scripture helps me to keep my "holier than thou" attitude in check.

3. I must love without hypocrisy (Romans 12:9). If I witness to a homosexual "in love," and then turn around and vent my disgust during a discussion with other believers, I'm being a hypocrite. It's hypocritical to say I hate the sin, and then allow my conversation to sound like I hate the sinner.

4. Bless and do not curse those who persecute me (Romans 12:14). The Greek word for curse means to pray against or to wish evil against. Sometimes, it's difficult not to "curse" when someone hurts you or your family, but God requires us to follow His example. We are not supposed to be tossed to and fro by our feelings.

5. Do not be wise in my own opinion (Rom. 12:16). Without prayer, I wind up doing things wrong—only to find out that my ways are not God's ways.

I learned, that unless I follow His way, my inner prejudices hinder my attempts to effectively witness to the lost. However, if I allow the Holy Spirit to remove the invisible barriers created by those inner feelings, I will be the Ambassador that Yeshua commissioned us to be, and sincerely speak His Truth in love.

Holy Spirit.

*See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise,
redeeming the time, because the days are evil.
Therefore, do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.
And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit,
speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs,
singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord,
giving thanks always for all things to God the Father
in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,
submitting to one another in the fear of God.
Ephesians 5:15-21*