

The Spartan Sower

The sower soweth the word... Mark 4:14



April 8, 2007 (Vol. 7)

When Truth Is Presented, Honesty and Error Must Separate

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There are people in the world who are honestly mistaken. Yet it seems that many think honesty somehow allows us to pass over being "mistaken". What if the bank teller makes a mistake by subtracting \$20 from your account? The Scriptural thing to do is to assume honesty, until we have evidence to the contrary (1 Cor. 13:6-7). Even granting the best of intentions, does this mean we should not correct the error? Does this mean that we have not been shorted? Certainly not. Wouldn't we diligently seek to set the record straight, regardless of the good motives of the teller?

But what would happen if, when we came with clear evidence to correct the mistaken, the teller refused to listen? Or the teller said he wasn't worried about it? Wouldn't we at least wonder what was going on? And when the bank manager came and agreed with the evidence, if the teller still refused to change anything - what would we think? Absurd, you say? Do you think this kind of thing would never happen?

This kind of thing is actually quite common in religion. How many times did old Pharaoh resist God's miraculous evidence and refuse to let the Israelites go (Exodus 7-14)? Pharaoh was faced with Truth - the reality that he was not really an incarnate god, nor able to withstand the might & power of Jehovah. Yet, even after Egypt's crops were ruined, all the fish in the Nile had died, and their firstborn had perished - Pharaoh thought he could reclaim the Israelites as his slaves. So he followed them down into the Red Sea. Can anything be more foolish? Could he not see that God was working to save Israel? Could he not consider that (as Moses had warned him - Ex. 10:28-29) he would not see Moses' face anymore?

"And the LORD said unto Moses, Pharaoh's heart is hardened, **he refuseth** to let the people go." (Ex. 7:14). "...And Pharaoh's heart was hardened, neither did he hearken unto them; as the LORD had said. And Pharaoh turned and went into his house, **neither did he lay even this to heart.**" (7:22-23) "But when Pharaoh saw that there was respite, **he hardened his heart**, and hearkened not unto them, as Jehovah had spoken." (8:15) "And **Pharaoh hardened his heart this time also**, and he did

not let the people go." (8:32) "But the heart of Pharaoh was **stubborn**, and he did not let the people go." (9:7)

"And Jehovah hardened the heart of Pharaoh, and he hearkened not unto them, as Jehovah had spoken unto Moses. And Jehovah said unto Moses, Rise up early in the morning, and stand before Pharaoh, and say unto him, Thus saith Jehovah, the God of the Hebrews, Let my people go, that they may serve me. For I will this time send all my plagues upon thy heart, and upon thy servants, and upon thy people; **that thou mayest know that there is none like me in all the earth.** For now I had put forth my hand, and smitten thee and thy people with pestilence, and thou hadst been cut off from the earth: but in very deed for this cause have I made thee to stand, to show thee my power, and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth. As yet **exaltest thou thyself** against my people, that thou wilt not let them go?" (9:12-17) "And when Pharaoh saw that the rain and the hail and the thunders were ceased, he sinned yet more, and hardened his heart, he and his servants. And the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he did not let the children of Israel go, as Jehovah had spoken by Moses." (9:34-35) "And Moses and Aaron came in unto Pharaoh, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD God of the Hebrews, How long wilt **thou refuse to humble thyself** before me? let my people go, that they may serve me." (10:3) "And Pharaoh's servants said unto him, How long shall this man be a snare unto us? let the men go, that they may serve Jehovah their God: knowest thou not yet that Egypt is destroyed?" (10:7) "And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground: and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left. **And the Egyptians pursued**, and went in after them **into the midst of the sea**, all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen..." (14:22-23)

Pharaoh refused to listen. He did not lay the Truth to heart. He made up his own mind to do things his way, not God's way. That is why Egypt suffered. That is why he and his army died in the Red Sea. That is why he will spend eternity in eternal anguish.

Now, there are many people in the world who are honestly mistaken. But when a man who is honestly mistaken hears the truth, one of two things **must** happen. Either he will cease to be mistaken **or** he will cease to be honest. If he refuses to obey the Truth, then he will no longer be honest. If he obeys Truth, then he will no longer be mistaken. Honesty and error **must** separate when truth is presented.

This is true of any aspect of Truth. Whether it be the simple evidence for God's existence in creation (Rom. 1:20-21) or whether it be by hearing the gospel (Acts 13:46); all men are without excuse before God.

As an example of how even Christians can do this, I have heard one who was formerly an elder say that some who were not baptized for the remission of sins could end up in heaven anyway. What proof was offered? Emotional expressions of how devout his dear Methodist mother was, how she read her Bible every day, how charitable she was,

etc. Is it wrong to be charitable? No. Is it wrong to read the Bible? No. Is it wrong to be Methodist? Yes. Why? Because we no where read in the Bible of the Methodist denomination. So, how on earth can we feeble human beings even imagine that anyone will be saved **apart** from the gospel and in a man made religion?!? WE may only see someone as honest, devout, sincere and kind; but does that make a person acceptable to God? Does their apparent sincerity and our perception of their honesty allow them into heaven? Friends, no matter the depth of our affections for our earthly relations, if someone "obeys not the gospel", then how can we think there is hope and comfort for them (2 Thess. 1:8-9)? Such hope is a false & misleading hope. It is not of faith (Rom. 10:17).

Jesus plainly said, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: for **every one** that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." (Matt. 7:7-8) Jesus promised that "everyone that asketh" also receives. So, if someone, anyone passes from this world without having received & obeying truth, who is to blame? Not God, for He is faithful and cannot lie (1 Cor. 1:9; Titus 1:2). There is none to blame but the individual for not seeking or accepting it. Friends, there is a tremendous danger in not seeking and accepting truth. People can not only cease to be honest, but also come to be "sincerely wrong". What do I mean "sincerely wrong"? One can **sincerely believe error** to be Truth - **because they have chosen error** over the Truth. How do we know this? The Bible tells us so. Remember Pharaoh? Remember Sihon, king of Hesbon (Deut. 2:30)? Remember Lot's wife (Luke 17:32)? Remember Israel (Lam. 3:65)? Remember Ahab (1 Kings 22:20-23)? Remember the parables of Jesus (Mt. 13:13-15)? Can you think of others?

As it is written: "And for this cause **God sendeth** them a working of error, **that they should believe a lie**: that they all might be judged who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, for that God chose you from the beginning unto salvation in sanctification of **the Spirit** and belief of **the truth**: whereunto he called you through our **gospel**, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. So then, brethren, **stand fast, and hold the traditions** which ye were taught, whether by word, or by epistle of ours." (2 Thess. 2:11-15)

Notice above, that when mankind takes pleasure in sin, God sends or enables us to believe we are alright anyway. In contrast to this, Paul speaks of being sanctified (set apart) in the Spirit. This means to believe in the Truth the Spirit revealed. We are called to be separate from the world by the gospel. It is in "standing fast" and "holding" the words of the apostles that we have hope.

Therefore, it is extremely vital that we develop a love for the Truth and that we do not allow the love of anything unrighteous to hinder us from obeying God. We may think of Pharaoh's decision as monumental. We may consider Joshua's speech ("Choose you this day whom you will serve" - Josh. 24:15) as epic. We may consider many of these Bible examples as larger-than-life occasions. But the truth is, this is where the rubber meets the road, even in our

own lives. We may not be facing Israel's exodus or Israel's taking of the physical promised land; but we are facing our exodus from sin and our entering into the spiritual promised land.

So, "Buy the truth, and sell it not" (Prov. 23:23). Bind the Truth to your heart. Be willing in every way and in everything to conform to Truth. For with an honest love of Truth, we can learn about & correct our mistakes. In fact, God promises to do this very thing (Phil. 3:15-16). But if we refuse the Truth, then what good will the gospel of salvation do us? Let us grow in all spiritual discernment and understanding. And may we all be firmly rooted and grounded, not just in the Truth, but in the love of the Truth.

PEOPLE TO REMEMBER & PRAY FOR

Sydney Eller (Surgery 12th), **Othena Kinnard**, **Jo Miller**, **Wesley Geer** (Life Care 316), **Mag Bumbalough** (Life Care 321), **Thelma Cunningham**, **Mary Cox**, **Monie Petty**, **Dave Poteet**, **Joshua & Misty Poteet**, **Dorris Williams**, **Robert & Betty England**, **Ed Williams**, **Joe Smith**, **Lydia Poe**, **Mike Tenpenny**, **Thelma Klein**, **DeLeesa Price** (expecting) and **Alisa Fletcher** (expecting), **Kenley Streeval**. Also, **Reba Jones** (Dorris Williams' niece), **Jackie Tindle** (cancer, relative of the Sims), **Marci Miller** (Alisa Fletcher's mother), **Ocia Bell Jones** (Doris William's mother), **Ruth Williams** (Betty England's niece), **Pauline Hickey**, **Kitty Mahan** (Kathy Tenpenny's mother), **Dwayne Williams** (Dorris William's son), **Paul Grissom**, **Carl Williams** (Ed's brother), **Teddy Sims**.

THINGS TO REMEMBER

- **Home Bible Study** - Sat., March 31 & April 14, 28
- **Door To Door** - Every Tuesday @ 6pm.
- **Business Meeting** - Sun. April 29.
- **Ladies Class** - 2nd & Last Sunday Each Month.
- **GOSPEL MEETING**: April 15-20, 2007 (Sun - Fri)
Speaker: Randall McPherson.
Plan on being here and invite your neighbors!
- **GM** - TBA, Oct.14-19, 2007.
- **GM** - Brian Yeager, April 13-18, 2008.
- **GM** - Lanny Smith, Oct.12-17, 2008.

We Invite You To All Our Services!

Sunday Bible Study	9 am
Sunday Morning Worship	10 am
Sunday Evening Worship	6 pm
Wednesday Bible Study	7 pm

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