

Do You Know Truth?

Genuine truth is incapable of being conceived in the mind of man. Two times two is four, that is true, as are numerous facts. But these are not truth. No thought, action or deed originating on this earth is truth. Through his God given, but limited mind, man is capable of, and has made great strides in, discovering many things that are true. He has come to understand in the most superficial way, a few of the “physical laws” God chose to promulgate and employ in His act of creation of man and the universe. These collectively may be true facts, but they are not truth themselves.

Philosophers through the ages have sought truth, the logos, the controlling principal of the universe, but never found it, because it cannot be formulated in the human mind. They were wise enough to recognize that the collection of known facts and beliefs were not what they were seeking. They were seeking what they knew must exist, that is some sublime, all encompassing, eternal truth, which governs everything. They never found it.

Churchill is said to have once commentated on truth. He said that truth was such a rare thing that whenever it is found, it must immediately be surrounded by lies, lest it escape and bring down the entire man made facade we call reality. He was more right than he may have realized.

When Jesus appeared before Pontius Pilate, Pilate asked Him, “What is truth?” Then he turned around and left. What an incredible opportunity he had! Beyond that moment, no person ever had such an opportunity. Here was TRUTH standing before him, and he either didn’t recognize it or he feared he might have to acknowledge it and the consequences, which would result.

It is Jesus and only Jesus who is the Truth, the logos, the Word. As Author of the Holy Bible, He could not express anything but the truth. Therefore, the Holy Scripture is His way of revealing to us, in accordance with His sovereign will, that portion of Truth, that

part of Him, which He would have us know, and that we are capable of knowing. Scripture is the inerrant Word of God. Apart from this, there is no other earthly source of genuine truth. Of course, there are many true facts not specifically expressed in Scripture. We find them in mathematics, engineering, science, and every day life, but these, as previously noted, are but tiny superficial nibbles into the facts, which surround God's universal Truth.

Now to the meat of the matter! Do you know Truth? Do you know Christ Jesus? That's the same question. Jesus walked the earth as man 2000 years ago and so Truth was manifest among His apostles and others who came into His presences. While He is no longer among us as Man, He did not leave us absent of His presence in the Spirit or from the ability to know, that which is Truth. Before He came as Man, He authored part one of the Book of Truth. After He returned to heaven, He authored part two of that precious Book. They stand as a single integrated message directly from Him and about Him. This Book, provably written from outside of time and space, is His gift to us so that through it we might not only learn about Him, but also come to understand what He would have of those of us who are willing to trust Him and make Him our Lord and Savior. Without a genuine working knowledge of its contents, how can we ever know Him or what He would have of us? Are we willing to trust hearsay from others, or a 30 minute sermon once a week as our means of knowing what is essential for an assurance of eternal salvation? Is it enough to trust our conscience or our heart, which Scripture assures us, is *"...deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked..."* (Jeremiah 17:9). On judgment day, ignorance will not be an excusable excuse. His Book is not hidden or prohibited, at least not yet in this country. Therefore neither you nor I have any excuse for not studying that which He gave us for this exact purpose!

Well, you say, "that's all fine and good, but I have to work, and have a family as well as other responsibilities. I don't have enough time to even read, let alone study the Bible, and I sure don't have time to attend group Bible studies." To this response I would ask, how much time do you spend it front of the T.V., reading magazines, reading sports pages, engaging in recreation and various forms of amusements or hobbies? These things

of themselves are neither wicked nor good. They become wicked when they take away from God that which must be His if you are one of His sons or daughters. In John 2:15, the Holy Spirit commands us to “*Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him*” you can’t have it both ways.

What must be His is your number one priority, far above your number two and three priorities, which should be family and others. Scripture tells us that if we are His we are not of this world. The activities mentioned in the proceeding paragraph are all of this world. They are all very pleasant addictions carefully crafted to keep you focused anywhere but on Jesus and the Scripture, to keep you chained to the ways of the world. The true Christian must for a while be in the world, but must continually resist being of the world. If you are truly one of His sons or daughters, it should not be difficult to honor God and His way by weaning yourself from these addictions and to replace them with more praise, prayer and pursuit of truth, that is, Biblical knowledge. That is the quality time which God wants to spend with you so that you can really get to know Him as your Father.

If you are raising a family and take parenting seriously, you know you must spend quality time with your children as well. And if you are concerned for their immortal souls, and of course you are, then you must do more for their spiritual development than dragging them to church on Sunday, letting (or forcing) them to attend that half hour Bible study provided by someone else, and setting yourself as an example of integrity and good works. Christian polls have shown that over 80% of those who come from Christian homes abandon the “Christian faith” within a year after leaving home. Why? Could it be that that these homes expressed only the superficial aspects of Christianity and do not make worship, prayer, devotion and serious Bible study a strong and major part of family togetherness and self discipline? You are being no friend to your child’s soul by allowing T.V., video games, unnecessary computer conversation, theater and sports to occupy more time and priority than is given to worship and getting to know Jesus through Scripture and through prayer. Unless you have taken control of these things in your life

as well as that of your family, then perhaps you should re-examine what you call your faith. Could it be that you are merely an ardent dabbler in the faith, typical of this end time's church of Laodicea, which God has said He will spew from His mouth (Revelation 3:16)?

Remember this! It is absolutely inescapable that one day every one of us will meet the Author of that divine Book, which most of the world hates and many of us treat so casually. What will we say to Him? Nothing! Because nothing can be said which He doesn't already know. But as we stand before Him we will hear one of two, and only two, remarks from Him. He will acknowledge us through saying something like, "*...well done my good and faithful servant...*" (Matthew 25:21) or it will be something like "*...depart from me for I never knew you...*" (Luke 13:27). The one you hear will undoubtedly result to a larger degree from how serious you were in your pursuit of understanding and trust of Truth, and your obedience to Him. Obedience. That word deserves considerable elaborations, which we'll get to later. However, those who are serious about being Christians and promoting the Christian faith will soon discover all that is needed can be found in the Scripture.

Scripture tells us that an understanding of the Holy Word is only possible through the tutelage of the Holy Spirit, and that He dwells only in the redeemed heart. So how can one comprehend Scripture as here urged unless one is already born-again? And if one is born-again of what need is it to further pursue such learning? The second question is easy to answer. If you are truly born-again, you have accepted Jesus as your Lord and Savior and pledge your undying faith in Him. One of the compelling evidences of that faith is a love for Him and a burning desire to know Him, and to understand just what He would have of you, and how best you can express your appreciation for His gift of salvation. He authored the Bible for that very reason! The first question is more difficult, at least for me. In trying to answer it, which no doubt can be answered in several ways, it is clear in Scripture that prayers of the saved for the unsaved are often answered affirmatively. I believe that in these cases, the prayer is answered through a supernatural "drawing" of the individual toward seeking Truth (John 6:44). That person

who is now a seeker will be led by the Holy Spirit to where Truth is revealed. The result is not automatic salvation. It is only exposure to the idea of, and potential for, salvation. God will not violate man's sovereign right to choose even though He is "...*not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.*" (2Peter 3:10).

Jesus expressed most clearly four ways, in which that exposure might be received, in His parable of the Sower. The first way (Matthew 12:19) indicates that some will not understand and will return quickly to the devil's control. Next, others will hear, accept the truth, and rejoice, but at the first real test of faith, they will also retreat back to where they were. Still others will also accept truth, but with insufficient conviction to resist the continuous worldly temptation and troubles. They will also in effect remain of the world, although most may continue to profess to be Christians and never realize that theirs is not a saving faith. Only the fourth category in the parable are the saved. These are the ones who seek, find, repent, obey and really know Truth. Only these are the *saved*. "...*But He that receive the seed into good ground is he that heareth the Word and understand it, which also beareth fruit...*" (Matthew 13:23). Notice that the one who is saved "beareth fruit". One can therefore conclude that if bearing fruit is not part of one's Christian walk, then there should be cause for concern as to the efficacy of one's faith.

"*Heareth the Word and understand it...*" This is another phrase loaded with significance. The word is the Word of God, the God authored Holy Bible. It is not a single word, nor a few selected verses; it is the whole Bible that must be understood to the extent one is capable of so doing. That capability can be awesome if one is but willing to engage the power of the Holy Spirit who at all times stands ready and eager to assist the sincere heart. Sincere, dedicated Bible study should be an essential part of every real Christian life. How else can one go from simply hearing the Word to truly understanding it? Also how can one resist falling victim to the many false prophets and false teachers of Scripture unless one is armed powerfully with the direct and entire Word of God?

If you believe this to be simply rhetoric, not to be taken seriously, consider this directly from our Lord Jesus as He came into Jerusalem riding a donkey. See Luke 19:37-44 as follows:

And when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen; saying, Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord peace in heaven, and glory in the highest. And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples. And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out. And when he was come near, he beheld the city and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! But now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and shall not leave in the one stone upon another, because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.

Here the people are declaring Him to be the Messiah, probably based more on the great works He had accomplished than on any knowledge of prophecy. However, the Pharisees the greatest Bible scholars of the day urged Him to stop the people from singing the songs of worship, and their acknowledgement that the Messiah had finally come. Jesus' response, that even the stones would cry out proclaiming the same thing, is telling them that even the whole earth knew of this prophecy and had been groaning and eagerly waiting for His coming. Then Jesus wept, because He knew, and told them, how horrible their future would now be "...because thou knowest not the time of thy visitation..." They could have known, and they should have known, because there are over 300 prophecies attesting to His coming. These prophecies describe Him fully, indicating where He would be born, how He would ride into the City on an ass, the exact day in which He would do this, and exactly why He had come. He held the entire Israeli race accountable for this ignorance. The price they have paid both individually and as a

nation, for not knowing what He held them accountable to know is a great tragedy they still suffer to this day.

After this can one in good conscience, and for the sake of one's assurance of eternal salvation, sensibly reason that being weak in the knowledge of Scripture is not important? They had hand written scrolls, without designated chapters and verses, and very few copies of these. They had just one continuous roll of words for each book, which was exceedingly more difficult to study, than our very comfortable, easy to read and fully referenced and researched Scripture. Also we have the New Testament, Part II of God revealings which answer many of the questions left unanswered in Part I. If God could hold them so tragically accountable, both individually and as a nation, for not knowing Scripture, why should anyone believe that Scriptural ignorance today can result in anything less tragic for any one of us?

Well, you say, "that was then this is now." Don't you know that the Holy Spirit through Paul in Romans 10:9, said, "*That if thou shall confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shall be saved?*" Yes, I know that, and I truly believe it. However, the efficacy of that proclamation is very much dependant of what one understands about the meaning of the words "confess" and "believe" and how they are applied. If the meaning of these two words was intuitively self evident and correctly applied, what need would there be for the rest of the Scripture? Judging by the proportionally very tiny remnant that attend Bible studies, it could be concluded that very many believe that there is no effective purpose for the rest of Scripture! It is not at all my purpose here to condemn those who chose not to participate in-group Bible study. Perhaps many study daily and diligently by themselves and are, thereby, well versed in the whole Word of God. If they are, then they know the meaning of "confess" and "believe" in the highest and only effective spiritual sense. They know that one must have a contrite heart, be submissive in servitude to the Lord, be filled with gratitude, and be bent on obedience and trust.

Lets' check out another famous pair of verses in the Gospel of John Chapter 8 verse 31 and 32.

Then said Jesus to those Jews, which believed, on him, if ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed, and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

Here He was speaking to believers who, IF THEY CONTINUED IN HIS WORD, would be His disciples, that is His followers, His faithful, born-again Saints. What does the verse say to you? It tells me that one major evidence of being a genuine Christian is by continuing in His Word, which means to read, study, chew and digest His precious Word, which for us must be nothing more nor less than the blessed Scripture. All of it! Then He says that if you do this, you will know the truth, and that the truth will make you free. Verse 32 is very famous and is usually quoted out of context. It even appears in stone, on the face of the U.N. headquarters building, which is one of the great citadels of those who are preparing the world for the coming of their lord, the antichrist. Verse 32 has Christian meaning only when preceded by verse 31.

Here Jesus is telling us that through continuing in a study of Scripture will you really know truth, that is know Him, and it is this Truth which will set you free. Free from what? This great phrase has several meanings. First, Truth – Jesus through His death and resurrection has freed His disciples from eternal hell through the washing away of their sins. Second, they are freed from the power of sin whereby sin can now be resisted through the in dwelling of the Holy Spirit. Third, through His legacy, the Scripture, He (Truth) can become known intimately, and fourth, through His precious Word, combined with prayer, His disciples can learn the truth of what His purpose is for them and how they can live by His will. If you are a genuine Christian, you are one of His disciples and so this all applies to you!!!

I could go on and on citing other similar, compelling examples of why one must study Scripture. However, by now you probably have more than exhausted your willingness to read on, so I'll close with this summary of thoughts.

1. The Holy Bible is God's inerrant Word. In its presently available Hebrew and Greek, it is provably so, in spite of all of those who attack, disparage, misquote and otherwise try with great cleverness to dismiss it as a mere work of fallible men and, therefore, not to be relied on or valued.
2. The infallible proof that it was Authored from outside time and space is available for all who need, want, and are willing to examine such proof. That the over and over copying of the Scripture makes errors inevitable, betrays a lack of a common sense fact, and a faith that if God chose to write this original, He would most certainly make sure that it retained its accuracy through the ages to this day, and provably, He did!!
3. The Holy Bible was not meant to draw dust on a shelf. It has a divine purpose and everyone who professes to be a Christian is admonished to use it as the one great source of Truth. Over the centuries, millions have been tortured and killed and still are, for owning the Bible, for reading it, preaching it, or even discussing it. If you profess to be a Christian, doesn't this make you wonder why Satan and his followers have been so adamant about keeping it from people? Just because it doesn't yet evoke fatal hostility in this country doesn't mean that it should have less relevance here. The worldly diversions discussed above appear to be all that are needed at this time to keep most people out of the Bible. I pray that you are not of one those, and if you are that you will now see fit to reorder your priorities to conform with God's will. You'll be eternally glad and grateful that you did.