

ATTITUDES TOWARD THE TRUTH

Prov.23:23

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. Since the truth of God's word is that which is to be preached to sinners to make them free from sin and the spiritual death caused by sin;
2. And since sinners are responsible for what they do and do not do with reference to the truth of God's word; and one's attitude toward it determines what he does and does not do with reference to it;
3. One's attitude toward the truth is all important.
4. In this study of attitudes toward the truth we shall approach the subject from both a negative and a positive view.

II. DISCUSSION

A. FIRST, THE NEGATIVE VIEW – WHAT IT SHOULD NOT BE!

1. We should not be willing to sell it after once buying it, Prov.23:23.
 - a. Sell it not for material gain, Mt.16:26; 1Tim.6:9,10; Mt.19:16-22.
 - b. Sell it not for the praise of men, Jno.12:42,43; Cf. 9:22.
 - c. Sell it not for fear of men or for the protection of physical life, Mt.10:28; Rev.2:10; 12:11.
 - d. The seller of it is always the loser!
2. We must not be willing to change the truth of God for a lie to the damnation of our souls, Rom.1:25; 2Th.2:10-12.
 - a. There are many warnings against changing the truth of God's word with dire consequences for doing so, Deut.4:2; 12:30; Prov. 30:6; 1Cor.4:6; 2Jno.9; Rev.22:18,19.
3. We must never allow ourselves to be influenced to lie against the truth, or to speak evil of the truth as Jas.3:14 and 2Pet.2:1,2 warn.
 - a. Remember this: All lies are against the truth; for no lie is of the truth, 1Jno.2:21.
 - b. And, of course, lying is a sin, and any and all sin is against God!
 - c. Moreover, "all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death," Rev.21:8.
4. We must strive to make sure we are not led to err concerning the truth as Paul warned in 2Tim.2:14-18 where he declared that certain ones had been guilty.
 - a. Note Paul's instructions to Timothy in V.14 pertaining to his duty toward the brethren.

- b. Then his positive instructions to Timothy pertaining to his own need, V.15.
 - c. Next, his negative instructions to Timothy as to what he must avoid or shun and why he must do so along with the deadly consequences of such things, Vv.16,17.
 - d. Finally, he identifies by name two guilty parties, who:
 - (1) Concerning the truth have erred.
 - (2) Were teaching that the resurrection is past already.
 - (3) Were overthrowing the faith of some. Cf. 1Tim.4:1,2.
 - e. See Gal.6:1 and Jas.5:19,20 for our duty toward those who err from the truth.
 - f. Also consider 1Cor.5:3-5; 2Th.3:6; 1Tim.1:18-20.
5. We are warned of the danger of doing so and told of perilous times in the “last days” when people of certain character would resist the truth, 2Tim.3:8.
- a. See Exo.7:10-13 for the action of the Egyptian magicians who withstood Moses referred to in 2Tim.3:8.
6. Our attitude should be such that we would guard against the time and the circumstances that would cause us to “turn away our ears from the truth,” as prophesied of some in 2Tim.4:3,4.
- a. When men, with itching ears, do not endure sound doctrine, they, after their own evil desires, multiply to themselves teachers to tell them what they want to hear, V.3.
 - b. When this is the case, they turn away their ears from the truth, and turn to fables, V.4.
 - (1) The mind does not and will not exist in a vacuum.
 - (2) If it turn from one thing, it will turn to another.
 - (3) If it turn from the truth, it will turn to error.
 - (4) If it doesn’t stand firm in the truth, it will fall into error.
 - c. Those of old, according to Isa.30:10, cried to the prophets of old: “Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits.”
 - d. Like those of old, many today cry, “speak unto us smooth things” tell us what we want to hear, not what we need to hear!
 - (1) But Paul instructed Timothy: 2Tim.4:1,2,5.
 - e. Moreover, “giving heed to Jewish fables (fiction) and commandments of men...turn (one) from the truth,” Tit.1:14.
7. Our attitude should be such that we would never be guilty of holding the truth in unrighteousness such as those of Rom.1:18-22.

- a. When V.18 speaks of those “who hold the truth in unrighteousness (iniquity)” he has reference to:
 - (1) Those who hold the truth in (or with) unrighteousness.
 - (2) Unrighteous people who restrain the spread of truth by their unrighteousness.
 - (3) Examples: Mt.23:1ff; Rom.2:17-24; Gal.2:3-5; 4:16,17; 6:12,13; 2Pet.2:1-3; 1Jno.1:6; Rev.2:20-23.
- b. The spread of truth today is still hindered by those of like character who profess to be what they are not!
- c. Consider what division among brethren over false doctrine and unscriptural practices have done and are doing to hinder the spread of truth!

B. THE POSITIVE VIEW

- 1. Our attitude toward the truth should be that of the Psalmist who said in Psa.119:29,30: “Remove from me the way of lying: and grant me thy law graciously. I have chosen the way of truth; thy judgments have I laid before me.”
 - a. If one doesn’t choose the way of truth, he will choose the way of lying and falsehood.
 - (1) Prov.8:7: “For my mouth shall speak truth; and wickedness is an abomination to (the abomination of) my lips.”
 - (2) Prov.12:17: “He that speaketh truth sheweth forth righteousness: But a false witness deceit.”
 - (3) Eph.4:25: “Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor...”
 - b. If and when one fails to choose the way of truth, he choose the way of damnation, and that because he does not love the truth, 2Th.2:10-12. Cf. Jno.8:32; 17:17.
 - c. To choose the way of truth is to choose Jesus Christ, who is truth, Jno.14:6; 1:17.
- 2. Our attitude toward the truth should be that of the Psalmist who said in Psa.119:172: “My tongue shall speak of thy word (which is truth, Jno. 17:17): for all thy commandments are righteousness.”
 - a. Here the Psalmist said what he would do, V.172a.
 - b. He said why he would do it, V.172b. Cf. Psa.51:12-15.
 - c. In V.11, he said: “Thy word (the truth) have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.”
 - d. No wonder he said what he did in Psa.119:11,172 -- that is what keeps us from sin, enables us to face and overcome the

- temptations of sin, and leads us in the paths of righteousness, 1Cor.10:13; Psa.23:1-3.
- e. Notice 2Tim.3:16-4:5 to see the absolute necessity of speaking, teaching and preaching the word, the truth.
3. Our attitude toward the truth should be that of an obedient believer of it by which we purify our souls and maintain that purity, 1Pet.1:18-25; 1Jno.1:7; 1Jno.2:5,6; 2:4,25,29; 3:7; Rev.2:10; 12:11.
 - a. See also Rom.2:6-11; Heb.5:8,9.
 - b. Gal.1:6; 3:1-4; 4:8-11; 5:1-7; 6:9.
 - c. Heb.2:1-3; 3:8-14; 6:1,4-6;10:27-29; 12:25.
 4. Our attitude toward the truth should always be that of one walking in the truth and a willing, eager fellow-helper to the truth, as John urged in 3Jno.1-8, emp. Vv.3,4,6,8.
 - a. To be a fellow-helper to the truth as here mentioned is done in two ways:
 - (1) To walk (live) in the truth in proof of the fact that it is in you and governs your life.
 - (2) To contribute support to those who preach the gospel, V.6. Cf. Phil.1:3-5; 4:10-16; 2Cor.11:8; Rom.15:23,24; 1Cor.9:5-14, emph. V.14.
 5. Our attitude toward the truth should be that which characterized the apostle Paul as stated in Phil.1:17.
 - a. Examples: Gal.2:5,14.
 - b. Also: ac.13:4-12; 15:1-12; 17:1-4; 17:16-34; 22:1-22; 23:1ff; 28:16-24,30,31.
 - c. So often today, when people see they cannot meet the force of the truth of God's word and defend their religious doctrine, their creedal belief, they will suddenly hide behind the cowardly excuse: "Well, I don't believe in arguing about the Scriptures!"

III. CONCLUSION

1. What is your attitude toward the truth? No doubt you have one – either good, bad or indifferent!
2. What have you been doing with reference to the truth ? Ignoring it? Believing it? Obeying it? Defending it?
3. What are you going to do with it? Beginning now – today – What is your attitude toward it going to be?
4. If your attitude toward it is not positive, with all that means, then it is negative, which will include its consequences, if you do not repent!
5. What is it going to be? Salvation? Damnation? Heaven? Hell?