

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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Truth

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Introduction

When Jesus was before Pilot He said to him that He was “come into the world to testify to the truth.” Pilot's response was a question “What is truth?” [John 18:37-38] That is a question we should be asking ourselves. We all have a little file folder that is stuck in the back of our minds that we call 'Truth'. We stick into this file everything that we believe to be true. The problem is that there are actually two components to the contents of this 'truth file'. There is that which is *actually true* and there is that which *we believe to be true*. What we believe to be true may not actually be true. That is the nature of deception: when we have believed something that is not true to be true.

Increasing Deception

It appears to me that deception is increasing and I believe that this new year will see further increases in deception. Why is this happening? Well, first off, it is a characteristic of the the last days so it is expected from that viewpoint. Secondly, our culture and our society are filling us with ideas and concepts that we accept and then believe to be true when, in fact, they are not *actually true*. When we have more *believed truth* than *actual truth* in our mental file folder then we are in deception. This has serious consequences.

But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth. (2 Thessalonians 2:13 NASB)

Paul tells us in this scripture that God has chosen us for salvation and that this is through sanctification, which is accomplished in two ways: 1) by the Spirit and 2) faith in the truth.

Faith in the truth means faith in *actual* truth. Faith in what we believe to be true is not faith at all. We must have active faith in real truth for it to be effective for sanctification. So, everything that we believe to be true must be examined to determine if it really is true.

We have accumulated what we believe to be true from spurious sources such as television preachers, sensationalistic evangelists, one topic teachers, and even fiction books such as the “Left Behind” series. However, these sources don't stand the test for “what is truth?”

What is Truth?

We can only answer this question by returning to what the Scriptures say about it. First we know that God, the Father, is true.

Then Jesus cried out in the temple, teaching and saying, "You both know Me and know where I am from; and I have not come of Myself, but He who sent Me is true, whom you do not know. (John 7:28 NASB)

"I have many things to speak and to judge concerning you, but He who sent Me is true; and the things which I heard from Him, these I speak to the world." (John 8:26 NASB)

The Word, sent by the Father, took on human form and became the embodiment of Truth.

And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth. (John 1:14 NASB)

For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ. (John 1:17 NASB)

Jesus *said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me. (John 14:6 NASB)

So, we see that truth is a primary characteristic of the Father, which found full expression in the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ, as the realization of truth in bodily form. Truth personified is Jesus Christ. We know truth by knowing Jesus.

So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, "If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." (John 8:31-32 NASB)

The only way to know truth is to continue or abide in His word. This is not an intellectual construction of doctrine but an experiential application of the word by the Spirit.

"But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. (John 16:13 NASB)

Part of the Holy Spirit's job is to guide, lead us into all truth, which means that as we continue in His word, the Holy Spirit guides our understanding so that we receive *actual* truth. This is the truth in which we can have faith. This is the truth that sets us free from things which we believed were true but were not.

Understanding of new truth never changes or alters actual truth but almost always negates or contradicts things that we believed but were not really truth. Since most religious people cannot distinguish between actual truth and believed truth they cannot accept or endorse new light as truth unfolds. That is why movements and religious institutions always go stale when it comes to the area of receiving and applying advancing truth. [See previous issues “[Compressed Truth](#)” and “[Proceeding Word](#)” for more about these ideas.]

Example

Let's look at a clear biblical example of the difference between actual truth and believed truth by looking at the Church in Laodicea from Revelation chapter 3

"To the angel of the church in Laodicea write: The Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God, says this: 'I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot; I wish that you were cold or hot. 'So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth. 'Because you say, "I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing," and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked, I advise you to buy from Me gold refined by fire so that you may become rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself, and *that* the shame of your nakedness will not be revealed; and eye salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see. (Revelation 3:14-18 NASB)

The church believed itself to be rich, to have become wealthy and in need of nothing. They believed that they were right with the Lord because they were blessed financially. This is what they believed to be true. However, Jesus states the actual truth: they are wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked. They had apparently believed an easy grace wherein everything from God was free; however, Jesus said that they needed to buy some things from Him. When you buy something it is not free. In their believed truth they had need of nothing; didn't need to buy anything. However, in actual truth they needed to buy three things from the Lord: 1) gold refined by fire, 2) white garments, and 3) eye salve. In actual truth these items had to be bought so that they would become rich, be clothed, and be able to see spiritually.

How much of what we believe to be true is like the Church in Laodicea? Are we deceived by our beliefs or are we walking in actual truth? We will only know if we continue in His word led by the Holy Spirit.

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