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Truth Pt 5 The church is the pillar & ground of the truth

This is our fifth and final teaching on the topic of truth. In our previous study we covered three points- (i) The word of truth is the Lord's precepts, judgments, testimonies & commandments and His law, (ii) The word of truth is the gospel of Christ, and (iii) Salvation is by belief of the truth.

In this teaching we establish three additional points: (I) The apostle Paul spoke the truth in Christ, (ii) We are to know how to behave ourselves in the house of God which is the church of God the pillar & ground of the truth, and (iii) The early church in Galatia had been seduced that they obeyed not the truth.

Let us turn to the scriptures from where our three points were established:

1. The apostle Paul spoke **the truth** in Christ

"Where unto I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle, (I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not;) a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity" (1Tim.2: 7).

The truth of Christ was in Paul

"As the truth of Christ is in me, no man shall stop me of this boasting in the regions of Achaia" (2 Cor11:10).

As Christ said, "Of a truth", so Paul said- "This is a true saying"

"This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work" (1 Tim.3:1).

Even though Paul desired to glory he did not (to do so would be foolish)- for he spoke the truth

"For though I would desire to glory, I shall not be a fool; for I will say the truth: but now I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth me to be, or that he heareth of me" (2Cor 12:6).

Paul spoke words of truth and soberness

In giving his testimony Paul declared that he was not mad but spoke words of truth and soberness

[19] Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision:

[22] Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come:

[23] That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles.

[24] And as he thus spake for himself, Festus said with a loud voice, Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad.

[25] But he said, I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness.

(Acts 26:19,22-25)

Speak every man truth with his neighbour- Eph.4: 25- "Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another".

Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God to confirm the promises made to the fathers- Rom.15: 8- "Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers".

2. We are to know how to behave ourselves in the house of God which is the church of God, the pillar & ground of **the truth**

"But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth" (1Tim.3: 15).

The truth is in Jesus

"If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus" (Eph.4: 21).

Pastors and teachers are given by Jesus Christ for the perfecting of the saints that the body- speak the truth in love that those in the body may grow up in all things in Christ

[11] And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

[12] For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

[13] Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

[14] That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

[15] But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: (Ephesians 4:11-15)

Lie not against the truth

“But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth” (Jas.3: 14).

Purge out the old man and live in sincerity and truth

[5] To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

[6] Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?

[7] Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us:

[8] Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. (1 Cor.5: 5-8).

A Christian obeys the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love

“Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently” (1 Pet.1: 22)

We can become a person’s enemy when we tell them truth?

“Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?” (Gal.4: 16).

3. The early church in Galatia had been beguiled that they obeyed not the truth

[1] O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?

[2] This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

[3] Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh? (Gal.3: 1-3).

When a person obeys not the truth they are hindered.

“Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?” (Gal.5: 7)

Those who speak profane and vain babblings increase unto ungodliness - who concerning the truth have erred

[16] But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness.

[17] And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus;

[18] Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some. (2 Tim.2:16-18)

Beware lest, as the serpent beguiled Eve, so you are corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ,

“But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ” (2 Cor.11:3).

An illustration to help apply the teaching to our life today.

In the US alone there are 300-plus different Christian denominations, and we see a great many of their denominations that have sprouted up in New Zealand- often claiming to be doing a new thing in God. Possibility identifying themselves as the pillar and ground of the truth. But a person today trying to find a church that teaches truth, and not simply says they believe the Bible and teach the scriptures (but do not), is like finding a needle in a hay-stack. You could go from church to church for years and never know for sure that any are the pillar of truth. But as we learnt in our third teaching on this topic- it is the holy Ghost’s role to teach truth, it is up to the pastors to put aside their traditions and compare the scriptures of truth. When they do so- the outputs will be truth from the Holy Ghost. When teachers do that - the church will be the pillar and ground of truth.

Questions to think about.

- i) How do we protect ourselves against being seduced that we obey not the truth?
- ii) What are the consequences to those who hold the truth in unrighteousness?
- iii) What will happen to those who turn from the truth? (iv) How do we know that we are in the truth?

Answers from the scriptures.

i) We protect ourselves against being seduced, by daily putting on the armour of God which includes truth ("the scripture of truth" Dan.10: 21 & "thy word is truth" Jn17: 17) around our loins- Eph.6: 14- "Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth..."

ii) Unto them that do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness and wrath there is tribulation and anguish [7] To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: [8] But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness...and wrath, [9] Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; (Rom.2: 7-9).

The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all who hold the truth in unrighteousness
"For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness" (Rom 1:18).

The judgment of God is according to truth against them which judge and do the same

[1] Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things.
[2] But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things.
[3] And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? (Rom.2: 1-3)

iii) Those who give heed to commandments of men turn from the truth
"Not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth" (Tit.1: 14).

Those who turn their ears from the truth shall be turned unto fables

[3] For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;
[4] And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables (2 Tim.4: 3-4)

iv) Hereby we know that we are of the truth- if we love in deed and truth

[18] My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.
[19] And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him.
[20] For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. 1Jn.3: 18-20

John loved the brethren in the truth - 2Jn 1:1- The elder unto the elect lady and her children, whom I love in the truth; and not I only, but also all they that have known the truth;

God has no greater joy than to hear that His children walk in truth

[4] I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.
[8] We therefore ought to receive such, that we might be fellowhelpers to the truth.
[12] Demetrius hath good report of all [men], and of the truth itself: yea, and we [also] bear record; and ye know that our record is true. (3 Jn.1: 4, 8 & 12).

Let us remember to:

Beware lest any beguile you with enticing words (Col.2: 4). NEVER turn our ears away from truth!

Let us rejoice in the truth- 1Cor. 13: 6- "Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth". And remember: "we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth" (2Cor 13:8). The church is supposed to be the pillar and ground of truth, not error. God's children are to: walk in truth, walk in the Spirit which is truth, having our loins girt with truth, and speak the truth at all times! To the glory of God! Amen!