

Whose Side Are We On?

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Jesus said, “For this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.” (Jn. 18:37) *Everyone* who is of the truth hears His voice. This is what Jesus said. Did He mean it? Did He lie? Was He mistaken? So how do we explain the many contradictory “doctrines” and “theologies” that abound in “Christianity” today? By simply recognizing that one side or the other – or perhaps both sides! – were not listening to the King of truth!

Thus, when someone speaks the rightly divided truth as the Holy Spirit has opened it up and applied it, and someone else – perhaps with a title or position or salary to protect – denies or ignores or viciously attacks the messenger of that truth, we can know without doubt that this second person has not been listening to the King of truth. Such a person is simply not of the truth – if he or she were, they would have heard His voice when the first person spoke the truth, whatever it was.

Jesus said, “My sheep hear My voice.” (Jn. 10:27) If any person does not hear His voice, no matter how many great insights they have, how much “wisdom” they seem to have or how much Bible knowledge they have accumulated, they have great reason to fear that they do not belong to Him! *It is* that simple.

Similarly, Paul wrote, “In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.” (Eph. 1:13-14) In Christ we were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise and He is the guarantee, the down-payment, the current reality, of our future inheritance of the kingdom of God. This is what Paul wrote. Did he mean it? Did he lie? Was he mistaken?

Elsewhere he wrote, “But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.” (Rom. 8:9) Again, did he mean it? Did he lie? Was he mistaken? Or have we so watered down the gospel of Christ that the simple statements made in the New Testament have been robbed of their meaning?

Jesus said, “When He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth.” (Jn. 16:13) And Paul wrote, “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.” (Gal. 5:22-23) The one who does not walk in and aim for ever-increasing measures of truth and the characteristics of the Spirit of God simply does not have the guarantee, the down-payment, the current reality of future gain that accompanies genuine salvation. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ – a possession displayed in observable traits – is simply not one of Christ’s people. This is what Paul taught.

There are some who see the “church” as being only a group of broken people who must always fail to measure up to the beauty and light for which they were created, who can only be a messy conglomeration of messed up people united only in awareness of their need for grace and mercy. Yet Paul wrote that we could “...*all* come to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness by which they lie in wait to deceive, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head – Christ.” (Eph. 4:13-15)

Those who embrace the attitude of brokenness have an appearance of humility in their position but this is a deception. In reality, this is just their admission that their “church” has no power to actually change lives and that all the “church” can produce is a “form of godliness” that is devoid of God’s power – and it is such as these that we are commanded to turn away from! (2 Tim. 3:5)

John wrote, “No lie is of the truth.” (1 Jn. 2:21) Jesus said, “[The devil] does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.” (Jn. 8:44) Paul wrote, “The Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons.” (1 Tim. 4:1) When the disciples asked Jesus what the sign of His return and of the end of the age would be, He warned, “Take heed that no one deceives you.” (Mt. 24:5) And Paul wrote, “For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.” (Gal. 5:17, 6:7-8)

The one who does not walk in truth has been lured into the enemy’s camp. The one who does not bear the fruit of the Spirit but instead participates still in the works of the flesh is a casualty of war in need of repentance and spiritual healing. The one who uses his knowledge of Biblical concepts to lure others into deception and bondage is a walking dead man.

Because the “church” – that counterfeit of the body of Christ – does not have this big picture of the war between God and Satan into which we have all been plunged, it is difficult for the new believer to move beyond the “what Jesus did for me” phase of infancy and step up to the realization that “I am a soldier in His kingdom” and “I am required to lay down my life in His service to my brothers and sisters.” Babies die in war zones. Children are liabilities to a combat team. And this is the best that the “church” can produce and that occurs in spite of all its prodigious efforts to kill and maim the infants in its grasp.

Only when one gets up and walks out of the camp of man-made religion and begins to follow Christ wherever He leads will that one begin the process of maturing spiritually. God is raising up His children and training them for the spiritual warfare that will enable them to shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. (Mt. 13:43) But this army will not look like the “church” in any way. Men have built castles of sand but the Lord has been building His kingdom in the shape of a net that draws in the souls of men. (Mt. 13:47) In His kingdom, *He* is lifted up (Jn. 12:32) and no longer is any mere man exalted to any place over another. (Lk. 22:26, etc.)

Paul wrote, “The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan; with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.” (2 Ths. 2:9-12)

Truth *is* an integral part of following Christ, the King of truth. If we are ambivalent or indifferent or negligent regarding what the Holy Spirit of God would teach us, by what insanity or flights of fancy can we possibly believe ourselves “saved” and on our way to “heaven”? If we don’t hear His voice or if we won’t obey His voice, we have no reason to believe that He is our Shepherd, King or Savior.

Having the characteristics of Christ come forth from the depths of our existence *is also* an integral part of following the Most High, living and holy God. If we are more concerned with our own desires and pleasures and couldn't be bothered with what the Holy Spirit of God shows us to be true righteousness, by what right can we demand to be received and retained in His kingdom of righteousness and truth? If we don't resemble the Father in some very real ways, we have no reason to believe that we have been born again into His family.

The "church" preaches a gospel which separates the believer from nearly all responsibility to actually hear and obey Christ. But, "having been perfected, Christ became the author of eternal salvation to all who *obey* Him." (Heb. 5:9) The "church's" gospel is a false one and the truth is that we come under the requirement of submitting to the Father of our spirits so that we might live. (Heb. 12:9) We must work out our salvation with fear and trembling (Phlp. 2:12) and we must pay much closer attention to the Word that God implanted in our souls, that word of truth that we first heard lest we drift away from it and neglect so great a salvation as God gives to those who are His and who truly depart from all iniquity. (Heb. 2:1, 3, Jas. 1:21, 2 Tim. 2:19) Anything less is merely a deception designed to lure us away from the narrow path that leads to life and back onto the wide road that leads to destruction. We must live the life of Christ or we will die the second death. There is no other ground available to those who want to have a relationship with Jesus Christ on their own terms but refuse to acknowledge or conform to His terms for this new covenant He has graciously offered to men. We simply must choose to be on the Lord's side or we have chosen to be on the side of His enemies. Whose side *are* we on?

Let he who has ears hear.

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