

A Lord's Day Snippet!

Biblical and Southern Studies

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SBSS

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1 Ye humble saints proclaim abroad
The honours of a faithful God,
How just and true are all his ways,
How much above your highest praise.

2 The words his sacred lips declare
Of his own mind the image bear;
What should him tempt, from frailty free,
Blest in his self-sufficiency?

3 He will not his great self deny:
A God all truth can never lie:
As well might he his being quit,
As breaks his oath, or word forget.

4 Let frighten'd rivers change their course,
Or backward hasten to their source;
Swift thro' the air let rocks be hurl'd,
And mountains like the chaff be whirl'd.

5 Let sun and stars forget to rise,
Or quit their stations in the skies;
Let heav'n and earth both pass away,
Eternal truth shall ne'er decay.

6 True to his word, God gave his Son,
To die for crimes which men had done;
Blest pledge! He never will revoke
A single promise he has spoke.

John Needham (d. 1786)

The Majestic God Is True

“He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true.”

John 3:33.

The One who came down from heaven above is above all, especially the earthly. The earthly cannot speak as the heavenly for he has no heavenly experience. No! The One who

comes from heaven excels all (v. 31). Thus, the One from heaven spoke of what He has seen and heard. This testimony is competent for His knowledge is complete. The problem: men do not receive His testimony (v. 32). The Lord Jesus had no limitations. His testimony was rejected by those loving darkness (v. 19). In our text consider *a testimony is received, a seal that is set, and a God who is true.*

A testimony is received, “He that hath received his testimony.” There were a few who received His testimony though many rejected His testimony. John the baptizer, the voice in the wilderness, cried, “Prepare ye the way of the LORD.” He had witnessed the Holy Spirit descending on Him in the form of a dove (1:34). He declared, “Behold the Lamb of God.” Have you received His testimony? Those who have are resting in Him. Augustine by the grace of God and through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, could write, “Oh God! Thou hast made us for Thyself, and our souls are restless till they rest in Thee.” “The Psalmist wrote, ‘He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty’ (Ps. 91:1). We cannot rest in God until we nest in God. To nest is to settle, to abide” [Vance Havner].

A seal that is set, that is His testimony “hath set to his seal.” Setting a seal is figurative language referring to ratification, confirmation or solemn declaration. The only way the lost can ever come to know the true God is by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. The Son of Man can give eternal life for God the father has sealed Him (6:27). The seal of Paul’s apostleship was the Corinthians who were in Christ. The one who establishes us in Christ and has anointed us is God who has sealed us, and gave the earnest of the Holy Spirit in our hearts.

A God who is true, “that God is true.” God the Father is truth personified. Truth is what God says it is. God’s nature is one of truth for He never is in error. Isaiah declared it, “God is truth, and he that sweareth in the earth shall swear by the God of truth” (65:16). This is the God who honors all His promises, who enforces His Word, who vindicates Himself. “Thou hast redeemed me, O LORD God of truth” (Ps. 31:5). What comfort the Psalmist realized in knowing his redemption was provided by the God of truth. Moses described the God of truth, “Because I will publish the name of the LORD: ascribe ye greatness unto our God. He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he” (Deut. 32:3-4). As Moses speaks of the God of truth he delineates, He is Jehovah to whom he ascribes greatness, He is the rock which cannot be moved, He works to perfection, He is sinless, He is just and He is righteous. What a God! He is true! This ascription of greatness is to magnify His majesty. The reference to the true God as the rock is acknowledging omnipotence, stability and immutability. This true God’s works of creation, redemption, providence and preservation are perfect without flaw, fault or failure.

“God is the God of truth. Every word of God is pure; ’tis impossible one jot or tittle of His Word should fall. God is the truthful God: ’tis impossible for God to lie” [Jonathan Edwards]. God is the origin of all truth and its only source. He arbitrates truth. David described it, “Thy word is true from the beginning” (Ps. 119:160). Obviously, only a true God’s words are true. The true God’s truth separates Him from fallen men, “God is not a man, that he should lie” (Num. 23:19). Thus, God’s word is truth, “The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever” (Isa. 40:8). This word of the true God is irrevocable!

Paul could not be silent when his glorious God’s truthfulness was under attack. Paul’s holy emotion was fired up and he shrieked out, “Let God be true, but every man a liar” (Rom. 3:4)! Paul’s heart would not allow for timidity when the glory of His God was at stake. He would not relent to those who followed the father of lies. To Paul silence would be criminal for the Father of Truth was having his glory besmeared. Thus, we declare God is true, but man is false. What God is is true, what He says is true, what He does is true!

He faileth not, for He is God:
He faileth not: He’s pledged His Word:
He faileth not: He’ll see you through,
This God with whom we have to do.

John Calvin commented, “Now since these two things stand together ... that God is true and man is false, it follows that the truth of God is not nullified by the falsehood of men. God is true, not only because He is prepared to stand faithfully to His promises, but because He also really fulfills whatever he declares; for He so speaks that His command becomes a reality. On the other hand, man is false, not only because he often violates his pledged faith, but because he naturally seeks falsehood and shuns the truth.”