

# Present Truth

2 Peter 1:12

November, 1998

Dear Readers,

*“To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ... Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.”* (Colossians 1:2) I pray that the Lord is richly blessing you. We have been studying some very interesting things within the last few months. I pray that you will take the time to thoroughly examine each of these subjects and compare them with the Word of God to see whether they are truth or not.

I would like to remind you that there will be a campmeeting in Florida from November 12-15 at the River Forest group campground located in the southeast corner of the Ocala National Forest—about one hour north of Orlando. For more information contact Bill Hayes (904) 684-2214 or Doug Goslin (740) 763-2242. I strongly encourage you to come. Doug Goslin and Lynnford Beachy will be among the speakers at this campmeeting. We hope to see you there.

## The Word of God

by Lynnford Beachy

Jesus said, *“If ye abide in me, and my words* **abide**<sup>3306</sup> [to be held, kept, continually\*] *in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.”*

(John 15:7) *“Let the word of Christ dwell”*<sup>1774</sup> [to dwell in one and influence him (for good)\*] *in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”* (Colossians 3:16)★

### ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

**DON'T TRUST IN A GUIDE**  
by Lynnford Beachy

To have His Word dwelling and abiding in us, we must continually let His Word influence and shape our lives, and determine every decision we make. If we do this Jesus said, we shall ask what we will and it will be done unto us—For we will be asking according to His will.

*“For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.”* (1 Thessalonians 2:13) Here the distinction is made between the word of man and the Word of God. The Word of God is powerful and accomplishes what the Lord pleases.

*“For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.”* (Isaiah 55:10, 11)

What shall accomplish what the Lord pleases? His Word that goes forth out of His mouth! This cannot be

\* Each time you see the preceding symbol, the quote is taken from the *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon*

★ The Old Testament was originally written in Hebrew. The New Testament text is most commonly found in Greek. A man by the name of James Strong took all the Greek and Hebrew words used in the Bible, put them in alphabetical order, and applied a number to each word. The small Strong's numbers used after a word represent a Greek or Hebrew word that was translated into English. Whenever you see the number<sup>3306</sup> in this study, it represents the same Greek word no matter what English word was chosen by the translators.

said of man, for when man speaks, he must physically carry out the action himself; his word does not accomplish that which he wants done. But God says that *His Word* will accomplish what He pleases. What does He please to accomplish?

**“For this is the will of God, even your sanctification<sup>38</sup> [consecration, purification\*], that ye should abstain from fornication.”** (1 Thessalonians 4:3) God’s will is that you would be consecrated and purified. This purification is accomplished in us by letting His words influence and change us. **“Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.”** (John 17:17)

Paul said, **“And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.”** (Acts 20:32) The Word of God is able to build us up, to change us in such a way that we will have an inheritance among them which are sanctified.

Paul wrote, **“If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up<sup>1789</sup> [to educate, to form the mind\*] in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.”** (1 Timothy 4:6) We are called upon to allow the words of Christ to influence us so completely that His words will form our minds.

### **The inspiration of the Word**

**“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.”** (2 Timothy 3:16, 17) The Scriptures, which are the words of God, were given to us so we may be perfect, and His Word is able to accomplish that goal in us.

Jesus explained, **“Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.”** (John 15:3) It is the Word of God that cleanses us. What are we cleansed from? **“Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.”** (Isaiah 1:18) The Word of God is able to cleanse us from our sins, if we will only let it influence and form our minds.

**“And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped [Jesus], saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus put forth His hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed.”** (Matthew 8:2, 3) What was it that cleansed the leper from his disease? The words of

Christ! Jesus had to do nothing else but speak the word only, and the leper was cleansed immediately.

When Jesus cleansed men’s diseases, did he also cleanse them from their sins? Let’s allow the Bible to speak for itself. **“And, behold, they brought to [Jesus] a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed: and Jesus seeing their faith said unto the sick of the palsy; Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee. ... For whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk?”** (Matthew 9:2, 5) **“And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.”** (James 5:15)

God heals us and forgives us because of our faith in Him. **“But Jesus turned Him about, and when He saw her, He said, Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole. And the woman was made whole from that hour.”** (Matthew 9:22) It is only by trusting and believing in God for forgiveness and physical healing that anyone has been forgiven or cleansed from a disease by the power of God. If this kind of faith is necessary for forgiveness, then how and where can I obtain it? **“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”** (Romans 10:17)

We know that we must be born again before we can enter the kingdom. **“Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”** (John 3:3) How can a man be born again? **“Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.”** (1 Peter 1:23) His Word is living and powerful.

If we allow the words of God to mold and shape our thinking, then we will be born again by the Word of God. **“And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing<sup>342</sup> [a complete change for the better\*] of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”** (Romans 12:2) Our minds can be changed if we allow His words to form our minds into His own likeness that we may be like Him in character.

**“Of His own will begat He us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures.”** (James 1:18) Truly we are born again by His words of truth, which build us up, cleanse us, and purify us.

**“Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted<sup>1721</sup> [implanted\*] word, which is able to save your souls.”** (James 1:21) The Word of God is able to

save our souls if we allow it to be implanted in us, shaping our minds and thoughts.

**“By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and by the fear of the LORD men depart from evil.”** (Proverbs 16:6) Sins are purged by mercy and truth. We must have His words abiding in us in order to be purged from our sins. *“He will turn again, He will have compassion upon us; He will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.”* (Micah 7:19)

*“I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.”* (Psalm 138:2) As high and lofty as the LORD’s name is, yet He magnified His Word above His name.

### **Gird up your loins with truth**

Paul admonished, *“Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness.”* (Ephesians 6:14) **“Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.”** (1 Peter 1:13) To have your loins girt about with truth is to have your mind filled with the Word of God. Jesus said, *“Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.”* (John 17:17)

Paul continued to exhort us when he wrote, *“And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”* (Ephesians 6:17) **“For the word of God is quick<sup>2198</sup> [living\*], and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”** (Hebrews 4:12) The sword that we are to take up to fight the “good fight” is the Word of God.

**“Cursed be he that doeth the work of the LORD deceitfully, and cursed be he that keepeth back his sword [the Word of God] from blood [sin]. Moab hath been at ease from his youth, and he hath settled on his lees, and hath not been emptied from vessel to vessel, neither hath he gone into captivity: therefore his taste remained in him, and his scent is not changed.”** (Jeremiah 48:10, 11) These verses are talking about doing the work of the LORD. So the term, “cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood” refers to doing the work of the LORD. When the LORD calls upon a person to speak His words of reproof to point out sin, that person must speak, or he is doing the work of the LORD deceitfully.

*“Therefore have I hewed them by the prophets; I have slain them by the words of my mouth: and thy*

*judgments are as the light that goeth forth.”* (Hosea 6:5) The words of the LORD can have two different effects upon people. When His Word is received into the heart to influence and form the mind, it has a good effect upon the hearers. When His Word is rejected with rebellion, then it will condemn that person; figuratively speaking, slay them by the word of His mouth.

Jesus, beholding the multitude, *“said, What is this then that is written, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner? Whosoever shall fall upon that stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.”* (Luke 20:17, 18)

God said to Jeremiah, *“Wherefore thus saith the LORD God of hosts, Because ye speak this word, behold, I will make my words in thy mouth fire, and this people wood, and it shall devour them.”* (Jeremiah 5:14) His words are likened unto fire, which will either burn away the sin and filth in our lives, or it will consume us with the sin. If we rebelliously choose to cherish those things which are repulsive in God’s sight, He has no choice but to destroy us along with the sins which we have chosen. *“Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and He shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it.”* (Isaiah 13:9)

Jeremiah spoke God’s Word faithfully. Soon many people did not want to hear him any longer, and even persecuted him for speaking the word of the LORD. He wrote, *“Then I said, I will not make mention of Him, nor speak any more in His name. But His word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay.”* (Jeremiah 20:9) The fire of God’s Word in the heart cannot be put out. Jeremiah had suffered much persecution because he had spoken words of reproof to Israel. He finally determined that he would no longer speak the words of the Lord, nor even mention His name. This resolution could not be kept, for the Lord’s words were as a fire in his heart that must be let out.

### **Words in the belly**

*“For I am full of matter<sup>4405</sup> [words<sup>□</sup>], the spirit within me constraineth me. Behold, my belly [mind] is as wine which hath no vent; it is ready to burst like new bottles. I will speak, that I may be refreshed: I will open my lips and answer.”* (Job 32:18-20) When the words of Christ dwell in us His words will constrain us

<sup>□</sup> Each time you see the preceding symbol, the quote is taken from the *Brown Driver and Briggs’s Hebrew Lexicon*.

to share them with others. We will be refreshed when we share the gospel with others. If we hold His words in, then our bellies (minds) will be as wine bottles with pressure built up so that they are ready to burst.

*“In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)”* (John 7:37-39)

It is plain that these verses are not talking about literal water flowing out of a person’s literal belly. *“But this spake He of the Spirit.”* The living water that will flow out of the believer’s belly (mind) is the Spirit of God. God imparts His Spirit, or mind, to us so that His Spirit can flow out of our minds to others when we speak to them.

*“It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.”* (John 6:63) Jesus said the words that He speaks unto us are spirit, and they are life. His life, His thoughts, are imparted to us when we *“Let this mind be in [us], which was also in Christ Jesus.”* (Philippians 2:5) The thoughts of Christ’s mind are brought to us through the words which He speaks. Then His thoughts that have been given us can be shared with others through the words that He has given us to speak. *“To whom hast thou uttered words? and whose spirit came from thee?”* (Job 26:4)

*“The words of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly.”* (Proverbs 18:8) When words are spoken to us, they enter into our belly; this, of course, refers to our mind. *“The spirit of man is the candle of the LORD, searching all the inward parts of the belly.”* (Proverbs 20:27) The spirit, or thinking, of man is the candle of the LORD, searching all the inward parts of the mind.

We have a literal belly, also known as the stomach, which digests literal food. We also have a spiritual belly, known as the mind, which digests spiritual food, or words. *“Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O LORD God of hosts.”* (Jeremiah 15:16) Jeremiah said that the words of the LORD were found, and he ate them. He ate the words with his understanding, and they went into his heart (mind) and were a joy to him.

The heart spoken of here is referring to his mind. *“And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great*

*in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.”* (Genesis 6:5) When the Bible speaks of the heart it often refers to the place where we think and reason; this is our mind.

Job said, *“Neither have I gone back from the commandment of His lips; I have esteemed the words of His mouth more than my necessary food.”* (Job 23:12) *“For the ear trieth words, as the mouth tasteth meat.”* (Job 34:3) As the physical body requires nourishment to survive, so the spiritual life requires nourishment to survive. The words of God are the spiritual food that sustains us and gives us life. Without a constant source of spiritual food, feasting upon His words, we will suffer spiritually and eventually become spiritually dead. Prayer is the breath of the soul, and study is the nourishment of the soul.

### **Being born of water and the Spirit**

*“Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.”* (John 3:5) To be born of the Spirit, is to follow the instruction and guiding of the Spirit of God. *“For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.”* (Romans 8:14)

What does it mean to be born of the water? *“Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it; That He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word.”* (Ephesians 5:25, 26) The water that is to sanctify and cleanse us is the Word of God. Jesus said, *“Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.”* (John 17:17) *“Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.”* (John 15:3)

*“And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.”* (Revelation 22:17) This invitation to come and take of the water of life is extended to all. This water of life will renew our minds and change our thoughts so that our character will be a living testimony to the power of God to save sinners.

The Word of God is calculated to elevate our thoughts and purify our souls by renewing our minds with His thoughts. To be born of water, is to be born by the Word of God. *“Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.”* (1 Peter 1:23) We are born again by the Word of God. When the Word of God is introduced into the soul, we feel our own wretchedness, and desire to change and be like Christ.

## Conclusion

Let's review what we have learned: If we allow the words of Christ to continually dwell in us and influence us (John 15:7; Colossians 3:16), they will effectually work in us (1 Thessalonians 2:13) and we may ask what we will and it will be done unto us.

We are sanctified by the words that Christ speaks to us. (John 17:17) Our minds are formed and we are nourished by the Word of God. (1 Timothy 4:6; Jeremiah 15:16) The Word of God builds us up. (Acts 20:32) The Word of God is able to perfect us. (2 Timothy 3:16, 17) We are cleansed by the Word of God. (John 15:3; Ephesians 5:26)

Faith comes to us through the Word of God. (Romans 10:17) We are born again by the Word of God. (1 Peter 1:23; James 1:18) The Word of God is able to save our souls. (James 1:21) Our sins are purged by the Word of God. (Proverbs 16:6) The Word of God is our protection from the assaults of the devil. (Ephesians 6:13-17)

The Word of God causes us to be born again, gives us faith, nourishes us, builds us up, sanctifies us, cleanses us, purifies us, purges our sins, perfects us, saves our souls, and is our only protection from being deceived. Study the Word of God, immerse yourself in the water of life, and you will be born again unto the saving of your soul.

*Lynnford Beachy*

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## Don't Trust In A Guide

by Lynnford Beachy

The Lord has instructed us through the prophet Micah that we should never trust in a guide. "*Trust ye not in a friend, put ye not confidence in a guide: keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lieth in thy bosom.*" (Micah 7:5) Why doesn't God want us to trust in a guide?

"*For the leaders of this people cause them to err; and they that are led of them are destroyed.*" (Isaiah 9:16) Many leaders will lead us in the wrong direction, causing us to go astray. The result of following these leaders is that we will be destroyed. "*Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.*" (Matthew 15:14) God loves us so much that He certainly does not want to see any of us destroyed.

As you know, we have been studying many things from the Word of God in these papers, which may be new to many of you. How do you know if these things are true or not? Can you simply go and ask your pastor if it is true and rely on whatever he tells you? Is this sufficient? Certainly not! We are required to search the Scriptures for ourselves to see "*whether those things are so.*" (Acts 17:11)

It is a sad reality that many people rely upon someone else to tell them what the Word of God says rather than searching the Scriptures for themselves to see what is truth. God gives us important warning regarding this type of reliance upon men.

"*It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man.*" (Psalm 118:8) If we trust in a man to tell us what the Bible says and what it means, then we will learn the hard way that it is far better to trust in the Lord, than to put confidence in men.

If we are just accepting everything the pastor tells us, without checking it out in the Bible for ourselves to see if it is true, then we are blindly following a guide. Many times the guide we are following is blindly following what someone else has told him. The terrible result of following someone like this is that both the leader and the followers will fall into the ditch, and ultimately be destroyed. "*My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, ...*" (Hosea 4:6)

### Beware of men

Jesus warned, "*But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues.*" (Matthew 10:17) Whenever someone comes to us and shares something with us, whether it seems to be gospel truth or contrary to what we have learned, we should be as the noble Bereans and receive it with readiness of mind, and search the Scriptures daily to see whether those things are so.

"*These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.*" (Acts 17:11)

If we just accept as truth whatever someone tells us, we will be carried about with every wind of doctrine, never coming unto the knowledge of the truth. "*That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.*" (Ephesians 4:14)

Jesus spoke many words of warning to us regarding this issue. "*And Jesus answered and said unto*

them, **Take heed that no man deceive you.**" (Matthew 24:4) Jesus knew that men would try to deceive us, so He warned us to be extremely careful.

Jesus said, "*Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.*" (Mark 7:7-9)

The religious leaders of Christ's day were deceiving the people. Christ spoke boldly to these deceivers. "*But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.*" (Matthew 23:13)

Just as in Christ's time, today there are many religious leaders who deceive those who follow them. It is a dangerous thing to believe errors. God has given each one of us the opportunity to study for ourselves to see what is truth. If we reject that opportunity, and believe a lie, we will be destroyed.

Paul warned us that the devil will come to us in the last days "*with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.*" (2 Thessalonians 2:10-12)

The truth is very important, my friends. As we learned in the previous study, the truth is able to perfect us and save our souls. Therefore, it is extremely important for us to know what is truth.

Jesus instructed us to judge for ourselves what is right and not let someone else decide for us what is the truth. "*Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?*" (Luke 12:57) The Bible speaks of those who believe whatever anyone tells them. "*The simple believeth every word: but the prudent man looketh well to his going.*" (Proverbs 14:15)

If you have been believing what someone has told you without searching it out in the Scriptures to see if those things were so, then you are trusting in men. You will be devastated when your faith is tried unless you change your course now and study to show yourself approved. When your faith is tried to the limit—which it will be—you will find that you were only trusting in what someone has told you about the Bible. You will be impressed with the reality that this person may have been either lying to you, or was deceived himself.

"*Confidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble is like a broken tooth, and a foot out of joint.*" (Proverbs 25:19) Please, put not your trust in man. "*Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help.*" (Psalm 146:3)

No matter what has been told to you, it must have its foundation firmly planted in the Word of God—in your own experience—to be able to withstand scrutiny. If you cannot find plain proof in the Scriptures for what you believe it is evident that you should not believe it. No matter what source you got it from, whether from written literature, or by word of mouth, you must base your beliefs in the Word of God; not in the sayings of men.

Possibly you have been blindly following what someone else has told you. God's Word tells us that God will personally lead each one of us. "*And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them.*" (Isaiah 42:16)

### **How can we keep from being led astray by false teachers?**

God has instructed us that we are to test the teachings of prophets or teachers by the Word of God. "*To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.*" (Isaiah 8:20) If what the preacher is telling us does not agree with what the Bible says, then it is proof that what he is saying is a lie. The Bereans have given us a good example to follow in studying the Bible.

Referring to the Bereans, Luke wrote, "*These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.*" (Acts 17:11)

Don't just accept what the preacher is saying simply because he has studied for a long time and probably knows what is truth. Paul certainly had a good grasp on the truth, yet the Bereans would not accept what he was saying without first checking it out for themselves. Even if the preacher is preaching the truth, if we do not check it out for ourselves, we do not know for sure if what he is saying is true or not. It is very easy for Satan to tempt us to doubt the things we have been told if the only authority we have for it is merely that of a man. If after studying for ourselves to see if what the preacher is saying is the truth, we find that it is true, then Satan will have little chance of getting us to doubt the sure testimony from the Scripture.

“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” (2 Timothy 2:15) We have been instructed to study for ourselves, examining thoroughly each Bible verse that relates to the subject in question.

“Seek ye out of the book of the LORD, and read: no one of these shall fail, none shall want her mate: for my mouth it hath commanded, and His spirit it hath gathered them.” (Isaiah 34:16) The Lord commanded what should be written and His Spirit guided the Bible writers as they wrote the truth.

“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” (2 Timothy 3:16-17) All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, or “God breathed” as Jay P. Green’s Greek Interlinear Bible puts it. We have no need to doubt that the Word of God was inspired by Him.

### **“What is truth?”**

Pilate asked Jesus this remarkable question. (John 18:38) This question is a very important one, and Jesus Himself gives us the answer to it in John 17:17: “Sanctify them through thy truth: **thy word is truth.**” The Word of God is truth, and if we want to know the truth, we must diligently study the Bible.

Paul wrote these words to Timothy: “*But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived. **But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them;** And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.*” (2 Timothy 3:13-15)

Paul told Timothy to continue in the things which he had learned. Was Paul telling Timothy to continue in the things which he had learned from Paul? No. Paul goes on to say that Timothy had been assured of what he learned, knowing who he had learned them from. Timothy could be confident that what he had learned was true because he learned it directly from God through His Word. Paul continued to explain that Timothy knew the holy Scriptures since he was a child. The things that Timothy had learned, which he could be certain were true, he learned by diligent study of the Bible.

If Timothy had learned what he knew about the Bible from Paul only, then Timothy could not be sure if what he had learned was true. Since Timothy stud-

ied the Bible for himself to see if what Paul was teaching was the truth, he could be confident that he had learned the truth. Whenever we blindly accept what the preacher says, without studying the Bible for ourselves to see if it is truth, our faith is grounded in a man instead of on God. Surely you can see how unstable this kind of faith is. Sadly enough, many people ground their faith in no higher authority than in the man who stands behind the pulpit. Let us always examine for ourselves to see what is truth, by comparing what the preacher says with what the Bible says.

### **Diligently study the Bible**

When we study the Bible to find out what is truth, we must examine every verse that pertains to the subject in question. If we only look at a small percentage of the verses dealing with a particular subject, we will have a distorted view of what the truth is.

Suppose you wanted to know which day is the Sabbath. You read this in Revelation 1:10, “*I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day.*” Maybe somebody had told you that the Lord’s day is Sunday, the first day of the week, because Jesus was raised from the dead on Sunday. So you read this in Luke 24:1-3 “*Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, ... And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre. And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus.*”

Then to get you to believe that the Sabbath is the first day of the week, someone may tell you about Paul meeting with people on that day. So you read this in Acts 20:7, “*And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.*” From these few verses you may conclude that the Sabbath is Sunday, the first day of the week.

If we accept these few verses concerning this subject without examining all the rest of the verses talking about the Sabbath, then we would walk away with a misunderstanding of what God requires of us. We must also read Exodus 20:8-11. “*Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.*”

We can see from these verses that the Sabbath is Saturday, the seventh day of the week, and we must read the rest of the verses concerning the Sabbath to get a complete picture.

As you can see, if we just take a few verses concerning a particular subject, we could believe just about anything and think that it is taught in the Bible. Some people say, "You can prove anything you want from the Bible." That is one of the most repulsive statements I have ever heard. The only way you could prove anything you want from the Bible is if the one you are proving it to does not study the Bible for themselves to see if it is true or not.

*"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world."* (1 John 4:1) We are instructed to try, or test, everything that we believe. *"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."* (1 Thessalonians 5:21)

### **Conclusion**

- Do not allow anyone to tell you what the truth is without studying the Bible for yourself to see if it is true.

- When you study the Bible, you must examine thoroughly each Bible verse that pertains to that subject.
- Hold the preacher accountable for what he is preaching. If you study the Bible to see if what the preacher is saying is the truth, and find that it is not true, then you must let him know.

My ideas and my studies, or those of anyone else, will not be sufficient to gain you entrance into the holy city. It is your own study and your own experience that will fit you for heaven.

May the Lord bless you as you study His Word to find out the truth for yourself.

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