

THE SOWER

'ARTHUR (IL) CHURCH OF CHRIST
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AUGUST 19, 2018

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SEARCHING FOR TRUTH

Where can you find truth these days? A popular view is that there is no absolute truth—the individual is left to define his own truth, with the result that your truth may not be my truth. Nowhere is this attitude more apparent than in the divided state of our nominally Christian society. Confusion reigns, but few are concerned. Is there hope for the few who have a desire for truth?

Some would let others determine truth for them. They may look to their church or preacher with confidence that therein is the reservoir for truth. After all, the preacher or church-hierarchy has been schooled in such matters. The danger of this was addressed by Jesus in His day when he viewed the sects within Judaism, divided by their opinions and traditions, each claiming to be the possessor of truth. He charged: “You have made God’s law null and void” out of respect for their traditions, quoting God’s message through the prophet Isaiah, “This people pays me lip-service, but their heart is far from me; their worship of me is in vain, for they teach as doctrines the commandments of men” (Matthew 15:6-9, NEB). May we never allow ourselves to trust any man or group of men to define truth. He who would control your thinking would control your life.

Still others would pridefully see themselves as fully knowledgeable of truth. To trust in oneself is no more commendable than trusting in others. Paul warned, “Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth. And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know” (1 Corinthians 8:1b-2). In the words of one of our hymns, “The arm of flesh will fail you; ye dare not trust your own.”

If absolute truth is not to be determined by preachers, churches or one’s own opinions, where is it to be found? The answer is that truth is found in divinely-inspired Scripture, for “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (2 Timothy 3:16-17). Truth never contradicts truth. Acts 17:11 describes the actions of the Bereans as noble for not only listening to Paul preach the gospel, but also that they “searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.” Did some test the gospel by consulting their rabbi? Or by comparing it with their own opinions? If some did, they received no commendation of being noble. The searcher for truth, as the Bereans, tests all things by the word of God. Jesus, in prayer to the Father in behalf of His disciples, prayed, “Sanctify them through thy truth: **thy word is truth**” (John 17:17).

The ultimate benefit of truth is that it points us to Jesus, who said, "I am the way, the truth and the life. No man cometh to the Father but by me" (John 14:6). We would urge all to heed the words of Jesus: "Search the scriptures: for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me" (John 5:39). God has not left us to search our own hearts and

minds for truth, nor the fickle minds of mere men, but to open our hearts to Bible-truth, and to the Son of God, the ultimate Truth.

-Ron

WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR?

They were looking for a lion: He came as a Lamb, and they missed Him.

They were looking for a warrior: He came as a Peacemaker, and they missed Him.

They were looking for a king: He came as a Servant, and they missed Him.

They were looking for liberation from Rome: He submitted to the Roman stake, and they missed Him.

They were looking for a fit to their mold: He was the mold-maker, and they missed Him.

They were looking for their temporal needs to be met: He came to meet their spiritual need, and they missed Him.

He came as a Lamb to be sacrificed for your sin. Will you miss Him?

He came to make peace between God and man. Have you missed Him?

He came as a model of servant hood for all mankind. Have you missed Him?

He came that we might have true liberty. Have you missed Him?

He came to give you eternal life. Have you missed Him?

What are you looking for? Lion? Warrior? King? Liberator?

When we submit to the Lamb, we will meet the Lion.

When we join with the Peacemaker, we will meet the Warrior.

When we work with the Servant, we will meet the King.

When we walk with the Submitted, we will meet the Liberator.

When we concern ourselves with the Eternal, we will have the temporal.

If Jesus isn't fitting into the mold you have, then come to the Mold-Maker and get a new one. Submit to His plan for your life, and you will see the eternal need met first, then all other needs will be met as well.

--Glenn Hitchcock, *House to House/Heart to Heart*

"Ask, and it will be given to you, seek and you will find, knock and it will be opened to you."

Matthew 7:7

THE SALT OF THE EARTH

You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet." -Matt. 5:13 ESV

God's Word says that His glorious church is to be a bride. No church building existed until 265 AD, yet the greatest revival of all time shook the world as it had never been shaken. When did this dynamic move stop? It came to a halt in the third century when Constantine legalized Christianity and made it a state religion.

People also began to look at the structure—in this day that would be the musical instruments, praise team, air-conditioning, sound system and preacher. Sadly, they took their eyes off Jesus, the true Source.

Today, God wants to make the Church glorious again. The Church is to be salt, able to preserve. "You are the salt of the earth." God is saying: "Be my bride. Salt this world that is decaying and bring it back to me." But you won't build a church or develop maturity through advertising or marketing techniques.

If you want God to birth His Church, you have to say, "God, help me to apply these New Testament principals until I become salt and light."

--Mike Evans, Jerusalem (from the Internet)

A VOICE FROM THE PAST—

"Hold fast to the Bible as the sheet anchor of your liberties. Write its precepts in your hearts and practice them in your lives. To the influence of this Book we are indebted for all the progress we have made in true civilization, and to this we must look as our guide in the future. Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people." --Ulysses S. Grant, 18th President of the United States (The American Patriots' Bible)

"THAT'S (NOT) ALL, FOLKS" will be today's message, with Ecclesiastes 12:1-7 as the reading—a continuation of our series on "HEAVEN