



PathLights

*"Your word is a lamp to my feet
and a light to my path"
Psalm 119:104*

March 17, 2019

People of the Truth

by Frank Himmel

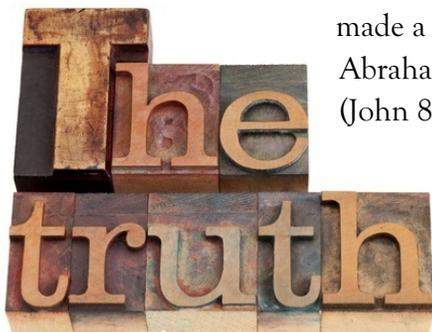
When Jesus stood before Pilate, the Governor asked Him, "Are You the King of the Jews?" Jesus responded that His kingdom was not of this world. Pilate, seeking clarity, asked, "So You are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say correctly that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice" (John 18:37).

Jesus' kingship is in the spiritual realm. He rules in our hearts. He does so, not by overpowering us with might but by persuading us with truth. Grace and truth are realized in Him (John 1:17). He is the embodiment of truth (John 14:6) and is its ultimate spokesman. He said that those who are of the truth hear Him. Who is that?

Who or what we are "of" came up in an earlier conversation about truth. The Jews

made a point of being Abraham's descendants (John 8:33). Jesus noted

that they were not acting like it; they were trying to kill Him for telling them the truth



The
truth

from God, something Abraham did not do (v. 40). No, their deeds reflected a different parent: "you are of your father the devil," in whom is no truth (v. 44). Their desire to do his will gave them away as his children. If they were truly "of God," as they supposed, they would listen to the words of God (v. 47).

To be "of the truth" points to being truth's child, suggesting one who has affinity and respect for it. 2 Thessalonians 2:10 connects love of truth with salvation.

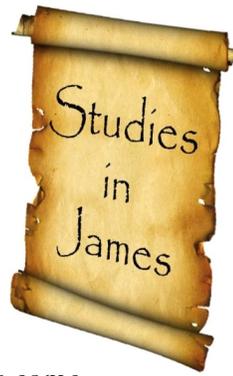
People of the truth are open to God's will. They have Samuel's disposition: "Speak, for Your servant is listening" (1 Samuel 3:10). They are willing to hear it all because the sum of God's word is truth (Psalm 119:160).

To be sure, people of the truth may be temporarily blinded by sin or error. Jesus sometimes found a receptive audience in tax collectors and prostitutes. They may or may not have been looking for truth at that moment, but when He confronted them with it they responded positively. The Lord noted the irony of their response in contrast to the stubborn self-will of some religious people (Matthew 21:31-32).

People of the truth deal truthfully with the truth. They do not first decide what they believe, then attempt to mold (or distort, to use Peter's word [2 Peter 3:16]) the Scriptures to fit that outcome. They do not interpret one passage in such a way that it creates a contradiction with others. They do not ignore context, and they ▶

Pure Religion

by Frank Himmel



The book of James emphasizes action. While faith is vital to pleasing God, our religion must never consist merely of believing some historical facts or adhering to some system of theology or belonging to some church or participating in some formal acts of worship; there must always be a personal, practical, daily application of Biblical truth.

James bluntly says that a religion that does not govern everyday conduct is worthless (1:26). In contrast, “Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world” (1:27). Thus, the application is both inward and outward, positive and negative.

Satan is the god of this world in a very real sense (2 Corinthians 4:4). Its values are often in opposition to God’s. The Christian’s constant challenge is to live in an ungodly world but not let it “rub off” on him. “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect” (Romans 12:2). Jesus prayed for His disciples, “I do not ask You to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one” (John 17:15).

Pure religion is more than just abstaining from wrong, however; it also requires positively doing right, and that includes helping others. Throughout the Old Testament, providing for orphans and widows epitomizes the love and concern God expects His people to have, helping the helpless. That makes us like God, who is “a father of the fatherless and a judge for the widows” (Psalm 68:5). “But whoever has the world’s goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him?” (1 John 3:17). “...The one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen” (1 John 4:20). ■

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do not arbitrarily redefine words or dismiss plain statements as not meaning what they say.

People of the truth are honest with themselves, too. Sometimes, truth hurts! Nothing is gained, however, by hiding from it. Truth makes us free (John 8:32). Just as ignoring the reality of physical disease can be fatal, pretending that spiritually we are something other than what truth says we are is disastrous.

People of the truth act on what they learn. John noted that by our actions, not just our claims, “We will know that we are of the truth” (1 John 3:19a).

Jesus’ appeal to truth before Pilate was timely: surely a judge is supposed to adhere to truth! The real question for Pilate was the same one we all face now: What is my attitude toward truth? ■

Service Leaders for the Week

	Sunday	Wednesday
GREETER	Greg Winget	Bruce Williams
SONG LEADER	Bruce Williams	Ian Brown
OPENING PRAYER	Sam Walters	
LORD’S SUPPER		
BREAD	Howard Moore	
CUP	Brian Wilson	
CONTRIBUTION PRAYER	Kerry Gray	
SERMON/INVITATION	Frank Himmel	Justin Candella
CLOSING PRAYER	Justin Candella	Howard Moore