

“The Truth As We Know It”
Pressing Toward The Mark

5/31/15

Today I want to talk about our need for a close personal relationship with Jesus. I remember when I first gave my heart to Jesus, I was thrilled and wanted everybody to experience Him too. I was hungry to know all I could about God and His ways. And I still am after these 57 years. I am blessed by that verse in Mat 5:6 and we read, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled."

I have always had a hunger to understand the Bible and the truth it contains. Nothing is more important to me than my relationship with God. I identify with Paul when he says in Philippians 3:8, "Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ." Now I have not had to loose all things to follow Christ, but nothing is more important to me than my relationship with Him.

I remember well the evening I was challenged to let the Bible be true regardless of my prier conviction. If the Bible says it, confirmed by two or three witnesses, I will follow it. That commitment brought about a separation from my former friends and brethren in the Mennonite church.

From that evening I have read the Bible in a different light. In Proverbs 25:2, we read, "It is the glory of God to conceal a thing: but the honor of kings is to search out a matter." I knew I had a calling on my life and I longed to see it fulfilled. As Paul said in Philippians 3:12 and we read, "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus." And in Phil 3:13-14 and we read, "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

We may never understand everything of the great mysteries of God. He tells us in Deuteronomy 29:29 and we read, "The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law." And In 1 Corinthians 2:9-10 we read, "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath

prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searches all things, yea, the deep things of God."

We are study-Study-Study! To seek God for clarity of what He is saying. 2 Timothy 2:15 "Study to show yourself approved unto God, a workman that needs not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." And in Isa 34:16 we read, "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." Obviously we will never understand it all, But we need to be informed of God's will for our lives.

Job 11:7-9 asks us, "Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know? The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea."

The wonderful truths of God's word are hidden from those who are not saved and have the Spirit of God in them. Jesus tells us in John 3:33, .. "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see (or understand) the kingdom of God." And in Matthew 11:25 we read, "At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." In other words God will reveal His Great truths to sincere, humble, hungry Christians who have a love for the truth, but will hide them from those who consider themselves the great Spiritual Leaders.

If we are looking for an excuse not to follow God, the devil will be glad to give us one. If we are not hungry for truth and to walk in it, God will let us believe a lie and be comfortable with in it as is told in 2Th 2:8-12 and we read, "Then shall that Wicked be revealed, ... Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And 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."

Notice that this is referring to people who are on the fence! They are not

serious about God! They are those who are thinking they can continue to live in a sinful lifestyle and still be saved. This is emphasized in the statement, 'with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish,' Note that God will allow them to believe a delusion, a lie, because they 'had pleasure in unrighteousness.' Jesus tells us in John 10:10, "The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have *it* more abundantly." In 2Co 11:14 we read, "And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light."

Jesus tells us in Matt 7:21-23, "Not every one that says unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

God is looking for a people who have a love for the truth! If our faith is based on fables and not on solid Biblical truth, then our religion is no better than any of the other religions out there!

We need to let the truth of the Word wash us clean! In Psa 119:11 we read, "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee." And in Eph 5:26-27 we read, "That he might sanctify and cleanse (The Church) with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."

We need to let the word change us! James 1:23-24 where we read, "For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a mirror: For he sees himself, and goes his way, and straightway forgets what manner of man he was."

Following Christ requires sacrifices on our part. Jesus tells us in Matt 16:24-26, "Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

When its all said and done, God's ways are far above our ability to figure out. It is only in God opening our eyes and hearts that we can comprehend any part of His truth. Paul expresses it very well in Romans 11:33-34 and we read, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counselor?"

I want to close with that great prayer that King David prayed in Psalms 139:23-24, "Search me , O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." So be it, Lord

Listen again next week.

This we do know, The Bible is God's Word, God's word is true, Jesus Christ is God's son, Jesus died to save us from our sin, Without Jesus we are eternally lost. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is no other name under heaven given among men, whereby we might be saved. Atheism is a temporary condition, for every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord! Jesus stands ready to save you now, Will you call on Him today?

Until next week, God bless you.