

Our Duty Toward the Truth

Prov. 23:23

I. Introduction:

1. We increasingly live in a world where every man defines “truth” based on his own ideas, wants, and desires. The politically correct view is that each man’s inner voice is authoritative in defining “my truth.” (Judges 21:25)
2. God’s word teaches the exact opposite, “O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.” (Jer. 10:23) So, we cannot infallibly use our “inner voice” as a guide, because “There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.” (Prov. 14:12)
3. Instead, our only infallible guide is God’s word: “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.” (Psa. 119:105)
4. There is no more important principle for one to be considered by God as His faithful child than for a person to be a person “of truth”! (Jn. 8:31-32: “If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. 32 And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”) Therefore, we must remember we have grave responsibilities towards God’s truth.

II. Discussion:

1. Must love the truth.

- A. Truth has no positive effect on our life unless we love it. Paul said God will allow those that have “received not the love of the truth” to “believe a lie” and “be damned”! 2 Thess. 2:10-11
- B. Do you really love the truth of God’s word or are you enamored with the teachings of a denomination? Prov. 23:23;
Prov. 2:1-5: My son, if you receive my words, And treasure my commands within you, 2 So that you incline your ear to wisdom, And apply your heart to understanding; 3 Yes, if you cry out for discernment, And lift up your voice for understanding, 4 If you seek her as silver, And search for her as for hidden treasures; 5 Then you will understand the fear of the LORD, And find the knowledge of God.
- C. Don’t forget the dire consequences! 2 Thess. 2:11-12 (“And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, 12 that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”); 1 Kgs. 13; Gal. 1:8-9
- D. Many religious people do not love the truth (Psa. 19:7-11 [2 Thess. 2:10; Matt. 7:21-23; Matt. 7:13-14).

2. Must know the truth.

- A. God’s word is truth (Jn. 17:17) and was revealed for our good (Deut. 29:29: “The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.”; 1 Jn. 5:3).
- B. Only the Scriptures can make us “complete” in God’s sight and “thoroughly” equip us “for every good work” (2 Tim. 3:16-17).
- C. But, we can only be saved when we “come to the knowledge of the truth” (1 Tim 2:4). We can understand God’s word! Eph. 3:1-5; Acts 17:11
- D. So, do you know the truth? Lk. 8:15; Jas. 1:21; 2 Tim. 2:15; 2 Pet. 1:3-5; Rom. 10:17
- E. Does what you believe and practice square with what the Bible says? Acts 17:11
- F. God’s word is for “those who love Him” (1 Cor. 2:9-10; Jn. 14:15; 1 Jn. 2:3-5).

3. **Must believe the truth.**

- A. Belief of the truth is required to be saved (2 Thess. 2:13: “...God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth.”).
- A. This belief isn’t a blind leap into the dark, for God’s word (truth) presents reliable, objective evidence designed to produce “saving belief” (Jn. 20:30-31) that is based on objective evidence (Heb. 11:1: “...faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”).
- B. Bible is most trustworthy book of antiquity! Lk. 2:1-2 (32 countries, 54 cities, 9 Mediterranean islands); prophecy: 2 Pet. 1:19-20 (~360 concerning Christ).
- C. Have you carefully weighed the evidence of God’s word, or are you relying upon the wisdom of men? Prov. 14:12; Jer. 10:23; 2 Thess. 2:11-12

4. **Must obey the truth.**

- A. God’s word presents us with facts to be believed and commands to be obeyed.
 - (1) Peter said that we purify our souls “in obeying the truth” (1 Pet. 1:22; 2 Thess. 2:13; 1 Jn. 2:3-5).
 - (2) Truth is not a spiritual smorgasbord of options from which we are free to pick and choose. The sum of God’s word is truth (Psa. 119:151, 160: “And all Your commandments are truth. 160 The entirety of Your word is truth.”).
 - (3) All He revealed on a subject constitutes the pattern we must obey (Acts 20:27; 1 Cor. 14:37; 4:17).
 - (4) There is a “pattern” (Rom. 6:17; Phil. 3:17 (“Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern.”); 2 Tim. 1:13 (“Hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me.”); Heb. 8:5 (“See that you make all things according to the pattern shown you on the mountain.”); Col. 3:17).
- B. Thus, we are responsible to “handle aright the word of truth” (2 Tim. 2:15). Neglecting one part of God’s word constitutes sin by which one will eternally perish (Jas. 2:10: “For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.”). Do you obey the truth? 1 Cor. 2:9-10

5. **Must walk in the truth.**

- A. Can John’s words be applied to you? 3 Jn. 3-4 (“For I rejoiced greatly when brethren came and testified of the truth that is in you, just as you walk in the truth. 4 I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.”)
- B. “walk” refers to one’s manner of life (Psa. 26:1-3: “Vindicate me, O LORD, For I have walked in my integrity. I have also trusted in the LORD; I shall not slip. 2 Examine me, O LORD, and prove me; Try my mind and my heart. 3 For Your lovingkindness is before my eyes, And I have walked in Your truth.”).
- C. The righteous incorporates God’s truth into every aspect of his life and walks therein (Phil. 1:27; Eph. 4:1).
- D. Regardless of circumstances, he will not compromise it (Col. 3:17; Prov. 23:23) and it will always serve as his/her standard (worship and service; Jn. 4:23-24; 1 Pet. 4:11). How’s your “walk”?

6. **Must teach the truth.**

- A. Paul, an inspired apostle (Jn. 16:13) always demanded the truth be taught! Gal. 2:5; 1 Tim. 1:3; Gal. 1:6-12; 4:16

- B. Doctrinal purity is a prominent theme; 2 Jn. 9-11; 1 Cor. 14:37; 4:17; Acts 20:28-31; Matt. 7:15: *"Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves."*
- C. How is this achieved? 1 Cor. 1:10-13; Col. 3:17; 1 Pet. 4:11; 1 Jn. 4:1, 6; Acts 17:11; Lk. 8:15; 2 Thess. 2:10-12

7. **Must defend the truth.**

- A. The Bible constantly warns us of false teachers (Matt. 7:15; 2 Pet. 2:1: *"But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them..."*; 1 Jn. 4:1: *"Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world."*). The truth is under assault!
 - (1) By secular society (Gen. 1 & 2 (evolution); same-sex marriage (Matt. 19:4-6).
 - (2) Worldliness (1 Jn. 2:15-17).
 - (3) By false teachers from without (modernism, denominationalism, Acts 20:28-29) and by false teachers from within (modernism, e.g., "days of creation," "serpent," inspiration of 2 Peter & Jude; MDR, A.D. 70).
 - (4) By the poor attitude toward controversy by otherwise faithful brethren (Acts 18:28 NIV: *"...he vigorously refuted the Jews in public debate, proving from the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ."*; Isa. 30:10-11: *"They say to the seers, 'See no more visions!' and to the prophets, 'Give us no more visions of what is right! Tell us pleasant things, prophesy illusions. I I Leave this way, get off this path, and stop confronting us with the Holy One of Israel!'"*; 2 Tim. 4:3-4; 2 Jn. 9-11).
- B. We must defend even if it offends! Matt. 15:9, 12-14; Jude 3; Acts 2:23; 5:28; 7:51-53; Acts 20:26-27; Ezek. 33:6, 8-9

III. **Conclusion:**

- 1. Are you discharging your duties toward the truth?
- 2. Do you love it? Know it? Believe it? Obey it? Walk in it? Teach it? Defend it?
- 3. Jesus said, *"Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice."* Jn. 18:37; 6:68: *Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life."*