



**Denise**

Well Hi! Welcome to the Black and White Podcast. Where we speak radical grace, raw truth and real hope in gray world. I'm your host Denise Pass with my cohost Micah Maddox and this month we have been talking about freedom. Today we want to tackle, well tackle sounds you know, kind of antagonistic (laughing). We are going to discuss being religiously correct. Has political correctness reached the church as well?

**Micah**

Ooh! Denise. This sounds like a touchy subject (laughs).

**Denise**

Yeah, probably could be, but when we are afraid to speak out on this, we prove the need to discuss this.

**Micah**

Mm! Your right.

**Denise**

You know our scripture for the day is Galatians 5:13 from The New Living Translation. For you have been called to live in freedom, my brothers and sisters. But don't use your freedom to satisfy your sinful nature. Instead, use your freedom to serve one another in love.

**Micah**

Wow! I think this verse really shows what our country is going through right now, right? Don't use your freedoms to satisfy your sinful nature. There's so much we could say right here and there's so many different issues that I can think of immediately that just, man our country and

our churches have it so mixed up when it comes to freedom. Freedom in Christ is so different from the freedom we see in the world.

**Denise**

You are so right, and it's kind of like mixing oil and water.

**Micah**

Yeah.

**Denise**

You can't mix flesh and spirit. You know, it gets kind of confusing.

**Micah**

Right? (laughing).

**Denise**

Well, I think today there is a weakening of doctrine in the church. That happens, I think, due in part to the fear of man or political correctness. It seems like we are supposed to be tolerant and that is the mode of Christianity we should embrace. As if tolerance is loving. But you know I heard a definition of tolerance lately where it was defined as hatred. When we don't love one another enough, to graciously point one another to Christ's truth, we accept the opposite and we point one another to darkness. But, when we uphold Christ's standards we are truly loving people. I think the problem arises in the method in how we approach people. When we don't approach them with grace, radical grace and real hope, we're just offering them religious rules.

**Micah**

Wow! You know this makes me of the verse The Lord chastens those that He loves. The Lord corrects those that He loves, and in our society and our culture we like totally decided that correcting is not tolerable.

**Denise**

Right?

**Micah**

Right, and so we have gone from like no tolerance for certain sins, quote quote, to being completely tolerant of everything.

**Denise**

Yes.

**Micah**

And when we look at this inside the church, we to the point of legalism. Well, if you follow these rules and you do this. Or, if your tolerant or not tolerant they decide, oh, well if I'm tolerant of this or I'm not tolerant of that, then I am not going to be accepted in that church and it comes down

to legalism. Legalism is one of those stumbling blocks I think that we all face at some point in our Christian life.

**Denise**

Mm!

**Micah**

Right? Tolerance has been twisted to become an enablement for sin in our churches and we can not tolerate sin in our churches, but we need to uphold sound doctrine. Even rebuking the believers, right?

**Denise**

Yes.

**Micah**

Not just rebuking and saying, "Hey, you're a sinner!", we're all sinners, right? So, we can't just name the sin and walk away. We've got to rebuke in the spirit of love. Because we love you so much, we don't want you to continue walking in this sin, even the sin of legalism, right?

**Denise**

Wow! Preach sister (laughing). Uh, but you know when I think about, you know when we hear, don't judge! don't judge! Right? And we're not to judge, but there is such a beautiful difference in saying, "I care for you and your soul enough that I'm going to risk you liking me, right? I'm not going to be selfish and enough to care for you.

**Micah**

Yeah, really this makes me think of parenting so much. Because, with our kids, you know we can be tolerant to a point. I think of, you know I have four children, our house can get pretty crazy and pretty loud and there comes a point where the volume, I am tolerant and I allow it for a certain measure and then all of a sudden, I am like alright! Everybody! Quiet! Enough! That's enough! You know, but in our world, we slowly allow the tolerance to rise and we slowly allow things to get bigger and bigger and bigger and then all of a sudden we are in the church and we realize, hey! We've been tolerant of these sins and now it's creeping in to them and we've seen it. We've seen big leaders who have made big mistakes because the tolerance level has just been allowed to slowly rise and rise and rise and it's time we as Christians say, enough!

**Denise**

Yes, we need to reprogram our minds and our thinking. It has seeped into this church. This political correctness, religious correctness, you have to tolerate everybody. When we encourage one another to the higher standards that Christ said, we are putting forth the freedom that He intended. Freedom from sin not freedom for sin.

**Micah**

That is so powerful.

**Denise**

Yes!

**Denise**

And that happens when we love each other in our place of weakness enough, not to label and define people according to their weakness, but to point them to who they are in Christ. Our true identity is not in the freedoms we say that we have that are countered at God's word, but when we mobilize God's grace and live according to His word.

**Micah**

Yes! You know I think you are exactly right. We live in fear. Sometimes we afraid we are going to step on someone's toes or going to make someone angry because we are trying to live according to God's word. People say that there's gray areas, right? That's even part of our goal with this podcast, is to kind of hash through these gray areas. The black and the white and really find what is truth. But, I really think that when we call things gray, we're just using an excuse.

**Denise**

Mm hmm!

**Micah**

Because if there is a gray area we need to search it out and we need to find what God's word says about it. God has not left us to wonder about the truths found in His word. He's given us the truth that we need and that He wants us to have in any area of our life. When we truly search His heart in His word, He will lead us and give us the words to say and the decisions to make.

**Denise**

Oh! (gasp) That's beautiful. It just really is. You know there's just such a peace in knowing that we have an absolute! People don't want an absolute they want relativity. Hey, everybody's ok! But that doesn't get people to Heaven! That doesn't get them in a relationship with God! You know, I whole heartedly agree with what you are saying. I would say that the only gray areas that truly exist are the ones concerning personal choices in our lives. Convictions as far as God's direction and leading for us. When it comes to His law and His holy standards, those are not gray areas and you know, you and I don't hold the standard or all the answers.

**Micah**

Right. Right. (in agreement)

**Denise**

I mean, we are wrong on some things, you know, everyone is. People should test what we are saying, even now.

**Micah**

Mm Hm (agreeing).

**Denise**

But God's word does have the answers, and this is why we need to be in His word, so we do not become deceived.

**Micah**

You're so right. You know, God's will give us those answers that we need and when we're in a situation where we are faced with the temptation of legalism and we have a man who's upholding a standard and saying, "You must reach this standard and you must hold these laws and these rules or else." We're really deceived.

**Denise**

Yes (agreeing).

**Micah**

We're deceived, and we have to test that, look into God's word and say, "Does God's word say that, or is this just man's word, or is this man interpreting God's word and twisting it to make it what he wants it to be?" You know, when we consider that our own hearts are deceitful, you know, the bible says our own hearts are desperately wicked who can know it. We are deceived within our own heart and every thought that we have you know, we have to sift it through God's grace and God's word and when we do that we will be able to lean on God's understanding and God's knowledge. The Bible says we can't lean on our own understanding. When we do that we are going to be led astray and we are not going to see things clearly. But, when we lean on God's understanding. He leads our path. He is a light to our path. He has revealed everything that we need to know in His word.

**Denise**

You know what's so funny to and it's so good um, I think legalism can operate both ways. People who want to avoid God's laws will say "Well He didn't really, show me the scripture." (laughing).

**Micah**

Yeah, You're right, right.

**Denise**

We have to do that. But they're wanting to avoid the principles. See, there's laws, there's principles, there's wisdom that God put there to protect us.

**Micah**

Mm hmm (in agreement).

**Denise**

But that's flesh. Hey, that's all of us. Our flesh sometimes, wants to find a way out. There's a loophole here (laughing).

**Micah**

Always a loophole (laughing).

**Denise**

The irony is, that's not freedom!

**Micah**

Right (serious).

**Denise**

We're talking about freedom this month and we can't find it by going our own way or leaning on our own understanding. So, how do we fix this problem Micah? I mean there are as many different ideas about God's word as there are people and sometimes people hold on to their belief and dogmatically judge and imposing on others causing division in the body of Christ. I think that church has become consumer based. They just want to be fed and not search the truth out themselves. I'm not saying that about everyone, I'm not judging (laughs). I've done it myself. But the Bereans, in scripture, were praised for testing what was shared, even by Paul!

**Micah**

Mm, mm hmm.

**Denise**

And it's not wrong to test in discernment. It is in fact what we are commanded to do.

**Micah**

Yeah you know, I think this comes down to we can not live like robots following a man.

**Denise**

Amen!

**Micah**

Right? I believe that God does raise up the powers that be and we should honor the pastor, we should honor the leader, you know, give honor to whom honor is due. However, we must use our brains that the good Lord gave us.

**Denise**

Yes.

**Micah**

And our hearts of discernment and as we listen to the word of God and as we read the word of God ourselves we must sift through it, through truth and through God's word alone and if we are adding, or we're taking away, or we're twisting, or we're listening to someone who is twisting or adding or taking away from God's word; we need to have eyes to see. I believe that God opens the eyes of the blind. I believe if you are sitting under teaching and you're thinking, hmm, that just doesn't sound quite right, many times that is the Holy Spirit of God saying that's not right.

**Denise**

Yes (agreeing).

**Micah**

If you are sensing that feeling in your soul, go to God's word for yourself and seek it out and search it out. You know I have been in a situation like this myself. I sat under a pastor and some preaching and I remember just sitting there and being troubled in my soul thinking, (sigh). I understand the point that is being made from the pulpit, but it feels like to me and seems like this is a personal point not a Bible point. So, I went home to my husband and said, "Hey, did you hear that tonight? Did you uhm, what did you think about that?" He said, "I felt the same uneasiness in my spirit." Whether it was a spirit being taught or whether we knew too much, we knew the inside scoop of the personal life and voice that the message was coming from. We had to look to God's word and say no, you know what, God's word says this and what we heard tonight is not what God's word says.

Denise

Yes.

**Micah**

So, in those moments of uneasiness, it's ok to rise up and just say, hey, the Holy Spirit of God has pricked my heart. The Holy Spirit's voice is more important than any man's voice, even if that man holds a big position. So, it's important that we realize that God's word is powerful. God's word speaks to us and God's word can speak to you individually. Let me be clear, this is not my church and not our pastor right now (laughing), but this happened years and years ago. But, I believe that we really have to discern for ourselves.

**Denise**

That's so good and you know to, I think it's the manner. So, when sometimes people will hear something wrong, they then go gossip about the pastor or they judge the pastor and we're all humanly weak. We're all capable of the same symptom that's not exactly true. So, then to go in love and say, hey you know when you shared this one scripture, and that's hard to do, right? Oh wait! The pastor's not going to like me anymore, he's going to think; but then that's on him and we just have to be obedient and gracious. I think that's what's missing sometimes. That's a stumbling block that prevents us from having churches that are deeper in the word is because we are afraid to talk to each other about it or we talk about it to other people.

**Micah**

Right, Right.

Let me be clear to as you are in a church body, be sure you're not listening with such "discernment", (quote quote). That everything the pastor is saying you are questioning, is that true? Is that true? Is that true? What we are talking about here is just being wise. Just being wise. So, please don't send your pastor an e-mail this week and say, "I don't know if everything you said was true".

**Denise**

Your going to get hate e-mail you know? (laughing).

**Micah**

I know! I know! (cringing).

**Denise**

I'm just teasing (laughing).

**Micah**

My pastor's going to be like, "Um, did you say this?" "Really? I get enough e-mail." My husband's going to be like, "Oh no!" (laughing). But, just be wise in your discernment of what you hear (stressing this).

**Denise**

That's so good. You know, I think that's all of us, we can miss the point of seeking God's kingdom and His righteousness, above just following rules. To know Him and to be accepted by Him. The unholy, enemies of God, accepted. This is true freedom and what we were made for. Not just trying to see if we can get our way or prove ourselves right. I think the saddest thing, for me, is when we accept living a mediocre, compromising life and don't live out the mission God has called us to. When we live radically above the carnal mind set living for ourselves, we remember the great cost Christ paid to purchase true freedom. Freedom from sin not freedom to indulge the flesh to live apart from Him. He wanted us to draw near.

**Micah**

Yes, you know, we should be intolerant of sin, of hypocrisy, of religiosity and we should promote humility and clinging to the word of God in our lives. But, so often we just get sidetracked and we get sidetracked are by our own desires, wanting freedom in our own way. We get sidetracked by what other people are deeming as free and tolerant or intolerant and we get all mixed up in terminology of political correctness and we just miss it.

**Denise**

Yeah and that's so biblical, what you just said, because in James it talks about each one enticed dragged away by his what?

**Micah**

His own lust, right?

**Denise**

Yeah, and his own desires. Yes, we do get sidetracked and we forget that simply put, what God is intolerant of is sin. It is simple, but we make it so complicated. Trying to rationalize away true conviction and promoting tolerance as freedom. Which it is not at all. You know another byproduct of living by rules instead of earnest conviction? Is, we start to judge one another rather than encourage one another all the more as we it a day approaching. Christian will rise against Christian, finding flaws in them or their beliefs and cast them away. But, I think about the heart of God that chases us down, to help us see. When the church rises up and prays for others and faithfully preaches the word of God, so God's people are not deceived and are better armed with truth. We can impact the world more than have the world of political correctness impacting us. But, it is how we impact the world that is essential.



**Micah**

I love that Denise, you know I love what you said about God chasing us down. I was just reading in scripture and God just so reminded me this morning that I don't have to find God, He finds me. I think that when we talk about all of this tolerance and intolerance we don't have to find something or find the truth God gives it to us. He opens our eyes to the truth.

**Denise**

This week I was leading worship to a song I wasn't going to sing because there was a word in it that I just disagree with and it's called "Reckless Love" (laughing).

**Micah**

So, I've heard a lot of debate about this song. I love this song, but I do know where your headed, go ahead.

**Denise**

So, the reason why was when I lead worship I want to know that I am singing truth. That I'm singing something that our hearts and our minds are going to be informed and we are truly worshiping and not just an emotional experience. We do have emotion involved often, but it really should be legitimate declaring His words. When I looked up the word reckless, and you know I hadn't read any of the things out there, this just in my own time with the Lord, it says without thought or care.

**Micah**

Mm.

**Denise**

I was like, I can't do this! But as then I thought about it more, one person said to me you need to look at that urban dictionary (laughing). It's meaning is radical, and I thought, why didn't they just say radical. But, the heart of it was this God chasing down. It seems reckless, but it wasn't without thought. See, I can't sing that thinking that.

**Micah**

Right.

**Denise**

But, I'm doing it this coming Sunday, because I was reading out of Psalm 5, it was describing enemies of God and David's, "Mm, get 'em God". I thought, thank God that's not God's heart toward me. When I was an enemy, He radically pursued me to give me freedom.

**Micah**

You know, I've heard all the debate about this song to and I could be on either side of the fence with it. But, when it comes down to it, trying to take the place of humility and knowing the song writer's heart and knowing what they implied there and what they meant there is that God's love is willing to go anywhere.

## **Denise**

Yes!

## **Micah**

Willing to run and to search and to reach the farthest and the deepest and the widest. So, we're just going to stop right there and when you sing that song this Sunday, God's grace and His love is willing to reach the one in your congregation that's farthest from Him. That one that maybe who maybe has been hurt by legalism or has been hurt by political correctness or tolerance or intolerance and you know that when there is another believer that writes something or teaches something and preaches something and their motive is to honor the Lord with it, we're going to honor them and we're going together lift up the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. The raw truth today is that when the church is impacted by the culture more than by God's word, she is in danger of losing sight of the mission God has called her to. The radical grace is that God's truth is grace. His rules bring freedom. The real hope is that where we feel uneasy about political correctness in the church, we can always go back to God's word to find truth. You've been listening to the Black and White Podcast. Where we filter life through the Bible and live life in the freedom of truth.

