

Lopsided Theology

Neil Girrard

If there is any word that might come closest to describing everyone's ideas about Christ and God in this time and season, it would be the word "lopsided." Only a relative handful seem able to even rightly divide words of truth and few, if any, seem to embrace the whole counsel of God – and almost entirely absent are those who are able to rightly divide the word of truth *and* nestle it into the whole counsel of God. Those who come the closest are those who view the Scriptures through the eyes of love while finding the balance of truth, using love as the "focal lens" through which to understand all the other important areas of Scripture. But the landscape of "Christianity" is so skewed and twisted that we must truly call everyone's "theology" lopsided in one way or another and to one degree or another. Since the people of Christ are called to be "the pillar and foundation of truth" (1 Tim. 3:15), this is a most serious indictment.

Love indeed stands as the primary, paramount, indispensable characteristic of following Christ. But it does not stand alone as the only attribute of the genuine Christian life. Let us consider some other things that are equally indispensable (although they do take a second place in comparison to the place Christ gave to loving God and one another) because if these are left undone, we will have abandoned our love for God and perhaps even the true faith that was given once for all. (Jude 3)

John wrote, "Grace and truth came through Jesus Christ." (Jn. 1:17) We like grace. We love to sing "Amazing Grace." Who wouldn't? The grace of God is awesome in scope and even the idea that God would be so gracious toward fallen mankind is mind boggling. But we often do not walk in the genuine grace of God. The genuine grace of God is His love expressed in power and mercy. It is not just "unmerited favor" nor is it really an it. It is His essence and attributes of love, mercy and power expressed by His Spirit. It is *Him*.

But what about truth? Many, like Pilate, are asking, "What is truth?" (Jn. 18:38) If we dare separate truth from grace, what we have is no longer Jesus. Any "grace" that leads us into sin or error is no longer God's grace but a deception of the highest magnitude and order. Yet many self-proclaimed "Christians" possess just such a lopsided "theology" about Christ and God.

The greatest hindrance to truth surely must be the attitude that says "I already know about this particular subject." But when our knowledge is derived from our independent, fleshly (carnal) minds, we do not yet know as we ought to know (1 Cor. 8:1) because our knowledge is in opposition against God. (Rom. 8:7) If we already know something before the Spirit of truth has led us into the rightly divided, whole counsel of God, our minds must be changed and renewed. (Rom. 12:2) *Every* thought must be brought captive to Christ. (2 Cor. 10:5) Our knowledge, when in fact it is error, is the hardest obstacle to overcome. And this is the case more than most suppose.

Is this Book we read (the Bible) the Word of God? No. "For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from *His* sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of *Him* to whom we must give account." (Heb. 4:12) "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." (Jn. 1:14) The Word of God is no mere book that will burn when dropped in a fire – *He* is a Person! The Bible is the word of truth that must be rightly divided (2 Tim. 2:15) by the Spirit of truth (who leads us into all truth – Jn. 16:13 – and who *is* the Word of God. – Eph. 6:17) Truth, if we could put it into a "formula," equals light given to us by God and rightly divided and nestled perfectly in the whole counsel of God. If we twist and distort the

word of truth at any of these stages, we have produced only a lie (2 Pet. 3:18), a work of the devil (Jn. 8:44) which Jesus came to destroy. (1 Jn. 3:8)

In the word of truth (the Bible, the Book) we find all the precious promises by which we may through faith partake of the divine nature. (2 Pet. 1:4) Would God have left anything important about the true way of partaking of the divine nature out of the word of truth that He gave to us? That is, is there anything that has been left out of the Bible (which, yes, must first be rightly divided and applied by the aid of the Holy Spirit of truth) that is supposed to be any part of the right way of following Christ and God? No.

Where does this leave the “church”? The pulpit, the pews, the “church” building, and the exalted clergy, to name the foremost and most obvious four are *not* in the Book. They are *not* part of the promises. They are *not* part of the life of Christ. No lie is of the truth. (1 Jn. 2:21) These lies are simply and only add-ons to the word of truth that are designed to lure us away from the way to life abundant and eternal. And their impact upon us is much greater than most suppose. This is the scope of the current deceptions and apostasy that men most commonly call “church.”

Lost seems to be the concept that we are fighting a war, a war in which we are supposed to practice loyalty to our King. “For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.” (2 Cor. 10:4-5) Our weapons in this spiritual war are love (grace, that is, mercy *and* power) and truth (God’s light rightly divided and nestled perfectly in the whole counsel of God.) In a word, Jesus. Anything that leads us toward an *it* takes us away from *Him* and it is, at best, a lopsided presentation of the truth. The pillar of truth has loosened from its firm foundation and is leaning dangerously to one side and God is misrepresented among men. My brothers and sisters, these things ought not to be so.

Paul wrote, “Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become as sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.” (1 Cor. 13:1-3) Yet the other side of that coin is equally true. Paul also wrote, “For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine...and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.” (2 Tim. 4:3-4) Without love, we are nothing – yet equally true is that without truth, we are lost. We must have both grace (love, mercy *and* power) *and* truth or we no longer have Jesus – we have a lie, the foothold and handiwork of the destroyer and enemy of our souls. We may faithfully attend “church” all our lives and do many wonderful things but “Only those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.” (Rom. 8:14) Simply put, love is not all we need and truth is not all we need. We need *Him* who is both love *and* truth.

Let he who has ears hear.

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