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Knowing The Truth

By Harold Turner

In John 8:32 Jesus expresses the importance of our knowing the truth, saying, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." The truth is frequently referred to as the key to spiritual freedom. Knowing the truth certainly makes one free from the doubts and uncertainties of not knowing, but it is also the key which opens the door to our salvation. In Romans 1:16, Paul refers to the gospel as the "Power of God unto salvation." In John 6:45, Jesus said, "And they shall all be taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and learned of the Father, cometh unto me." Coming to Christ for salvation, then, is completely dependent on my knowing the truth. But knowing the truth is also essential to my hope and confidence in eternal life. In 1 John 5:13, John said, "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life." John continues in the following verses to show further that knowing the truth is essential to confidence in prayer. Actually all blessings of God designed for the Christian are dependent on knowing the truth.

In a world where so many different and conflicting things are being taught in religion, many are doubting and questioning whether it is even possible to know the truth. Creating doubts is one of Satan's greatest tools used to discourage men. James shows that the doubter is unstable in all his ways, saying, "He that doubteth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed." Jesus assures us that we can know the truth, but not by some miraculous gift. There are several prerequisites involved in attaining this knowledge. And while it is not possible to consider all of these prerequisites in this article, let us look at a few of them.

Of course a diligent study of the Bible is essential to knowing the truth, but equally as important is our attitudes toward the Scriptures. No matter how diligently one may study, apart from the proper attitudes, one will not reach a knowledge of the truth. The scribes and Pharisees were great students of the law, and teachers as well, but of them Jesus said, "They seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand", Matt. 13:13. A further study of the Lord's teachings of these

people will clearly show that this was true of them because they had improper attitudes and motives in both their study and teaching. In 2 Tim. 3:7, Paul spoke of some who are "Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." Paul shows the same to be true of these, their attitudes and motives were not proper.

REVERENCE FOR THE AUTHORITY OF THE SCRIPTURES.

To reach a knowledge of the truth one must have a reverence (fearful respect) for the Scriptures. Not just for the Bible as a book, but for each statement, and each word. When God first gave the Scriptures to the people of the Old Testament, he said, "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you." This warning is repeated at the close of the Bible in Rev. 22:18-19. It is also stated in various forms throughout the Old and New Testaments. God demands respect for His word. Yet, down through the ages, men have dared to tamper with it. In Mark 7:7-13 Jesus shows that many hold their traditions with greater respect than they do God's word. In Gal. 1:7 Paul shows that some "Pervert the gospel of Christ." In 1 Tim. 4:1 he said that some would "Depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils." In 2 Tim. 4:3 he said the time would come when men would not endure sound doctrine, but turn to fables from the truth. Over and over such warnings and statements are given. Today it is common to hear someone express, "I know the Bible says that, but I believe... or I don't believe..." How many times have you heard someone say, in an effort to justify their own desires, "The Bible doesn't say, Thou shalt not do it." There would be very little one could not do if he used the silence of the Scriptures for authorizing things.

One who has the proper respect for the Scriptures will not use them as an instrument to justify his selfish interests, but will "Study to show himself approved unto God", 2 Tim. 2:15. God has said what He intended for us to know, and what He has said, He intends for us to do.

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The Price of Salvation

By Glynn V. Purdy

We often hear the expression that "Salvation is free," which in a sense, is true. But what is meant by the word "free"? The land of Canaan was free to the Israelites, but many of them did not possess it. In fact more than six hundred thousand men, who were more than twenty years of age at the time they left Egypt, died while waiting to occupy this FREE land. Why? Was it not free? Oh yes, it was free. But though God gave them the land they must occupy it. The blessings of God were placed IN the land of "Milk and honey." If the Israelites wanted this 'milk and honey' they must go INTO the promised land. God would not and did not bring the blessings OUT of the land, and many of the Israelites lacked the faith to occupy it. They were denied these blessings for forty years because the people would not go where the blessings were. Though there was plenty for all, only those who went into the land enjoyed the blessings.

The salvation from the flood was also free, but not all the people were saved. Noah was a preacher of righteousness and was saved, but not those to whom he preached. Salvation was IN the ark. Only those who were willing to go INTO the ark, where the salvation was, could be saved. Only eight people in all the world were saved. Why? Because the people of Noah's day were like the people of today; they did not believe it necessary to go where God placed salvation.

Today the "Grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men." (Titus 2:11). In the days of Noah and Moses the grace of God also appeared to many men, but only a few were saved to enjoy His blessings. In the days of Noah and Moses the grace of God appeared TELLING men to DO something. If they did as instructed they could receive the promised blessings, if not, there was no blessing. The same is true today.

NOTICE: This grace of God, which today is appearing to all men, is telling all men to DO something. What? "Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious

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EDITORS: Erwin Cowen
and Harold Turner

Needed - - - Sound Doctrine

By Don Smith

"But as for you, speak the things which are fitting for sound doctrine." (Titus 2:1.) Among the many needs in the church today none is greater than the need for sound doctrine. Timothy was to refuse old wives' fables and be nourished up in "Good doctrine." (1 Tim. 4:6-7). He was to save himself and his hearers by taking heed to doctrine (1 Tim. 4:16). He was warned about false teachers who would not hold the "Doctrine which is according to godliness." (1 Tim. 6:3).

The ecumenical spirit of the seventies holds doctrine in disrepute. Those who emphasize doctrine are looked upon as intolerant bigots. This is quite a change from the scriptures cited above. Indeed, Paul considered a perverted gospel as "another gospel." (Gal. 1:6-7). The pitfalls are still there for the blind leaders of the blind and when one departs from the distinctive doctrine of the New Testament he is sure to find them. When we swap soundness for psychology the sand is shifting beneath our feet.

It is worth noting that the greatest growth in the church in modern times was experienced during a time when Christian people stood solidly upon the New Testament. They knew the Book; believed the Book; and defended the Book. AND THE CHURCH GREW. Now that it has become fashionable in many circles to be tolerant of religious error the church is no longer the fastest growing religious body in America.

Brethren, we must wake up! The time is already here when many will not endure sound doctrine. The solution is the same as it was in Paul's day - "PREACH THE WORD."

"A Christian should never let adversity get him down except on his knees."

Consumed One of Another

By Wayne McDaniel

"For ye, brethren, were called for freedom: only use not your freedom for an occasion to the flesh, but through love be servants one to another. For the whole law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another." (Gal. 5:13-15).

Out of the minds of the Galatians that were deceived into attempting self-justification, came a way of thinking towards others that the Spirit described in terms of cannibalism. Because these Galatians sought to be righteous before God on the basis of their own deeds, they naturally sought to exalt themselves rather than to humbly serve. This way of thinking inevitably led them to devour each other to sustain their imaginary life with God.

Since salvation has appeared because of God's love (John 3:16; Rom. 5:8), Christians must respond by loving each other. "Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another." (1 John 4:11). Those who explain away "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" will meet the inevitable consequence of the unchangeable principle of sowing and reaping - history demonstrates that among cannibals there is no one found in peace (2 Pet. 3:14). There are few if any true friends, since something other than God's love binds them together. God's love was shown thusly, "For while we were yet weak, in due season Christ died for the ungodly" (Rom. 5:6). But among cannibals, love exists only as long as each is deemed strong, "sound". Any real or imagined weakness only invites attack by others. There is no thought of the strong bearing the infirmities of the weak (Rom. 15:1). No one is safe. A single disagreement may erupt into a fight-to-the-finish. Even among the old warriors that have fought side-by-side there is no sure love. Cannibals both walk in the flesh and war according to the flesh. They look at the things that are before their face (acceptance with men, monetary gain) and determine what tactics will be to their advantage.

How does one escape the cannibals? One must determine to leave the jungle of self-justification where the rule of every-man-for-himself results in the survival of the self-centered. One must come to truly take refuge in the Rock, to rely upon Him. Of course this rules out all boasting of individual strength, but it returns the peace of God which passeth all understanding. Cannibals have no power to tear those who by faith hide themselves beneath the Rock. (Isa. 32:2).

The choice is clear: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself", or "Bite and devour one another." One results in confidence towards God (read 1 John 3:17-19), the other in a spirit of bondage unto fear - "And he that feareth is not made perfect in love."

The Price of Salvation (Cont.)

appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." (Titus 2:12-13).

Today salvation is in Jesus Christ. As God's blessings and salvation were in the ark in the days of Noah, and in the land of Canaan in the days of Moses, so today salvation and God's blessings are in Jesus (Eph. 1:3; 2 Cor. 5:17). If we die in Christ we are saved (Rev. 14:13). Is it enough to just believe this? No! Faith without works is DEAD. (James 2:24). We must OBEY Christ (Heb. 5:9). We must OBEY God. (Matt. 7:21). Is salvation free? Yes, in a sense, but it is limited to those in Christ's spiritual body, which is the church. (Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18). One must enter INTO Christ as one had to enter the ark, and the land of Canaan. We are saved by the blood of Christ. (1 Pet. 1:18-19). The blood was shed in His death. (John 19:33-34). We must be baptized INTO his death (Rom. 6:3-4).

Why did God place salvation only in the ark in the days of Noah? I do not know. Why did God place salvation in the land of Canaan in the days of Moses? I do not know. But He did; and only those who went where salvation was enjoyed this blessing. Today we may want to know why God placed salvation only in Christ or the church, and may not know why, but he did (Acts 4:12; Eph. 5:23, Acts 2:47). Many do not see any sense in it, as many did not think the ark necessary in the days of Noah, but it was, and they learned too late.

You may read your Bible from cover to cover, and the ONLY way God teaches us how to get into Christ, where salvation is, is through Baptism (Rom. 6:3; Gal. 3:27). Now if you do not wish to go where God has placed salvation, then God will not bring it to you. The blood of Christ provides free salvation, but God placed this blessing in the church, and if you do not have enough faith to go where the salvation is, then you do not have enough faith to be saved (James 2:24). The blood of Christ can save ALL men, but ALL men will not come to Him for salvation (Matt. 7:13-14).

America's Morale Climate

By James Knight

America has long been known as one of the greatest nations in the history of the world. I am happy that I was born and raised in these United States of America. America has also long been known for her moral goodness. The men and women who founded this nation were strong believers in moral purity. However, a look at the present conditions in our society points to a great change in the moral climate of this country.

What are the present conditions of our society, morally? The latest figures show that immorality is on the increase. Redbook magazine reported in 1972 that 14 per cent of all fifteen year olds had had sexual intercourse. It also reported that 46 per cent of all 19 year olds had been immoral. A recent report in the newspaper revealed these startling facts: First, 14.2 per cent of all births in the United States in 1975 were illegitimate. Based on information from birth certificates in the District of Columbia and 38 states that record such information, it was estimated that there were 447,900 illegitimate births in 1975. This represents an increase of 7 per cent over 1974. The appalling thing about these figures are that they show the greatest increase of illegitimate births in the 20 to 29 year old bracket.

If these figures are not enough to startle your mind, let me give you just a few more that will. In our nation's capital the illegitimate birth rate has now exceeded 50 per cent of all births. This makes our capital the first major city where this has happened. Also in Washington D. C. during the past year there were two abortions for every birth according to government figures. What a shame when we are supposed to be a civilized society.

Another thing that shows the moral decline in our society is the break-up of marriages, and the marital unfaithfulness of husbands and wives. In 1975 there were more than one million divorces in this country. The Reader's Digest reported that one out of two husbands, and one out of five wives have been unfaithful, sexually, at least once during their marriage.

We can see from the foregoing figures that we are living in one of the most, if not the most, permissive societies in the history of mankind. What can be done to change the direction of our society?

First, we as parents, can begin to instill into the minds and hearts of our children a respect for the teaching of the Lord. God still teaches that immorality is a SIN, and sin will condemn one's soul to an eternity in hell (1 Cor. 6:13-20).

The Salt of the Earth

By Richard England

"Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men."

Salt is a symbol of purity, a preservative and an enhancer of good flavors. To call one "the salt of the earth" is to pay a great compliment. To His disciples, Jesus said, "Ye are the salt of the earth." They not only preserve the earth, but make it more acceptable to God. When there is a complete void of righteousness, the wrath of God shortly follows.

Because of a prevalence of wickedness, God determined to destroy the antediluvian world. "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". (Gen. 6:5). Had there been only ten righteous people in Sodom and Gomorrah, the entire cities would have been spared (Gen. 18:32). Apparently there is an extent of sin beyond which God will not let man go. This may be that to which God refers concerning the Amorites when He told Abram that He would later destroy them "For their iniquity is not yet full". (Gen. 15:16). Ninevah had reached the point where God would have destroyed them had they continued in their ungodliness, but they repented at the preaching of Jonah. (Jonah 3:10).

"Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord." This was his blessing because by faith he did that which God instructed him to do (Heb. 11:7). The same is true for men today who believe God and do what is commanded. They are saved by

Second, the church of our Lord must take a strong stand against immoral conduct. There was a time when the church knew exactly where it stood on moral issues, but today there are many who are too lax in their teaching and discipline toward moral misconduct.

I want to encourage all parents to take more time to be with their children. I know that we live in busy times, but if we love our children and value their soul, we will find time to be with them, and do things with them. I want also to encourage parents to pray with and for their children. I truly believe that we fail to pray as often and as fervently as we should.

In closing let me say, Christians are the only ones who have the power to change the moral climate of America. Let us not be weary in well doing.

the grace of God (Eph. 2:8-9). Being a follower (disciple) of the gospel of Christ, one becomes a teacher of the same good news. In so doing he saves (or preserves) himself and some that hear him. Paul instructed Timothy, "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine: continue in them: for in so doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." (1 Tim. 4:16).

Many nations have reached a peak of development and then become so corrupt within that they have fallen. The great empire of Rome is said to have fallen, among other reasons, because of the wickedness and internal corruption. It may well be that the nation of which we are a part will either continue or fall because of the life YOU live. If God is counting the righteous persons in these United States of America with a figure below which he will not let it go without destroying it, will he include you among the righteous?

The greatest thing you can do in life for yourself, your family, the nation, and even the whole world is to be a faithful Christian. In so doing you will be the "Salt of the earth." On the contrary, Jesus uses the greatest insult against those who are not true to him, "But if the salt have lost his savour . . . it is thenceforth good for nothing." Uselessness is a tragedy. Whether you are useful or useless is entirely up to you personally. Jesus provides the way of righteousness, we must choose to walk therein (John 14:6, Matt. 7:13-14).

The Meaning of Baptize

By Ted Mountjoy

Does the word 'baptize' mean to sprinkle, pour, immerse, or all three? The word 'baptize' is not a translation but a transliteration of the Greek word 'baptizo', meaning to dip, or immerse. This word always meant to dip or immerse in the original language. It was never used to mean sprinkle or pour. The Greek language had a specific word for sprinkle, 'rhantizo' (Heb. 9:19), and a specific word for pour, 'ekcheo' (Rev. 16:1). These words had distinctive meanings to them, just as the words sprinkle and pour have different meanings to us.

But, one does not have to know the original Greek language to understand this. If we will read the Bible, we will find things said in regard to baptism that would require one to be immersed. In

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Jesus Depends on You

By Jason Frizzell

The feet of Jesus no longer tread the sandy shores of the sea of Galilee, nor walk the banks of the turbulent Jordan River. His hands no longer reach out to lift the fallen, nor make spittle to heal the blind. His voice no longer is heard in the market place, or the streets, or in the marble halls of the temple. He moves no more around the common people that heard his teaching and accepted what he taught. Jesus has left this earth, having fulfilled his mission here. He left or received this epitaph: "He went about doing good." Jesus has laid down the cross of this physical life and received the crown of crowns, became Lord of lords, and Priest of priests. He has left a task for all his disciples here on earth. A task for you and me, if we are wearing the name 'Christian', to carry on his work. Jesus depends upon you and me to finish or continue his work as long as the breath of life remains within us. Our hands must carry on his work. He depends upon us, as Christians, to hear the cry of the needy, the fatherless, the widows and others who need care, love, and compassion. He depends on us to carry the message of salvation, the gospel, to all mankind. Therefore, he depends upon our hands, our feet, and our lips, yes, even our hearts, or minds, and our material possessions to further the work he started for the redemption of mankind and the glory of the Father.

God has given us, through his divine wisdom, tongues to tell the glad tidings of the gospel of peace for saving the souls of mankind. God has given us worldly goods to be used for self preservation and to alleviate human sufferings. But these can't be reversed! You can't stop human suffering by talking about it, and you can't save the lost by expending money on publicized programs of benevolence. It is essential that we use our worldly goods in and for the cause of Christ, but we must understand that this cannot take the place of the gospel of Christ in the saving of souls. Jesus depends upon you and me to be more like him each day of our lives. Therefore, this dependency calls for something for every one to do in the form of knowledge of his word. We must study to know; use that knowledge to show we are his followers, his disciples, his chosen according to his will, and his called out. Jesus depends upon you to be diligent in his work, to be steadfast in his service, and always seek his kingdom first in this life. As a Christian, how dependent are you?

"Nobody ever lost his shirt with his sleeves rolled up."

Knowing the Truth (Cont.)

Only those who do His will are promised eternal life.

WE MUST DEAL HONESTLY WITH THE SCRIPTURES.

Jesus shows that the only rewarding life is for those which "In an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience." Luke 8:15.

The Bible seems to have become a book whereby each interprets it to fit his own views. When his view is challenged for scriptural support, sometimes extreme efforts are put forth to justify rather than to study honestly to see if such an idea is scriptural. Several years ago sprinkling for baptism was introduced, and challenged. It was introduced because that in extreme cases of illness water was poured upon the person desiring baptism. It was reasoned that if such was acceptable, then sprinkling would be just as sufficient, and eventually became the only mode for baptism among many churches. Who authorized this practice? Most, who have studied their Bible, know that neither Christ nor the apostles authorized it. They taught baptism by immersion only, see Rom. 6:4, and Col. 2:12. How can sprinkling be justified? Scripture is needed; so an effort is made to find one. In Ezekiel 36:25-26 the scripture is found to support baptism by sprinkling. Though this was long before baptism was administered, and has no reference to such, it suffices the person who is only interested in justifying what he desires. This Scripture, as the context clearly shows, is dealing with God's delivering Israel from bondage, and returning them to their home land. Such an application of the scriptures is dishonest.

The honest seeker for truth will not try to justify his own ideas, but denying himself, will seek to change his ideas to conform with God's will. To deal honestly with the Bible one must be careful to consider the entire context of each idea. Extreme care must be used not to change the idea that God is conveying to us into what we would like for it to say. One thing that might help is to abandon the false idea that the Bible is to be interpreted by each of us, and realize that the Bible is the interpretation of God's will to us. What God intended that we know, He told us.

WE MUST LOVE AND DESIRE TO DO WHAT GOD WANTS.

When one has a love for the truth, and a desire to do what God wants instead of what he wants, his study of the Bible is with the objective of changing his life. In Phil. 1:9-11 Paul shows that a love for the truth is essential both to our understanding and our spiritual growth. Spiritual growth is a growth out of ourself into the image Christ left for us.

This demands denying ourself and looking to Christ for what we should be. The person who seeks to justify himself is not only dishonest with the Scriptures, but is dishonest with himself.

CONCLUSION:

Knowing the truth is certainly possible, but only when we approach it with the proper attitude and motive. Unless there is respect for the fact that this is GOD'S word, not something to be played with, but something to be obeyed; unless we deal honestly with it, desiring to do all that God teaches, though we may study diligently, we will never come to the knowledge of the truth. Certainly every doctrine, belief, and practice should be studied and examined to see if they are of God or men. And may we have the honesty and respect to abandon all that is not of God.

CONTRIBUTIONS

A member of the church	\$10.00
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The Meaning of Baptize (Cont.)

John 3:23, John was baptizing in Aenon because there was MUCH water. In Acts 8:38-39, when Philip baptized the eunuch, "Both went down into the water," and they came "up out of the water." In Romans 6:4 we read that baptism is a burial - "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism..." In Colossians 2:12 we read that we are "Buried with him in baptism..."

Does sprinkling or pouring require "Much water"? A going down into and coming up out of water? (as Jesus did in Matthew 3:16). A burial as seen in Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12? And while it may be helpful to understand the original language of the Bible, it is not necessary in order to understand what the Bible teaches, as seen above in the meaning of baptism. Immersion is the only conclusion one can reach either from the original language, or from the study of the Bible alone.

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