

# PRESENT TRUTH

A Teaching Letter of Lifestream Teaching Ministries

*For this reason I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though you know and are established in the present truth. (2 Peter 1:12 NKJV)*

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## Unprepared

Art Nelson

### Introduction

When a child is born into this world, he or she is not prepared for life but is in all ways vulnerable and ignorant of even the necessities of survival. Only as the child grows and matures is there preparation for a productive life. The same is true spiritually. We are born again into a spiritual reality for which we are not prepared but are as a baby would be in our understanding.

The truth is that none of us are prepared for spiritual reality. We walk in the natural and when we are introduced to spiritual things it is sometimes a shock to us. We become like children in a playground, running to and fro as different things gain our attention. However, the Lord intends that we become stable in our walk in the Spirit and that spiritual reality would become the norm for us. To achieve this requires that we become prepared to operate productively in spiritual reality, which requires that we grow up, that we mature as sons in the Lord.

Now, the question is “are we growing up?”; “are we being prepared?”

### Illusion or Reality

Today, there is much preaching and teaching from the pulpit and from the television that doesn't prepare us for spiritual reality and the things of the Lord but actually causes us to develop incorrect expectations leaving us completely unprepared for the work of the Lord and unprepared for the world conditions as the timeline for the end times accelerates toward the close of the age. The prosperity gospel, the self-esteem messages, the never-have-another-problem doctrines, and many others all produce belief systems that will crumble and fall when God shakes things. These teachings build up a false reality, an illusion that is far from the Truth of the Word.

The Scriptures tell us that we have received a Kingdom which cannot be shaken. We must be prepared if we are to become unshakable, we must lay a foundation of the Kingdom, operate in the principles of the Kingdom, and expect the results of Kingdom living and purpose. This can only be done as we mature as sons in God and as we walk in the Spirit.

We cannot avoid times of stress. They are part of God's purifying process. Stress separates the

real from the illusion. I heard a teacher say one time that if you have become 'disillusioned' it is because you were living in an 'illusion' to begin with. The Lord must “disillusion” us if we are to mature in Him. He puts us to the test so that we can know what is real in our life.

## Causes of Unpreparedness

There are three areas of our lives and our understanding that must be addressed in the naked light of Truth if we are to be prepared for what is to come.

1. **Our foundation**—that which our life is built upon.
2. **Our premises**—the assumptions we make concerning the word and the purpose of God.
3. **Our expectations**—the way we think that things will happen.

Let's take a brief look at each of these areas to see how they affect our preparedness or lack thereof.

### Our Foundation

Seemingly, most of the Christians in the United States lack a solid foundation in the Lord and His Word. This is the result of the Institutional Church's lack of emphasis on basic doctrine and understanding of the plans and purposes of God. Hebrews chapter six gives us six foundational or elemental doctrines as our foundation, which is to be laid in our lives so that we can move on to maturity. The third verse tells us that we can go on to maturity if God permits, implying that these elementary principles are a requirement before we can mature. However, how many institutional churches do you know that actually systematically teach all six of these elementary principles? There are a number of cases where entire denominations have been created from a difference in understanding or application of one or more of these elementary doctrines. How do we maintain sound doctrine when we are not even taught the basic tenets of Christ?

The modern American Church does not require of its members any significant understanding of the Word of God nor any need to move on to maturity. It only requires an adherence to a set of doctrinal statements of the denomination to which they are attached. This has resulted in a membership of perpetual babes in Christ.

Paul told the Corinthians, “... *I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.*” (1 Cor. 2:2 NASB) This is what Hebrews 6:1 calls the “*elementary teaching about the Christ*”. Paul could not speak to the Corinthians as mature believers but had to speak to them as infants in Christ because they had not laid their foundations and moved on to maturity. When they should have been teachers they needed to be taught again themselves the elementary teachings. He makes this very clear in chapter 3 of Corinthians.

And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to men of flesh, as to infants in Christ. I gave you milk to drink, not solid food; for you were not yet able *to receive it*. Indeed, even now you are not yet able, for you are still fleshly. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and are you not walking like mere men? (1 Corinthians 3:1-3 NASB)

I think that if Paul walked into any church in America, he would have to say the same. We are seriously lacking in foundational strength. We can't move on until the elementary principles are

in place.

## **Our Premises**

As a result of our lack of foundational integrity, we have developed incorrect *premises* about how we understand the things of the Lord. The best example of this is the way the Pharisees understood the appearing of Messiah. Their incorrect premise was that Messiah would appear as a conquering King and restore the glory of Israel. Instead He appeared as a suffering Lamb to take away the sins of the world and make the Gentiles a part of the people of God.

When we operate with incorrect premises, we come into conflict with the outworking of the true intention of God. If our foundation is not strong enough for us to adjust our premises, then the crisis will break us and shatter our faith. Peter gives us the best example of this.

When Peter told Jesus that he would follow Him and die for Him, he thought what he had said was true—that it was real. However, just like us, Peter didn't know his own heart nor that he was operating with a false premise about Messiah. But Jesus understood Peter's heart and his false expectation about Him. He told Peter that before the rooster would crow he would deny Him three times. (*John 13:37-38*) Peter didn't understand the trouble that was coming nor the pressure that was about to be applied to his convictions. Peter's beliefs and his dreams of the restoration of the Kingdom of Israel with Jesus as King were about to fail the stress test and crumble.

Most of our incorrect premises have been taught to us from the American pulpit. These include incorrect premises about the Church; about the return of the Lord, about money, about God's plan and purpose, about end time events, about faith and grace, about many other aspects of the Scriptures. To go on to maturity we will have to lay the proper foundation and adjust our premises to line up with the Word of God, which is our only measuring stick.

## **Our expectations**

One of the biggest problems that we have is maintaining the appropriate expectations in the Lord. This is particularly difficult when we are bombarded by Christian television personalities that continually promote the western version of the good life—wealth and prosperity resulting in a lavish lifestyle. According to them, this is the outcome of faith, even the goal of faith. However, it is a false expectation. God has never promised us a rose garden in this life. Indeed, it appears that our expectations should revolve more around suffering than wealth.

The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him. (*Romans 8:16-17 NASB*)

It would seem from these verses that suffering is a requirement of our inheritance.

When we give place to incorrect expectations, it causes us to become complacent and unprepared for anything that is outside of our expectations. This will not only cause our dreams to crumble in the day of testing but it will also crush our hope for the future.

One of the best examples of false expectations is given by the children of Israel when Moses led them out of Egypt. They knew where the caravan route to Canaan was and they knew that it would take about two weeks to travel from Egypt to Canaan along the caravan route. Their expectation was for a quick, uneventful trip to the Promised Land. They were unprepared for the

wilderness. They were unprepared for the length of the journey. They were unprepared for changes that had to occur in them before reaching Canaan. They didn't realize that the very way that they thought, the way their minds worked, had to change—their mentality had to move from thinking like a slave to thinking like a warrior.

Their expectations were their downfall. They continually complained that Moses had led them into the wilderness to die. They longed to return to Egypt because their expectations had been wrong and their dream of a quick trip crumbled before them. Since they were unprepared for reality, the only option in their minds was a return to what was known even though it was slavery.

We operate in the same manner. When we move in the Lord with false expectations, our hope crumbles as the expectations are proven to be incorrect, unrealistic, or a fantasy. Our first response to this type of collapsing dream is to return to Egypt, that is, the world system, to be comforted there. However, there is no altar in Egypt—no comfort to be found there. [*The original request to Pharaoh was for the Israelites to be permitted to go three days journey into the wilderness for a feast and to sacrifice to the Lord. (Exodus 5:1-4)*]

God is putting America to “the stress test” in order to purify His Church. There are big problems and big changes ahead of us. Many of the people of God whose lives have been built on faulty foundations, faulty premises, and faulty expectations will crumble and fall. The Church in America is completely unprepared for what God is about to do. By His grace He is giving His people an opportunity to prepare; but, the time is drawing close when that opportunity will be gone. Let us be prepared for His Kingdom to come and His will to be done. Let him who has eyes to see and ears to hear understand what the Lord is saying.

[For more background on the points made in this Teaching Letter you might want to read these teaching articles:

[“Faulty Foundations and Fuzzy Patterns”](#)

[“Place of Temptation”](#)

[“Foundation Series”](#).]

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For comments or questions contact Art Nelson at this address:

[artnelson@lifestreamteaching.com](mailto:artnelson@lifestreamteaching.com)

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