

A Lord's Day Snippet!

Biblical And Southern Studies

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1 "I am," saith Christ, "the Way";
Now, if we credit him,
All other paths must lead astray,
How fair soe'er they seem.

2 "I am," says Christ, "the Truth";
Then all that lacks this test,
Proceed it from an angel's mouth,
Is but a lie at best.

3 "I am," says Christ, "the Life";
Let this be seen by faith,
It follows, without further strife,
That all besides is death.

4 If what those words aver,
The Holy Ghost apply,
The simplest Christian shall not err,
Nor be deceived, nor die.

Joseph Hart (1712-1768)

For the Truth's Sake

"For the truth's sake, which dwelleth in us, and shall be with us for ever."

2 John 1:2

Truth is the foundation of faith and life. Truth should be ruling in our hearts. Please consider that truth is not only the focus of life, but it should be the foundation of life. The foundation which stands sure is not built upon lies but upon the indefatigable truth. What a contrast this way of life is when compared to the lies of the deceivers who are in the way of death. The way that seems right unto fallen man is the way of death (Prov. 14:12; 16:25). They are outside the way of peace (Isa. 59:8; Rom. 3:17), and the right way they have forsaken (2 Pet. 2:15). How can man know the way he should go? Jesus' answer to Thomas' question, "How can we know the way?" and His answer was "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:5, 6). Christ is

the personification of Truth. Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid which is Christ (1 Cor. 3:11).

What we do should be “for the truth’s sake” or “for Christ’s sake” which is to say essentially the same thing. We have John telling us that Christian love is focused *on* truth (v. 1a), and that Christian knowledge is focused *in* truth (v. 1b). Our blessed Lord in His high priestly prayer said, “Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth” (John 17:17). God’s Word is not only true but is the unadulterated truth itself; it is the encapsulation of truth; it is seminal truth. All truth is embodied in Christ and is characterized in Christ. “Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ” (John 1:17). Truth identifies Christ’s person (John 14:6). The truth lives in us as Christ lives in us! But if Christ lives in us so does the truth.

What has God’s people suffered for the sake of the truth? They have suffered intensely and died as martyrs. William Tyndale died because he translated God’s truth the Bible into English. Hugh Latimer was burned at the stake for the gospel. There have been thousands to suffer for the truth.

What does John not mean by truth? He does not mean by truth mere accuracy of proposition or principle about biblical facts. Does a person receive the truth by a mere mental acknowledgement of dogma? John referred to the truth “which dwells in us.” Surely, he did not mean that dogma dwelt in us. Remember in verse 1 that the elect lady was loved “in the truth.” Loving in truth is the same as loving without deceit or dissimulation (Rom. 12:9). To love “in the truth” is to love in Christ who is the embodiment of truth.

Please remember John wrote that it was “for the truth’s sake.” The truth (1) resides in us and (2) remains in us. (1) The truth resides in us, “For the truth’s sake, which dwelleth in us.” The sake of the truth motivates John. The truth, which is revealed by Christ, who is truth, is unfolded by the Spirit. Paul spoke of the truth *of* Christ (2 Cor. 11:10), the truth *in* Christ (Rom. 9:1) and John spoke that the truth is Christ (John 14:6). When we love our Saviour we love the truth! Paul declared that he spoke “the truth *in* Christ” (1 Tim. 2:7). John’s love for the elect lady and her family was caused by their love *for* the truth. The love of Christ constrains us to love, because the Truth makes this possible (2 Cor. 5:14). The truth resides or “dwells in us.” The truth indwelling refers to that which permanently abides. The permanence of truth is the assurance of the abiding love which John has and expresses. Christ the truth is always with us, “And, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen” (Matt. 28:20). Yes, the place of the ever-abiding truth is “in us.” The truth has taken up permanent residence in the child of God as the branch abides in Christ (John 15:4 ff.). We abide forever in Christ the Truth, and He abides forever in us by His Spirit. We are His and His forever. (2) The truth remains in

us, “and will be with us for ever.” Not only is there present permeance but there is prophetic permanence (future tense). This is a confident assertion, “will be.” This is a companion, “with us.” Not only is Christ the Truth “in us” but He as the Truth is “with us.” The personal presence of Christ “because as He is so are we in this world” (1 John 4:17). Christ sent the Holy Spirit to be “with us” as well, “And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you” (John 14:16-17). The Truth dwells in us and shall be with us “forever.” The length of Christ’s endurance is the same as the length of truth.

Hugh Latimer stood in his old age before his persecutors. They proposed to cross-examine him, and especially directed their attention to that point which was then adopted by all parties as a test of orthodoxy which was really the opposite for they were heterodox. They challenged him to a discussion on the subject of transubstantiation (belief that the bread and wine at the Lord’s table actually becomes Jesus’ body and blood when consecrated—the habitual sacrifice of Christ who died once for all). The elderly minister eloquently replied to this effect—“When I was young, in the full possession of my faculties, with books to consult and learned friends with whom to take sweet counsel, I examined this subject, and I rejected the figment of transubstantiation, which cannot be proved by Scripture, and was unknown to the Catholic Church for nearly a thousand years. And now, an old man worn out by sufferings, deprived of my books and excluded from my friends, *I am not going to damage the cause of truth by entering into an unequal contest* with adversaries in possession of all the advantages which once were mine, but now are denied me. I examined, I studied, I prayed, I was convinced; for my convictions I am not prepared to argue, but I am quite ready to die.” The truth shall set you free.