

Fulton County Gospel News

Good News About Christ And His Church For All Of The World

"... Christ is the head of the church: and He is the Savior of the body." - Ephesians 5:23

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GOD'S WAY VS. MAN'S WAY

Part Three
By Burl Curtis

FOR PARENTS IN THE HOME

If you believe the Bible is the Word of God, you should find these words convincing. If not, you will have to start at a different point. The focus will be on parents, not children, although a complete separation is impossible. This discussion is especially for parents and guardians of younger children and older people who have opportunity to teach them.

1. **God's way - marriage, then parents.** Paul commanded, "Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband" (1 Cor. 7:2). After marriage every husband and wife must remain faithful to each other and not defile the bed. "Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge" (Heb. 13:4). **Man's way - sex before marriage and often children out of wedlock.** Sex before marriage results in sins which are works of the flesh. "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness . . . they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (Gal. 5:19-21). Also every child needs both a father and a mother in his/her life and every father and mother need each other. Woman was created for an help mate for man (Gen. 2:18).
2. **God's way - male and female.** "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them" (Gen. 1:27). "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his moth-

er, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh" (Gen. 2:24). **Man's way - approves same sex marriages.** God strongly condemns such practices. Please see Rom. 1:26, 27 and 1 Cor. 6:9-11.

3. **God's way - stay married until death.** "For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband" (Rom. 7:2). **Man's way - divorce.** But Jesus, our only Savior, said, "And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery" (Matt. 19:3-9). God often addresses the man because He made man head of the woman, but the prohibition applies to both sexes (1 Cor. 11:3). Psychologists tell us that the most frightening thing to a child is to find out his parents no longer love each other.
4. **God's Way - both parents God-fearing, faithful Christians.** The wise man, Solomon, learned many years ago, "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear god, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man" (Eccl. 12:13). Since this is the whole duty of man it is the whole duty of parents. **Man's Way - one or both have little or no reverence for God.** A clear contrast can be seen between God's way and man's way in Deut. 6:4-9. God's way starts with love for God;

man's way starts with parents not loving God. "Be the right kind of person," contrasted with, "do as I say, not as I do." God's word must be in and on our hearts; don't neglect the Bible. Teach God's word diligently to your children; don't make secular education more important. Teach them outside of Bible class; don't let others do it, especially TV, the one-eyed thief of time. Live truth and don't have a double standard.

5. **God's Way - make time to be good parents.** "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4). "Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged" (Col. 3:21). This takes time, forethought and self-control. **Man's way - no time to be good parents.** Parents need to work together by looking for the good and being a blessing to each other. Set worthy goals. Do what is good and right even when they don't feel like it. Work at being good parents; be happy one day at a time; keep growing and improving; make the first move to make things better. Dr. Nick Stinnett and Dr. John DeFrain studied 350 strong families. They found strong families had a lot of happy times together; made it easy to talk and listen to one another; showed appreciation and affection; had strong commitment to each other; supported each other (family was important); were religious; and made good out of bad things that happened.
6. **God's way - discipline children.** "Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him" (Prov. 22:15). Godly training of a child in-

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volves being a good example before him: giving commands and instructions: making corrections and giving and taking responsibility. It requires avoiding injustice, indulgence, partiality, and inconsistency. **Man's way - fail to discipline.** Your child will likely be with you 18-20 years so it does not all have to be done in one day but it is very important to start early. Some of the dangers to parents in training their children are: bad beginning; too busy with other things; blaming others; wrong crowd; meddlers from outside; and, above all, leaving God out.

7. **God's way - take care of extended family.** Paul told Timothy, "But if any widow have children or nephews, let them learn first to show piety at home, and to requite their parents: for that is good and acceptable before God" (1 Tim. 5:4). "But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house he hath denied the faith, and is worse and an infidel" (1 Tim.

5:8). **Man's way - forsake parents and relatives.** In the U.S. we are required to pay taxes and it is wise to take advantage of needed government services but we cannot turn this responsibility over to the government or even the church. Jesus rebuked the scribes and Pharisees for rejecting the commandment of God to "honor thy father and mother." They taught that if you gave what you owed your father and mother as a gift to God, you were free. They would "suffer him no more to do aught for his father or his mother; making the word of God of none effect" (Mk. 7:9-13).

"Lo, children are an heritage from the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward" (Psalm 127:3).

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**"BUY THE TRUTH AND
SELL IT NOT"**

Proverbs 23:3

By Ted J. Clarke

"WHAT IS TRUTH?"

John 17:17 declares that God's word is truth. In John 14:6, Jesus Christ declared Himself to be the truth. Religious and moral truth are inseparably united in God's revealed truth, as seen in His Son and the written word of His will. All other kinds of truth pale in significance when compared with the spiritual truth of Jesus and His word (Mark 8:38).

When the average church member looks at the state of affairs in the religious climate of today, he (or she) may be tempted to excuse himself from any deep concern for a search for real truth. Like Pilate, one may want to wash one's hands of the many unpleasant situations present and exclaim, "What is truth?" - as though no one can really recognize it and know it (Matthew 27:24; John 18:38). Do you not know that this is fast becoming a prominent attitude in society and in the Lord's church? The consequence of such a concept is

to effectively destroy every substantive doctrine that is taught in the Scriptures. It ultimately means that we could not know the truth about anything that the Bible says! Why would God bother to give us such a book?

EFFORTS TO SELL THE TRUTH

The young, but apostate, Roman Catholic church got the early Christians to sell the truth (God's revealed and written will about His Son) by telling them that they couldn't understand it anyway. In Roman Catholic teaching the Scriptures had to be interpreted for the masses by the specially trained clergy. Since the common man was not well educated, and learning what the Scriptures taught did take some effort, dedication, and time, it was **easier** to let the clergy tell them what the Bible supposedly said. More significantly, the Roman church forbade the common man to even possess a copy of the Scriptures. The corruption of God's word became so great that even now, with Bibles readily available in most languages, much of what is called "Christendom" still doesn't know what God has truly said. Most people are still content to let the clergy tell them what the Bible says, without ever checking it for themselves. Few are as noble as were the Bereans (Acts 17:11).

Centuries later, modernists have attacked our ability to know the truth in a different way. They tell us that the Bible isn't inspired of God; that it wasn't written by those who claim to have written it; nor was it written when it claimed to be. Therefore, very little of it could be the actual words of God or Christ, if any. Such scholars have recently told us that 82% of the words reportedly spoken by Christ are not genuine. Jesus never said all of those things (*Time Magazine*, Jan. 10, 1994). Quite a few major denominations have bought into this so-called scholarly line and have sold the truth. We are told that we cannot know the truth because we do not have it to study. What we do have is mostly a phony Bible, according to such men.

Today, we are being petitioned by many with various positions on truth. The more liberal ones are promoting the basic elements of modernism, which destroy the Bible as the inspired word of God. Modern versions which pervert the text with modernist or denominational readings destroy the truths that God has revealed. Another approach more or less follows Pilate's philosophy, that we cannot really know the truth. It is being said that intelligent, sincere men have studied the serious issues that trouble the church today and still come up with various ideas as to what is the truth in these matters. Next it is asked, "If intelligent, sincere men cannot agree as to what the truth is regarding an issue, how can we lesser trained preachers, elders, and average church members be expected to know the truth in such areas?" **Friends, this argument, carried to its logical conclusion, teaches that we really cannot know the truth about any Biblical doctrine!** Why? Simply because it is the case that you could always find intelligent and sincere men who disagree on any Bible topic. Some well-schooled and sincere men would say, "There is no God." Shall we therefore say that it is impossible to know if God exists? Brilliant and sincere men contend that "baptism is not in order to obtain forgiveness of sins." Is it true that we cannot therefore know the truth about baptism? On and on we could go with such folly. This view attacks the very power, wisdom, and goodness of God. In effect, it says that either **God could not** give us a book whereby we could know the truth of His will and about Jesus, or that **God could have** given us such a book **but did not do it**. Either way it reflects unfavorably upon the nature and character of God. How sad that many have bought into such ideas and have really sold out the certainty of salvation for the doubt and confusion of, "We cannot know the truth."

BUYING THE TRUTH

When one "buys the truth," one does more than just come to a knowledge of what is real or genuine, as opposed to what is

false. **Buying the truth means to acquire the revealed truth of God's will in such a personal way that it has life transforming consequences (Romans 12:1-2).** We must both know and practice (abide in) truth (John 8:31-32). God the Father is true (John 3:33); Jesus the Son is the truth (14:6); and the Spirit is likewise truth (15:26). **Doing truth** must naturally follow knowing truth to be acceptable to the Godhead. "He that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be manifest, that they are wrought in God" (John 3:21).

Buying the truth means that one accepts and obeys Christ (John 14:6,15). It means that one is sanctified (set apart for service) by God's holy word (17:17). Buying the truth means that one will be clothed in it and will defend that truth as a brave soldier of Christ (Ephesians 6:10-17). One has a responsibility to **share** the truth with others, but **never to sell it** (Ephesians 4:15,25; 1 Thessalonians 2:13). **There is no substitute for truth!** Those who reject it reject salvation, and those who do not love the truth love a lie instead (2 Thessalonians 2:9-12). It cost the Lord His life to buy the truth which is the center of the gospel; His death, burial, and resurrection (John 1:17; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4). It costs us our lives when we buy into following Him Who is **the truth** (Luke 14:16-33). The cost is great, but the reward is eternal and multiplied beyond measure (1 Corinthians 15:58; 2 Timothy 4:6-8).

SELLING OUT THE TRUTH TODAY

Supposed believers and Christians by the thousands are selling out the truth for popularity, pleasure, or for what they mistakenly believe is peace and progress. Those in Jesus' day did so (John 5:44; 12:42-43). So it was in the apostles' time with the likes of Demas and Diotrephes (2 Timothy 4:10; 3 John 8-10). Such men and women are afraid of the truth and the light it brings to bear on their faith (cf. John 3:19-21). They run from the truth like men run from hornets, trying to cover up and avoid the sting of truth. They

ignore the commands of Scripture to give an answer for their faith and to defend the truth (1 Peter 3:15; Jude 3). These spiritual weaklings have sold out the truth and know that they have no defense, so they feign sweet sayings like, "I've grown past the point in my faith where I feel like I have to prove what I believe or defend the truth. It will defend itself." Isn't it amazing that the apostle Peter had not "grown" beyond the need to give an answer (defense) for his hope?! Jude and Peter are giants who dwarf those who sell out the truth today down to the size of our summer redbugs. Yes, the sellers of truth get under our skin and cause some serious itching, but they are doomed. Truth is the medicine to stop them dead. A generous application of God's word is poison to them.

CONCLUSION

What shall we do? Sellers of truth are going to be troublesome to the Lord's cause. They are going to have their followers and some souls will be lost. They may even become so numerous that those who speak the truth will be a minority, as was Jeremiah the prophet. Still, God said,

The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord. Is not my word as a fire? saith the Lord; and like a hammer that breaketh rock in pieces? (Jeremiah 23:28-29).

In 2 Timothy 4:1-5 the same type of scenario existed in the New Testament church. What was the word of the inspired apostle Paul? Even if many turned aside from the truth unto fables, faithful Christians must pay the cost to buy the truth and never sell it. **Preach the word at all times, reprove, rebuke, and exhort without ever tiring of doing it. Do the work of an evangelist . . . (and) make full proof of thy ministry** (meaning to make it "full" of the things Paul had charged us to do). We must keep turning people to the truth, or back to the truth when they try to turn away.

God's Son and God's word are eternal truth and will abide forever. When every foolish fad and false teacher have gone to their eternal destiny, the truth and those who live it will remain (1 Peter 1:25; 1 John 2:15-17). Brethren, do not sell the truth of your faith. You will be cheated every time. (Matthew 16:26).

WHAT WILL HEAVEN BE LIKE?

By David Macy (Deceased)

"And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life," (Revelation 21:27). Purity will be a shining characteristic of the Holy City. There will be no place in it for anything that is unclean, an abomination, or a lie. The world cannot enter the paradise where God dwells, only those who have their names written in the Lamb's book of life. No unforgiven sinner has his or her name inscribed on this record book of the saved, only those who have been cleansed from sin by belief and obedience, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the lamb. "And I heard a great noise out of heaven saying 'Behold the tabernacle of God is with men and he shall dwell with them, and they shall be his people and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying. Neither shall there be anymore pain: for the former things are passed away'" (Revelation 21:3-4). The whole aim of the gospel is to bring God and man together in a beautiful everlasting fellowship. Heaven is the end result and the glorious consummation of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus and the proclamation of this gospel throughout the earth. When this everlasting fellowship becomes a reality because we responded to the gospel call and lived faithful until death, we will experience no more sorrow, pain, sickness, suffering or death.

These unpleasant sometimes heart-rending experiences are by those who are in the flesh. When God's children receive their new bodies and dwell with him forever, these disappointments and sorrows will be a thing of the past, completely erased from their memories.

The word death means separation. All who have experienced the death of loved ones who were really close to them know this is one of the most heart-rending experiences a person could possibly pass through. Separation from a mother or father or wife or husband or a precious son or daughter: How painful this is! If this describes you, then you should have a special interest in heaven, and an all consuming desire to go there. This interest and burning desire should draw you with love's strong cords. It is no strange land to which we journey, we are going home to be with our saved friends and loved ones forever. There will be the grandest reunion ever held and it will take place in the portals of glory.

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GOD'S AUTHORIZED WORSHIP - COLOSSIANS 3:17

- LORD'S SUPPER** - The New Testament and early church history record that Christians met on the first day of every week (Sunday) to worship God and remember Christ (Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 11:23-34; 16:1-2).
- PRAYERS** - (Acts 2:42; Philippians 4:6-7; 1 Thessalonians 5:17-18).
- SINGING** - God's word authorizes only vocal music and specifically singing (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16; Hebrews 2:12). The New Testament shows no use of mechanical instruments of music in worship to God by the church Christ established. Church history notes no such use for nearly 700 years after the New Testament was completed. It is an innovation of men, not of God.
- GIVING** - Free-willed, cheerful, generous, and every week (Acts 20:35; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2; 2 Corinthians 8 & 9).
- PREACHING OF THE WORD** - The gospel of Christ, not men's doctrines nor entertainment, saves and strengthens us (Acts 2:42; 20:7; Romans 10:17; 1 Corinthians 1:18-23).

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