

Eternity Daily Bible Study

Searching For The Truth

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Number: 06

Topic: Truth Is Living And Personal And Speaks To Us!

Bible Verses: John 14:6, 15:26-27; Hebrews 4:12-13

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The truth of God is very, very different from the truth of the philosophers. The truth of the philosophers is abstract and analytical and is found by searching through books, papers and journals; whereas the truth God is spiritual and personal and is revealed to us in Christ Jesus who is the living Word of God:

The Truth is a Person: John 14:6 *Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.*

The Truth Testifies To Us: John 15:26-27 *"But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me. And you also will testify, because you have been with Me from the beginning.*

The Truth Is Living And Active: Hebrews 4:12-13 *For the word of God is living and active, 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 intentions of the heart. **13** And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to His eyes, to whom we must give account.*

The Truth Is Not Mere Book Knowledge Or Law: 2 Corinthians 3:6 *who also has made us efficient as ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit makes alive.*

The letter kills but the Spirit makes alive! Those who look merely at the "letter", (the Bible as literature, history, science, law, moral teaching, philosophy etc) end up dry and without faith. Yet those who read the Bible with devotion, listening for the voice of the Lord to hear it, discover it and obey it, these come alive to God!

We need to expect God to turn up when we read the Bible. We are not so much learning a doctrine as we are listening to a Divine Person! The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob actually turns up and speaks to us from the burning bush. Life should lead us to encounters with God through prayer, bible study and worship.

The Word is living and active, it is not dead, dry, musty and stale. The Word and the Spirit bring life and make people active, they turn sinners into saints. By contrast, human religion makes people traditional, dull and passive, turning them into confused pew-sitters.

The Truth is in Jesus who is the eternal Word and is full of grace and truth. Jesus is the Word; indeed they are one and the same! Jesus fully declares and sets forth God! (John 1:1-18) For Jesus is the express image of the invisible God (Hebrews 1:1-3, Colossians 1:15) revealing the full spectrum of God's nature in human flesh (Colossians 2:9).

Jesus did not write a prophetic book full of new revelation, instead Jesus Himself was the fullness of the new revelation:

Hebrews 1:1-3 *1 God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, 2 has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; 3 who being the radiance of His glory and the exact expression of His substance, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,*

God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself (2 Corinthians 5:18-21), God's saving and reconciling power was not in a library full of books or a secret Masonic formula. It is not mystical knowledge that saves us; rather it is Christ Himself who saves us!

So we need to expect the truth of God to be an active living, self-revealing thing. It is not a sort of abstract blob somewhere in outer space that we have to attain to. The Truth comes to us in the Word and, discerns us, separates our joints and marrow, soul and spirit and penetrates into all we are and think and do (Hebrews 4:12,13 above). We do not study God, instead God studies us!

The Word is living and active and intersects our life in a crisis of faith so that we can make a decision as whether to believe and obey that Word or not (we saw that theme developed at length in the last three bible studies). God speaks to us and expects us to respond.

God did not write the Scriptures in order to create the perfect systematic theology or philosophy. The Bible is not just a profound intellectual system to be admired for its elegance; rather it is a stunning and accurate revelation written to be believed!

God wrote the Scriptures in order to reveal the story of the glory of the Son of God and thus to produce a people who believe in Him and who obey His Word to their sanctification and to His glory (Romans 8).

Every attempt to fit the Bible into a philosophical framework, in order to make it "believable" or "intellectually acceptable" has resulted in spiritual catastrophe! It started with trying to fit it into Rabbinic Judaism, then into neo-Platonism, then into Gnosticism, then into Roman Imperial jurisprudence, then into Aristotelian logic (with Aquinas and the scholastics), then into Renaissance humanism, and then into rationalism (the Enlightenment), liberalism, nationalism and into the humanism-existentialist framework, then into the human potential movement, and into post-modern deconstructionism and so on. Not a single one of these attempts has done what it claimed it was doing "making Christianity relevant/acceptable/coherent" etc.

Each and every attempt to put the living Word of God into the structures of abstract reasoning so that we could "think about God clearly" has ultimately led to heresy and unbelief.

God did not declare Himself in Christ just so that we could think about Him clearly! God does not need to be "thought about". God is not a mere concept. What parent tells their children stories about life so that their son or daughter may "think about them clearly"? Rather parents tell those stories so that their progeny may remember and learn and grow in wisdom and become good human beings.

God is our Almighty Creator who is to be feared above all and God reveals Himself so that we might believe Him, be saved, and reconciled to Him, and then obey Him! God's truth is what He reveals to us so that we may become holy children of God.

God does not tell us everything. For instance much about Heaven is hidden from us. God is not interested in explaining it all to us during our brief lifetime here on earth. The Bible is a wonderful revelation but it is not a full explanation.

And this revelation is a doubly encrypted mystery. Firstly this mystery needs to be decrypted by the Holy Spirit. Without the Holy Spirit the things of God are just "foolishness" (1 Corinthians 2: 14). Secondly we need to use the key of faith to open the mystery that the Spirit has revealed to us. The Holy Spirit may open the sealed scroll for us, but we must take it, read it and personally believe it if it is to change us, and to save us, and to sanctify us!

When we search for the truth we are not searching for doctrines to arrange in neat little rows. Rather we are searching for the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob to speak to us at the burning bush! We are looking for the chariots of fire; and for words that will utterly transform us and change our path in life. Words spoken by Christ, the Living God, for whom the worlds were made!

Blessings,

John Edmiston
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