

**Contents:**

<b>Standing for truth</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Perilous times as Truth is forsaken</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Standing for the unadulterated Truth</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Dangerous waters of disunity and perversion</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>The Truth Prevails</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>Destroy carnality to promote true unity</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>Truth, not option, defines the Kingdom</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>Connoisseur of the Word</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>The Lie that Poses as the Truth</b>	<b>54</b>

## Standing for truth

There is a saying that goes ... if you don't stand for something then you might fall for anything.

This truth shines like a screaming siren in the night. It is that lighthouse on the seashore that desperately shines its light as we navigate through the storms of life, enduring wave upon wave and storm upon the storm. Shall we heed this truth and turn our attention to this frail wonder of how easy we can be lost in the mire of confusion? If so, then we can surely make it to the shore. That lighthouse shines its light, that lighthouse is God.

In this postmodern world of shifting sands and leaders who are but wolfs in sheep clothing, in this world where truth finds herself at the mercy of the brute and the dragon, it has become imperative to urgently find spiritual truth that grounds us. Mankind also finds itself at the mercy of an existentialist journey, enduring an ever-increasing angst over the meaning of life, its purpose, global warming, political upheavals, death and personal loss. However, when done against a background of trying on their own to create the meaning and essence of their lives, as opposed to deities or authorities creating it for them, poses further challenges to the quest for truth.

Yet here we begin our struggles and here we begin our journey. Truth. Such a simple word. Such a simple concept, yet so complex with a myriad of connotations. What is the truth? After all, this is the postmodern world of pluralism. This world will simply say your truth and my truth do not need to clash and conflict. My truth is my space and in my time is the truth. Whatever I deem the truth to be is the truth after all for it only applies to me and is therefore beneficial to me. This is pluralism. Fear and loathing, intolerance, supremacy and elitism have driven mankind to this intersection of rather seeking a contextualized truth rather than a universal one. Yet a contextualized one radically influences our search for meaning and spiritual truths as compared to that of a universal option.

The Hebrew word most used for truth is emeth, which implies certainty and trustworthiness. For the truth we adhere to and fight for must be certain and must be trustworthy. The truth that we seek and the truth we seek to share is not some temporary knowledge, yet it is something eternal and which gives eternal life. It is a truth that abounds with possibilities where the secrets of the supernatural realm are unlocked to be manifested in the natural realm.

We live in a world of mixed generations, consisting of people known as the baby boomers (born out of 1950's and 1960s), Generation X (1970s and 1980s, X referring to the variable, thus times of constant change) and the New Millennium babies (1980s and 1990s). Each generation, as generations gone by, are faced with the challenges of finding truths and answers. Yet, the modern world is one of progression and changing values. As long as man seeks the truths in technology and science instead of the divine, then the truth will be hidden among the folds of darkness.

We experience enormous opportunities yet society is subjected to a constant metamorphosis of state of mind. We live in a world of threat and chaos. Despite all our achievements and efforts to improve ourselves, the world however has never been as spiritually impoverished as these

days. Man believes he has reached enlightenment, as proven by the Age of Enlightenment, yet bloody warfare externally and internally in man over the last three hundred years attest to the fact that man has not reached his enlightenment.

History is a complex saint and a savage beast, exposing humanity's barbarity and intolerance, but also displaying the inherent goodness of God through man and His saving grace. Wars have come and gone, so has man been shaken by natural disaster. Empires and kingdoms have risen and fallen. Leaders and kings have ruled, exploited, set free and changed the times. History does repeat itself, yet man never learns. History is a mirror reflecting fallen man's way and also the way of a man who has risen spiritually and victoriously in Jesus. History reflects many atrocities and cruelty, but also brilliant days of God's truths breaking forth like the daybreak.

Never before has mankind lived in such a false sense of spirituality. Never before has man been so spiritually impoverished, holding on to false comforts and placing his love, faith and hope solely in the perishable. Yet, the deceit of the world tells a sordid tale of fulfilment. The world lives in a state of emotional and intellectual hype. The world lives in a time of smoke and mirrors, being deceived with a false sense of the Lord's power and His hand. These are indeed days of false spirituality and great illusions. The voice of the false prophet and the false teachers have for some time now replaced the true voice of the Father in the hearts and minds of many.

Never before has mankind lived in such deceptive times, being exposed to so much falseness. Yet, mankind remains blind and does not hear, does not perceive or heed the danger, for their knowledge and the false sense of comfort proclaims peace. Ignorance and lack of vision have crippled the world. Mankind systematically believes in his own mortal powers and that they have become more wealthy and knowledgeable than the Lord.

Humanity strives to seek the meaning to life, even looking to the stars, yet so often have placed their trust in vain philosophies or hopeless dreams. This process of seeking and finding answers beyond the realm of the Lord has intensified to a point of great concern. Once again, the events of the last 2500 years have driven man to this point of total spiritual ignorance and blindness.

In Christian circles, since the early struggle between the disciples and Pharisees, to the threat of the Gnostics to the birth of Islam and from the struggles of the mystics and scholars has this battle for spiritual truth wage. It has been carried forth by the struggle between Catholic and Protestant, between philosopher and the carrier of the cross.

The Ages of Rationalism and Enlightenment, along with the storms of Romanticism, have opened new doors for alternating truths of enlightenment. Jesus was attacked by the traditionalists for claiming that He was the truth, while the early disciples were constantly under attack for defending the truth against the truth as proclaimed through myths, legends and philosophies of the Romans and Greeks. During the early and high Middle Ages the monks retracted from the world to find the truth in the monasteries. Philosophers of the ages have sowed a theory in terms of the universe, man, destiny, substance and matter, sometimes

beyond the realm of divinity. Philosophers, thinkers and scholars who have operated devoid of divinity have prompted mankind to explore a different reality and truth.

The Age of Enlightenment after all broke away from traditional Church truths, heralding in an era of demystifying society, placing mankind and the individual only under the authority of reason and the senses (empiricism) within the bounds of natural law. The postmodern world however has added its weight to the search for truth, by rather insisting that even the universal truths of science and reason within the natural law cannot be absolute or supreme.

The two significant movements in the approach regarding universal and holistic truth have caused a significant ebb and flow in the way society today approaches sensitive subjects like religion. Where the naturalistic approach of the Enlightenment endeavoured to place God under the magnifying glass of science and reason, the postmodern approach holds greater repercussions when it comes to the search for enlightened truth.

The concept and notion of truth is also under enormous pressure from worldly external forces. In the wake of historical events that saw tyrannical governments and oppressive regimes, the postmodern world strongly resists the idea of placing anything in a supreme or elitist category. In our postmodern world, there are no absolutes, for according to the postmodern mindset we cannot determine the objective reality of this world. History moves in circles and is caught in a constant flux of continuum. The postmodern world of perceptions is similar to the thoughts of the Greek Stoics. Again, these two thoughts are centred on impression and perspective, therefore reality is determined by the individuals' perception and impression within cultural context.

Therefore, when we discuss matters of truth, there arises the difficulty of comprehending that in a world of no absolutes there can be no absolute truth. This is in comparison to the world of the Enlightenment where truth was determined by science and reason. During this time period, God and faith were reduced to deism, meaning a supernatural being that would only intervene through natural laws. Jesus was reduced to a historical figure and His miracles defunct and placed under the scrutiny of abstraction. In the Middle Ages, religion and superstition defined truth. Within these parameters, spiritual truth has undergone major and radical transformations.

In the postmodern world, all things pertaining to the supernatural or religion are allowed and can be true since there is no more universalism. Jesus is strongly seen as a historical figure, due to the rather bizarre adventures of the Jesus Seminar, yet the possibilities of miracles and supernatural feats are not totally and utterly dismissed. Jesus has also become a metaphor for our enlightened quest while sin is but a projection of our misguided or misunderstood needs. Thomas Payne and Erich Fromm attacked religion, and like Karl Marx, felt that God is only a creation or a projection of our perception to make sense of a dualistic world of hate and love.

Even though all religions are welcomed at the table of reasoning, the postmodern world has also opened the door for random activity in spiritualism. Fundamental Christians argue that if one reduces sin to being nothing more than shortcomings, mistakes or social wants, then Jesus

would be reduced to a historical figure since the world then doesn't need saving. Truth is again under siege.

Even though the world is increasingly intolerant over elitism religion, it has seen a marked marriage of faiths and beliefs as mankind searches for its own brand of truth. Definitions of faith have become blurred, as for example, some Christians deem themselves also to be Buddhist. These approaches to a multi-optional believe system or the tolerance to many truths in essence has complicated the once cut clear path of faith. In the times of absolutes, there were no grey areas. Is the world today of no absolutes providing greater security or is it only adding far greater complications and confusion to the existentialistic journey? Judging by man's constant and erratic floundering for answers against the backdrop of history, it appears that the postmodern world is only clouding the issue instead of clarifying it.

We live in a global village of interdependence. There are many cultures and mankind is sensitive about world peace and living in harmony. The last thing this world wants to do is to think about a universal concept of faith, for abuse of power is a stark reminder of man's frailty. Yet, in the wake of the modern secular society, with its emphasis on scientism, rationality and materialism, mankind has been left almost alienated and spiritually bankrupt. No matter how hard mankind has tried to break away from religion, what has clearly been seen in the last couple of decades is actually an increase in spirituality. Without a doubt, mankind feels spiritually homeless and void of divinity.

This quest for spirituality has, however, added a new dimension to the quest for truth. The search for alternative realities and spiritual truths these days fall under the blanket of so-called New Age movements, where studies in cosmology, holism, anthropology and epistemology have come to the forefront. Cosmology simply states that the cosmos is rather a manifestation of God, which is constantly evolving towards perfection. Anthropology discusses the view that human beings are indeed spiritual beings who are created in the image of God and that humanity is part of the greater reality which is God.

In the epistemology school of thought, the emphasis is placed on subjective inner experience as a way of knowing. Epistemology is rather reminiscent of early mystics, as it is argued that a direct experience with God carries more weight than scriptures of the various religions or the dogmas of the church. Absolute authority is therefore vested not in doctrines but in personal experience.

Such a search for spiritual and scientific truth has largely been driven by man's insatiable appetite for knowledge. The great knowledge accumulated by the Hellenic Greeks was for centuries after the birth of Jesus held in the hands of the Arabic nations. It was only after the excursions of a revived Roman Empire during the latter stages of the Middle Ages into the Middle East that knowledge of the Greeks was regained by the west. The spread of knowledge between east and west was aided also by earlier invasions and trade movements of the Arabs, such as the Saracens and the Moors, into Europe. Before the Renaissance in the west, the Arabs were already more advanced in architecture, literature and other forms of arts because of their access to the work of the Greek scholars.

A human exploration into knowledge has systematically produced reality and a truth dissociated from divinity, as encapsulated by Nietzsche. Leibniz, Spinoza and Descartes were among the forerunners to introduce a true reality that exists by reason and within natural law, while men like Hume and Lock rather advocated a truth of the senses. The study of divinity has also been treated as a philosophy through the establishment of doctrine and dogma. Yet God is spirit. He cannot be fathomed, understood or manipulated logically or critically. A living, powerful and intimate relationship with our Creator is logically and rationalistically beyond understanding. Faith defies logic and reason because it exists beyond the natural realm.

An absolute world of absolute power has left its scars, for absolute power corrupts, yet maybe the greatest problem in the quest for truth has always been to search for the answer that lies in the absolute and the non-absolute. This does not imply the marriage of faiths or ideas; it simply implies that religion has become absolute because it has been tainted by man, while the possibility of a supreme and true divine faith actually consists of absolute and non-absolutes. Is this possible? Surely, for this then implies we are dealing with the supernatural and the natural, which lends towards a situation of absolutes and non-absolutes.

The arguments over spiritual truths and absolutes rage on. Even though such debates may seem complex, the true duel when it comes to secular society as opposed to faith in a personal God is one centred upon the natural and the supernatural. For those who believe in the limitations of the natural world, then everything concerning God and more specifically the Bible is seen as mere stories. Therefore, sin is demystified and Jesus is a teacher. For those who believe in the supernatural, then truth takes on a different meaning as God, sin, death and Jesus no longer are confined to natural laws or to history but are also more interracially tied in with a realm beyond the senses.

In the argument of the naturalist, especially in the postmodern world, absolutes become grey areas.

Truth is contextualized and becomes an impression. In the argument of those who believe in the supernatural, the absolute is clear and so is the truth, for God wants unity with man and therefore sent His son Jesus to act as a Saviour, not just as a teacher.

However, not only has religion been subjected to such ever-changing flows of scrutiny, but art has also adapted, producing the age of impressionism and expressionism. Such artwork determines reality through the artist's impression or expression. This has taken post among literature and modern-day movies.

Taking all of this into account, we have an atmosphere for the birth of many truths, gods and spiritual ideas/ideologies. In this millennium, what is punted is that whatever truth we need to get us through the day and will soothe our aching mind from the claws of this world, then that truth shall surely suffice and no one shall argue with that truth. The truth we seek is then our chosen truth to guide us on our existential journey, as opposed to a universal truth that involves deity.

The dual over spiritual truth, has for a long time, been debated by scholars, philosophers and those of faith. Do such debates only concern religion? Secular religion however disagrees since



its very purpose is to create a world without religion. Can truth be so simplified? What about politics and law – aren't they more universal? In the postmodern world nothing is universal. Despite the fears of secular religion, the truth is that religion has always played the most significant part in history. For example, let us look at Spain's imperialistic expansion policy after the 1300's. Was it for land?

No, it was for the Catholic expansion. The Crusades – religion. The war between France and England was one between Protestant and Catholic. So were the wars in Great Britain. History never lies, no matter from what perspective it is told. The holocaust was based on a notion of religious supremacy – so was slavery. If religion, therefore, has such a profound impact, being the driving force behind the great Renaissance men and the great classical composers, it stands to reason that how we deem religion is rather important. For how we deem religion may just determine how we deem truth.

The world of the naturalist and that of the supernaturalist are two different concepts, therefore perspective on truth differs. As one's truth is determined so does one's beliefs, actions, thoughts, morals and ethics change. Have we considered this? Truth determines our ethics and morals. And if the truth is determined by one's outlook on religion or God, it stands to reason that we have some serious forces at work that dramatically changes societies and times.

We, therefore, have a world of soteriology (doctrine of salvation) pluralism, where mankind rather wants to find his spiritual and enlightened journey and his own kind of salvation in his own way, one which is relevant only to him. This outlook again determines morals, ethics and beliefs concerning humanity.

Human rights determined by the naturalist, often embodied in the humanist, will seem radically different from the human rights drawn by the supernaturalist whose morals and ethics differ. Are truth and religion than a small thing to banter with? To disregard God or play with His deity is not something that mankind can or should be doing at a whim, for it sets in motion great forces of changes beyond the individual's salvation or destiny.

Jesus was attacked by the traditionalists for claiming that He was the truth, while the early disciples were constantly under attack for defending the truth against the falseness proclaimed through myths, legends and philosophies of the Romans and Greeks. During the early and high Middle Ages the monks retracted from the world to find the truth in the monasteries. We however are not called to retract for we are in the world but not of it. We simply need to listen to the Father and allow the Spirit to witness to us what the truth is. We must allow the Father to deposit the truth in our spirit.

Philosophers of the ages have sowed the seed of a false theory in terms of the universe, man, destiny, substance and matter. Philosophers, thinkers and scholars not true to the Lord have prompted mankind to explore a different reality, probing our minds so that we can follow the spirit of lawlessness.

Let it be noted that many philosophers were Catholic or professed some sort of faith. Yet there is only one truth, which is Jesus. No matter how close a philosophy appears to the truth, it is not the truth if it does not proclaim Jesus as the truth of it all and from which all truth flows

then it is deception. One can argue that the Stoics and Plato were partly on the right track, even though they lived before Jesus. The truth however remains that their teachings were not the teaching of Jesus, so we cannot allow it to determine our reality and way of thinking.

Secular philosophy has also played an influential factor in not only introducing false wisdom to the secular world but also managed to incorporate countless false doctrines and practices into the church.

The greatest commandment is to love the Lord with all our strength, heart, mind and spirit. How many times didn't Israel break this commandment? It was for that reason, and there is no other, why Israel and Judah suffered exile into Assyria and Babylon respectively. It was for this reason alone that enemies constantly conquered them, that they experienced drought and plague for they choose not life but death (Deuteronomy 28).

The people of Israel did not always love the Lord with their entire mind, heart, soul and spirit. They turned to other god's and to their rulers, finding strength and comfort in man and lies. Israel wanted a king, for they wanted to put their trust in a mortal man instead of the Lord. Similarly, they chose to put their trust in Moses, even though righteous, instead of choosing to hear from the Lord directly. This is why the Lord had to use the prophetic voice to speak to the people - for they followed man's voice instead of sitting down at the feet of the Lord. The Lord never intended to send prophets or judges to Israel, yet they refused to come closer to the Lord and allow His presence, His fire and His truth to settle in their hearts. The Lord still chooses to speak directly to His children, yet we fail to hear and we fail to heed. From his mouth flows the truth - the only truth that has been since all eternity.

More than ever, this world bleeds for her values and norms are twisted. For where our treasure lies there is our heart. The treasure of this world lies surely not with the Lord. Such distorted values and priorities have instilled a false belief in his mortality and morality. Man has systematically reached that stage where he loves his neighbour above all else and then the Lord secondly. Finely stated, it is about putting your trust, your hope and understanding in man instead of leaning upon the Lord primarily for all and everything.

It is for such reasons that we have placed human rights above the Lord's truth, laws and principles. It is for such reason that we have tried constantly throughout the ages to listen to our ways instead of transforming ourselves to the ageless LORD who never changes. It is why the church and the world have been so susceptible to philosophies and free thoughts because of the need to bring man to a point of enlightenment and self-exaltation. We love this world and man and all its vanities and its pleasures above the values of the divine Kingdom.

Man's search to become a god and to gain the self-knowledge to become a god of his universe is after all the highest level of spiritual idolatry and adultery. Self-promotion and self-fulfilment fuel our need to become all that we deem to become. The Lord has been subtly pushed to the background. Instead of loving our neighbour because of our love, faith and fear in the Lord, we try and show that we love the Lord because of our undying commitment to exalt mankind. This is simply a form of humanism, wanting to improve and restore mankind but without leading them to Jesus or acknowledging Him as King and Lord.



Philosophers/scholars/lovers of knowledge have therefore prompted man to examine a false truth and false wisdom beyond the realm of the Lord. One of the key spiritual battlefields is for the control of the mind. The child of the Lord won't, in general, be easily swayed by other religions, for the obvious reasons that it denounces the Father, Son and Holy Spirit as the Lord, but rather they could be deceived through subtle forms of reason and logic.

It is written in Daniel 12:4 that many will go to increase knowledge. The angel of the Lord spoke this to Daniel before the end time finally comes. 2500 years later knowledge exalting itself against the Lord has increased rapidly, giving birth to religions, governments, ideologies, philosophies and pagan practices. This knowledge extends into all spheres of life throughout all ages. It is not the knowledge of the Lord or the wisdom of the Spirit. It is not Jesus, who is the true root of Jesse and the offspring of the tribe of Judah. This knowledge exalts man's mind to a place of spiritual rebellion and to become his own god.

The primary drive of such false knowledge, influencing mankind for thousands of years, flourished in Greece. This postmodern world is still seemingly nauseous on the dirt and the grind of the universal idea of the Catholic Church during the Dark Ages. It is as if this world still struggles to deal with the pain and the anguish, struggling against the poison they deem afflicted them so. Was the Catholic Church correct and right?

The Protestant movement will attest to the fact that she was partly wrong. Yet, despite theological errors or doctrinal misgivings, what the church did produce for a thousand years was, at last, some kind of a universal sense of truth. Again, maybe only a part of truth, but it still was universal and accepted. The Protestant Movement with trumpets blaring and with banner-waving-gusto tried to rectify the situation, yet almost a thousand years on after they arrived on the scene, we find more than a thousand Protestant denominations scattered across the world.

Every kind of Pentecostal and Charismatic and Evangelical movements clamber for attention, proclaiming they know the truth and they market it so. The Christian religion of today has managed to actually cause greater disunity because man has added his voice beyond divinity.

Jan Huss, one of God's spiritual generals during the time of the birth of the Protestant Movement, firmly pressed that the saints must fight for the truth, adhere to it, proclaim it, speak it, die for it, defend it, and stand on it. It is words that vibrate like a flaming inferno in our hearts even today. Yes, Mr Huss, maybe it is time that as believers we need to light the torch of hope like the night of terror advances. Yet, with more than a thousand denominations proclaiming their brand of truth, along with a myriad of spiritual movements and other religions, what is then the truth?

We no longer live in a world of universal truths. The accumulation of all philosophical movements after the Middle Ages have surely shot those notions down. The truth lies scattered, almost like a hidden treasure, and we desperately search for it. Christian book stores overflow with books on all kinds of subjects yet again we have the conundrum: so many books proclaiming so many truths. Preacher upon preacher, teacher upon teacher, scholar upon scholar, presenting to the eager listener a truth they want to hear.

We live in a supermarket society of choosing what we want. We can choose where we want to shop for clothes, for groceries and for basically anything else. We also have a choice of what truth we want and where to go to glean it. The world is a wide-open marketplace full of activity.

Consider the enormous barriers of wading between our subjective and objective mind-sets. The truth today is subjective, for it serves the individual's needs. Subjective implies nothing universal but rather something personal, which fuels the environment of pluralism.

So is the church. It is a marketplace. Whatever is needed will be found. Anything is possible and everything is available to appease our tortured and tormented longing for true peace and meaning. For the truth, we adhere to and fight for must be certain and must be trustworthy. Do we still find this in a postmodern society? The truth that we seek and the truth we seek to share is surely not some temporary knowledge, yet it is something eternal and which gives eternal life. It is a truth that abounds with possibilities where the secrets of the supernatural realm are unlocked to be manifested in the natural realm.

What is then so special about these days? Wars and conflict is nothing new. Natural disasters and plagues are old. Kingdoms still rise and fall. Leaders still come and go. Indeed, we find history repeating itself, therefore life continues as is. The answer is therefore not in this natural world but in the spiritual. It is within the hearts and mind of man where things have changed. The wiles and schemes of man in his quest for truth have actually led him along a path of spiritual self-destruction, simply because absolutes have been eradicated. Uncertainty is the order of the day and with uncertainty comes greater confusion and fear. Fear breeds insecurity, which leads us to an emotional and spiritual vulnerable state.

Sordid events in politics, philosophy, arts and religion have also blurred the lines of universal rights and wrongs. Man in the post-modern world is in effect spiritually impoverished, holding on to false comforts and placing his love, faith and hope solely in the perishable. Whereas man in the past found his solace in divinity, now man lives in a state of constant emotional and intellectual hype, devoid of divinity.

It is a world of smoke and mirrors, a man is lured by illusions of truth and enlightenment. Mankind has systematically become to believe in his own mortal powers and that they have become more powerful than divinity. History attests to man placing so much faith and trust in philosophies or dreams of grandeur only to come to the realization it is void of true power or hope. This process of seeking and finding answers beyond the realm of divinity has intensified to a point of concern.

2 Timothy 3 speaks of how in the last days men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of the Lord. This has become so true.

2 Peter 2 vividly issues a warning of the last day how false teachers and prophets will open the legal spiritual door for deception, evil deeds, strifes and division.

Since the ascension of the Lord, the words of Paul and Peter has rung true throughout history but never before has it bore so much fruit as today. The self has been exalted, which is no surprise, for this is what philosophy has forced a man to explore, in other words, the ego.

The Word has warned future generations of great deceptions and even the outcome of such deception. We have been warned about the false prophets, false teachers, false apostles, false philosophies and false religions, yet do we heed?

There is indeed mighty spiritual movements happening today, yet some are false and one is true. The false movement of false security and salvation leads us away from the Lord. Humanity has simply evolved to the point of determining their own gods, creating a world and way of life conducive to satisfying their need and desire. Yet, this is false, causing an ever-greater spiritual impoverishment and a catastrophic desire to plunge into a state of spiritual darkness and ignorance.

Man's call is not to evolve to a point of self-exalted power and enlightenment to rule, but rather to be reformed and renewed by the Lord to a point of humility and spiritual strength to serve a broken world.

In our societies where pain and bitterness are inflicted, we bear witness to a world that seemingly regresses and fails to find her sanity. The world may not be furlled in war across all her borders, but the war inside of man, that savagery and that hate, rises predominately to declare its wish to rule.

In this darkened world, are we then surprised to find how little universal truth remains, shrouded in subjective and conscientious trickery? Humanity has evolved to the point of extreme survival, determining their own lukewarm gods, creating a world and way of life conducive to satisfying their needs and desires.

Yet, this causes an ever-greater spiritual impoverishment and a catastrophic desire to plunge into a state of spiritual darkness and ignorance. It is said in journalism that there are two sides to a story and in between the two lies the truth. The struggle over the divine truth reflects this approach. Somewhere in-between all our dogma and doctrine, formed by reason or by faith, lies the divine truth.

This evolvement reminds of Social Darwinism, where each individual attempts to evolve to such a point in order to become the strongest and fittest. Streams of philosophies and scientific thought have prompted societies and man to evolve to feed the inner beast in order to survive. This is known as the pecking order.

We see in the world of business, sport and entertainment. It is about the self and the insatiable need of the self to survive and prosper. In this quest for survival and in this quest for glory, any truth will be upheld and in every truth will one abide to achieve such goals of surviving as the fittest.

The Italian Machiavelli, who wrote the famous work *The Prince*, wrote a stark thesis on the corrupt nature of statecraft. He wrote about what governments' back in the 15th century did and professed to do and the means rulers' used to gain power and to hold power. He speaks of

the corruption of power and the many means necessary to achieve such corruption. Today, any means of truth will suffice to still the torrents of guilt and our hunger for conquest.

Man as an individual and countries as states are using all the resources accumulated throughout history to become the dominant one. The beast howls at night for man has systematically found his power in deceit, treachery, warfare and exploitation. These strategies to survive and rule are seen in all spheres of life, be it in politics or business. And again, in the midst of it all, the truth has been trodden on and ridiculed.

For those who love the cinema, many films over the last thirty years have explored the good and dark side of man and society. One thinks of *Apocalypse Now*, *Lord of the Flies*, and *Lord of the Rings* or even science fiction productions such as *Star Wars*.

Just as there was a false sense of peace in the world before the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars, brought on by man's pride that they have tamed the inner beast, today there is also such a false sense of man's achievements. Such false sense is intricately woven into his arrogance and pride, which whispers at night that we are the masters of truth and can so change our destiny and even our mortality.

Wars in the Middle East and Africa, along with the wars inside homes and neighbourhoods, bring man back to reality just as it did in the 18th century when he realised that he was after all not so lofty and enlightened. Violent conflicts in homes and in neighbourhoods remind man often of his barbaric abilities. The wars on a domestic front within the family structure, perpetuated by mans' chasing worldly pleasures and vanities, remain a dark reminder of the fall of morality in the world. Are we surprised? Is God still in the schools, government, and business or in so many churches?

Man's ambitions for progress and evolvment to survive in this dangerous world, thereby sacrificing the truth, be it in the west or east, only leads man further away from the truths and ideals of divinity. These days are reminiscent of the Dark Ages; yet, in those times many were genuinely ignorant and didn't know better. Today, man has heard the truth, but they choose not to heed the call to turn to God. Ignorance is that backbreaker yet the truth truly enlightens and sets free.

For too long now we have witnessed the spiritual demilitarization of the church. Just like Germany was demilitarized after World War I, so has the church been rendered almost harmless in speaking the truth because of ignorance and deception. The question remain how has such demilitarization taken place? Ever since 100AD the church has struggled in the wake of cultural, political, physiological and psychological changes. Throughout the first 300AD years of the Roman Empire, the church was driven underground, bidding to keep the message alive.

The Middle Ages followed and with it the Catholic Church arose to set the tone for the religionist outlook on life. So the spirit of religion prevailed. For almost a thousand years the world was plunged into a time of superstition, fear, emotional instability and uncertainty. It was a time when the Roman Empire and the ensuing Franks and Saxons wanted to impose

their form of civilization onto a barbaric world. Does the question however remain who were the barbarians: Rome and the church or the native tribes scattered across Europe?

Under popes like Hildebrand and Innocent III, the Roman Catholic Church attempted reformations of purity within its own ranks, such as clamping down on simony and marriage of priests. There was a genuine search for the truth. Yet, it was also a time when the pope and the church gained even greater power, later on breaking away from the then Empire, ruled by Germanic tribes to being protected by France.

The Renaissance, Enlightenment and Age of Reason ushered in new challenges to the Christian faith as streams of thought such as rationalism, nationalism, liberalism, criticism and scepticism challenged faith. Extremist groups made their mark early on in the history of the church, like the Gnostics (seekers of knowledge), followed by a myriad of philosophical scholars seeking answers beyond the realm of divine faith.

It was only in the late 1500's when the spiritual light again began to shine in the darkness when men like Wycliffe, Martin Luther, John Huss and John Calvin challenged the apostate way of politics and the church. It ultimately led to greater movements of reformation, restoring salvation through faith while men like George Fox opened the doors again for the Holy Spirit to work.

It was as if the formidable weapons of spiritual warfare in the forms of righteousness and truth had again been discovered in a musty old cellar and then polished for battle. However, due to the various changes in church history, along with the continuing political upheavals and philosophical developments, these patches of light have again been darkened.

The prophet Jeremiah severely reprimanded the two tribes of Israel and Judah for living in idolatry and spiritual adultery. The attack against truth is manifested in the spirit of idolatry and adultery, as the devil tempts us to abandon the truth of the Lord and rather chose the wisdom of the flesh (the two trees).

The apostle Paul continually fought for the truth as revealed by his epistles to the churches of Rome, Greece and Asia Minor. He fought for the truth of the gospel, of righteousness and of faith. He exposed the false doctrines and false teachings. It is evident in his writings that he wanted to instil a healthy reverential attitude towards the truth, guarding the early followers against the wisdom of the world. The Reformers fought for such truth. Today, the saints are still called to judge the truth and expose all that is false. Yet, how could this happen if the church hardly knows what truth is anymore?

This devil's strategy has always been to lead us away from the Tree of Life, therefore the truth. Satan has forever sought to distort and blur the truth. His greatest weapons are after all deception, lies and deceit. This is how he persuaded Adam and Eve to choose from his tree, causing them to become fully aware of the five senses and thereby losing their spirituality.

The spiritual fight has always been one of truth versus deception, for the truth sets you free. Such an escalation of conflict between truth and falseness has been in progress since the devil lost his place in heaven. This is a fight for right and wrong. The fight involves our spiritual



condition. The saints need to seek, pray and adhere to the truth in order for the Lord to be restored in the hearts of man. The truth will bolster our condition and set our faith soaring.

We have been given the Kingdom on earth, the Blood of the Son, wisdom of the Father, guidance of the Spirit yet we still prove to be ineffective because of our love for carnal and empty knowledge instead of abiding faithfully in the Lord. Germany was brought to its knees through a united allied front, just so the Father is calling for a united bride to bring down the false strongholds of the mind.

Paul warned the churches in Galatians not to listen to any other gospel but the one preached by him and his fellow apostles. He warned the churches against those preaching a different Jesus, or those preaching a different gospel, such as one that enslave by adhering only to the Law of Moses. Similar warnings can be issued against the churches as well: whose gospel and truths are we proclaiming, keeping in mind the works of deception?

There is but little unity in the church at the moment. This adds to the complexities of finding truth. There are so many points of views, arguments and debates raging about what is right and wrong. For centuries streams of thought have challenged the death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus. Doubt has been placed upon the origin of mankind and against the fall of mankind into sin.

The validity of the Word (if it should be read figuratively, literally, symbolically) has come under fire. Questions have been raised whether the Old Testament should be ignored (many however do regard it as useless information) or if the entire Bible should be pushed aside completely because it was written thousands of years ago. Questions to man's goodness, to the truth, to the role of society and to universal laws have kept man busy with a meaningless search that has not brought him closer to unity with divinity but only being a part of a changing yet repeating history.

For centuries there has been a dark call for faith and reason to be united. There are calls for the church to get real (simply implying to conform and submit to the wisdom of the world) and that the manifestation of the Holy Spirit is but signs of emotional hype. The Father's nature and purpose and will have been attacked and so has His Son been mocked. Such blatant attacks are not solely the work of heathens, but also, and at times the most strongly, those within the folds of the church who have also been horribly deceived. Again, this is all but an attack against the truth.

We are fully aware that we need to wage a battle a truth against pride, racism and ignorance. The pride and arrogance of man have led us to exalt our minds above the Lord's while regarding our wisdom and knowledge as more powerful than His. We have become ultimately demigods and self-righteous kings. It is written in Isaiah 55 the Lord's ways and thoughts are higher than ours. Shall we forget that the Lord's word is eternal, everlasting and settled in heaven? Shall we forget that Jesus is the truth, way and life? It may sound simple, but the church in general seems to forget who is the Master.

1 Corinthians 1 and 2 makes it clear that since the age of man there has been a conflict between the wisdom of the Lord and the wisdom of man. The Lord's wisdom is settled in the divine,



supernatural realm. His wisdom is untouchable, infallible, pure, holy and true. Man's wisdom is tainted, twisted, fallible and touchable. Man's wisdom dwells in the natural and sinful realm.

1 Corinthians 1 speaks strongly against the wisdom of man, which is settled strongly in the voice of the philosophers and scholars. Yet, these wise men will be brought low and their wisdom will be shown as foolishness. Such wisdom will not last. Those who wish to walk in the natural, fed by the flesh, can't fathom or understand the supernatural, fed by the spiritual, so the works of the Father, of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, can't be logically, rationally or through reason be grasped. Faith after all is a supernatural calling and only through the sheer spiritual beliefs can we stand firm in the Word.

Romans 1 states that because man has since the beginning of the ages chosen not to follow the Lord, therefore not submitting to His wisdom, he has been given over to become a slave of darkness. Since man has chosen idolatry above the Lord, his wisdom above the Lord's, his ways above the Lord and his thoughts above the King, he has been given over to the dreadful cage of the deprivation of his mind. Is it therefore not surprising that sin is so rampant in every nation and tribe? Is it not surprising how strong the spirit of rebellion is, waging war against what is right?

Let us then consider that the Word of the Lord should be brought into our heart through the Holy Spirit, digested through a humble and contrite spirit. Let us consider that only when we allow for Scripture to be taught and interpreted by the Spirit, therefore becoming a living and breathing faith, then there will be no room for flesh or for man's arrogance to glory. When we allow ourselves to submit to the final and authoritative teachings of the Spirit, then only will Scripture be the vital life force of truth in our soul and spirit. Yet, we act like philosophers and scholars, adapting and adopting truth through our own interpretation by means of the flesh and soul. We should submit and yield only to the wisdom of the Lord.

Let us remember that the Lord is not a King of tradition, legalism and of the method. He moves differently within each individual, within each town and church, drawing and working as He creates and presents circumstances. The Lord never changes, yet His will has always prevailed. The Lord is a sovereign king, bringing forth His perfect plan for the ultimate coming of His. This will be done according to His means, never man's way.

The teachings of Jesus showed how a believer should live and what he should attain to be part of the body of Christ. Jesus taught us how our character should be transformed to reflect His likeness so that our soul and spirit could be alive with His Spirit. He came to show us love, grace and mercy. He came to show us life and hope. He came to show us the Father.

In our times of vain imaginations and distortions of truth, the way the believer should live has never changed. We can only exercise spiritual authority in the spiritual realm as long as we remain constantly and reverently submissive under the only and true Headship of the Lord. Sin remains sin and our relevance pertains to the measure of love, grace and hope we present to a broken world. This world has fallen into a deprived state of immorality, simply because it has moved away from the Lord's truth.

Method, legalism and tradition play a crucial role in determining the outlook of the church, its functionality and what she represents to the world. True sons and daughters of faith are those who have submitted to the truth in Spirit and not solely the truth of man. As saints, we adhere to a certainty in calling which is infallible. We live for the fulfilment of seeing the Son come again to rule from Mount Zion. We as saints are the living epistles, spiritually covered by the covenant through His Blood, called to lead the world not to ourselves in dependency but to the Lord alone in dependency. We are called to live interdependently not co-dependently.

Confusion has especially been caused by the concept of what is a church? Is it the building, the services or the sermons? No, for God never came to establish a religion, He came to establish the eternal Kingdom of God in the hearts of man. Jesus never taught about a church building or never talked about Sunday service or about the structures of church order - He talked about the eternal Kingdom and eternal spiritual values of hope and love. Jesus came to show the Father's heart and implanted in us the eternal spiritual truth of following Him.

Mankind has for too long learned from man and not from God. Jesus came to show true "church", which is fellowshiping with divinity, with each other and walking in love. God seeks unity with man who is willing to follow Him, learn from Him and abide in Him. We can no longer blindly follow what man believes to be the truth. There is only source of truth and that is God Himself.

Oh the beauty of that spiritual state called mysticism. The term mysticism, like the lady of the night, has been misunderstood, scorned and treated with contempt. It is not pagan. It is the truth. Why would people run from divinity and the deeper search for the things of divinity?

Mysticism: The concept perplexes, for the idea of worship has been distorted into a concept of noise, performance, showmanship and emotionalism. Big noise, big lights and big events catch not the attention of God. A still humble heart, captivated by the beauty of God is what stirs the heart of the Master. A heart moved by the lost and the broken and the hurting stirs God's heart. A heart seeking for a man to know the beauty of salvation and the delivering power of truth stirs the Father's heart. Our well-rehearsed sermons, well-rehearsed services and well-rehearsed meetings of worship are but forms of false wisdom and a sad pretence that we are in touch with God. God is in the silence, for He dwells in the Holy of Holies.

Faith has run dry because man has forgotten true worship, for true worship is the act of leaning towards, in trembling realization and an ever-deepening spiritual hunger, towards divinity. Faith has become shallow and so has our spiritual walk in truth for the strength of our flesh shines so brightly and the arrogance of our fortitude weakens our humble resolve.

In our search for meaning, man has employed his intellect, his will, his emotion, his senses (empiricism) and his surroundings to understand the truth of all things. This is tragic, yet it is history and the reason is that man's divine walk is actually but a lame empty crawl towards a false light of hope.

Man has crawled away from God, away from the true nature of serving Him, glorifying the Son and being completely and utterly captivated by divinity. In this postmodern world, we have chosen to crawl away from a truth that involves divinity, seeking something in this world alone

that will calm our nerves. We it seems are returning to mysticism and to contemplative prayer and silence. Why do we seek noise when in silence there is God? Why do we need performance when God seeks truth and honesty? Why do we seek structure and hierarchy, as in the way of the Romans, when God's order still needs to be discovered?

Indeed, few understand mysticism or contemplative prayer. How can they if they have been taught that millions of empty rehearsed words will break down the door to God? How can they if the entire order of service, so adopted by a few men of dubious motive, is so arranged to please a man and not please God? How can they if all the philosophers and the scholars and the ideologists and the so-called church leaders have led them so far away from the truth?

God is in the silence. He is in the stillness of the spirit. He dwells in the realms where words and performance and noise become but mere noise. For we have to ask the question: In the church and world today, where is the love? It is but self-love dressed up in hypocrisy and deceit? Yet we still serve so many ideas of gods and truths. We serve so many ambitions. Unity with divinity is where man seeks to follow the path of God and not merely his own path and truth. True unity with divinity is the inward journey where God dwells in our spirit. There in the silence void of emotion and thought, God embraces us. We search for trust and truth because our trust is based on shifting sands of illusions and delusions. Comprehending God will only take place when we reside in Him.

Therefore, in the state of beholding divinity, as we draw towards Him, our spirit captivated by Him, then we shall know truth in Spirit. For it is that moment of surrender and perfect union where clarity rises like the dawn and revelation is birthed like a new creation. If we live a life of true union with God, then our strength dwells in the spirit, dependent not on our intellect, thought or emotions. Yet who can live a life in the Spirit today? Man's ambitions and ideals and self-love drive Him further away from the true union with divinity. Contemplative prayer is not considered for it takes surrender, obedience and time.

In true divine worship, when we truly seek Him, then we shut down the world, our thoughts, our emotions and our flesh. Indeed, God comes in the silence. He speaks in the silence. His power is in the silence. But not just any silence. It is the silence of His presence where a man seeks His heart.

Mysticism has therefore been misconstrued. It is simply the inward journey towards spiritual illumination, the journey of freedom and the journey of discovery. It is upon this journey that God speaks and man listens. Here one learns His love, His character and His nature. It is here where we discover the road to Emmaus. It is here that we grow strong to do His complete and perfect will.

With all of this in hindsight, as we sketched in broad strokes the movements and developments that has affected our search for knowledge, we are again reminded that if we don't stand for something then we might fall for anything. And in this case and at this point in time, we are falling for everything. We are falling for the barriers of truth that are but shrouded in darkness. Truth abounds not in universal leaps but has been cramped into every box made by the

individual. In the end, without being philosophical or even mystical, we hear the words of Jesus echo throughout history: I AM THE TRUTH. Just as God said to Moses: I AM.

Jesus Himself confounded every scholar, philosopher, ruler and leader. He was God in man, commanding no army, yet He conquered the world. By His death, resurrection and ascension He defied an empire and the Hebrew scholars. Still today, God confounds minds through His work. God sent Jesus to confuse scholars. Miracles, signs and wonders confound logic. Over the last forty years, man has especially sought to reach higher for fame and glory, seeking the answers in the stars and the cosmos. Men have pooled their knowledge, together with building empires and cities.

Pushing all things aside and things we have learned, including our enormous pride, we begin to understand truth begins by greeting the lady of wisdom. Wisdom will tell us that it is wise to heed God. Wisdom tells us that it is those who seek God who will find Him and we will find the truth. She tells us that it is wise to heed Him morning and night, seeking not after man's tainted wisdom.

Can truth be re-established here on earth in nations? A universal truth? A binding truth of faith? History has scarred us, yet what if God is the universal truth and the only truth from which all things flow? Shall we shun this because of pride or is there the possibility of a universal truth beyond religion or man's influence that can bring lasting peace and unity? Like the epistemology school of thought and like the mystics, the probable answer lies in that true and direct and personal contact with divinity, void of man's doctrines and religions.

Maybe then, a universal belief in the universal God, and not in man, would bring us to the point of love and recognition. For then, possibly, as mankind, we will stand and prosper ... in truth.

## **Perilous times as Truth is forsaken**

The Church is finding itself in deep waters of uncertainty, and struggling to truly make an impact in the world. There are many reasons for such challenging times. This includes exaltation of selfish needs, desires and kingdoms above the Kingdom of God; the advocating of immorality and impurity; lack of true discipleship; traditions and legalisms that curb true spiritual growth; and a distressing flourishing of deceptive, erroneous and false doctrines.

The church is also struggling tremendously because of division, and today there is little unity to be found among believers. Sure, we are all different as human beings, with different personalities, callings and the way we relate to God, and to society. A lot of division is actually trivial, such as when we deal with dress code, or what instrument may be played in church services. Such division is based on carnality and the flesh, yet some divisions are serious, for it directly impacts ones' spiritual growth and causes harmful separation.

Such division revolves very much around the differing opinions, views and perspectives regarding Scripture, which has formed doctrine and dogma. And if we look at the state of the church today, with all its varying doctrines, ideas and 'truths', we are then in trouble. Why? Simple because Jesus is the Truth. He is not divided in truth. We are in trouble because a lot of doctrines, ideas and 'truths' are therefore false, and anything which is not the truth is dangerous for it sows deception, and such deception leads us away from the liberating truth of God. Such deception only creates bondages, thus it enslaves. Sadly, as Jesus spoke the woes over the religious leaders of Matthew 23, just so false doctrines by design, be it intentional or unintentional, "shut up the kingdom of heaven against men."

In John 3:16 it is stated clearly that the Spirit was poured out to lead us in all truth. How then is the Church then so divided regarding doctrine and what the Scripture say? It is actually very simple. We are not completely and utterly led by the Spirit in the Truth. Many doctrines are thus the result of humans applying their own imagination, perspective, opinion and idea, thus it is not God-inspired. And this can easily happen, for the flesh at times can be strong, and the spirit weak. We also cannot ignore the reality of "1 Timothy 4:1: Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons."

It says in "2 Timothy 3:16: All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness." God's Word is infallible. It is everlasting. It is the truth. Of Jesus we read in "John 1: 1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made." The Word of God is the Truth. It is Life. It is Jesus. Yet we are so divided because of our approach to the Word, and the way we interpret and determine its value. After all, we even live in times where many in the church have dismissed the Old Testament in its entirety, saying it is obsolete! Some have simply placed very little value on the entire Word of God from Genesis to Revelations.

It says in Ephesians 4: 11 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the [e]difying of the body of Christ, 13 till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; 14 that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, 15 but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ— 16 from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.

Indeed, God does appoint certain workers in certain ministries with certain gifts and purposes to equip the saints “for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.” And as the saints are equipped with the truth of the Word, they can properly disciple others to fulfil the Great Commission. Yet, here is the crux of the problem. It also says in Ephesians 4 that the purpose of such equipping is “that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ.” Yet it is because of erroneous, false and deceptive equipping of the saints (thus the trickery of man) that the saints remain “children” in the spirit, tossed to and fro by such deceptive teachings! How can this be when the equipping of the saints is actually supposed to protect the saints from deception and train them as disciples to walk in truth? Those who God ordained for such a task of sacred equipping of the saints for the work of the Kingdom – thus discipline and fulfilling the Great Commission – have actually become the ones who have desecrated this sacred duty and thus have forsaken the Truth of God. Indeed, they have not remained guardians of the Truth, but have abused it, and manipulated it, causing saints to be equipped in deception, and thus we have a Body of believers that have not grown into the fullness of God but have become slaves to trickery and bondages.

In the 1992 American legal drama, *A Few Good Men*, there is one scene in the courtroom where the accused says to the lawyer that “he cannot handle the truth”. It is an iconic moment in cinema history. Still today, it seems as if the church is also struggling to handle the truth. Are we truly offended by it, for maybe it makes us feel uncomfortable? Do we truly know the Truth, after all, it is the Truth of God that sets us free (John 8:32). But it also says in verse 31 that if we abide in Him then we shall be His disciples indeed. See also John 15. We can only know the Truth, walk in the Truth and defend the Truth when we are in the Truth – Jesus. If we are not in Jesus through the indwelling presence of the Spirit we are not in the Truth.

Jesus always applied Scripture. In Matthew 9, Jesus is found “reclined at a table in the house” with tax collectors and sinners (v. 10), which stirred up controversy amongst the Pharisees. They ask his disciples, “Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and ‘sinners’?” (v. 11). How does Jesus respond? “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. But go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice.’ For I have not come to call the righteous,



but sinners” (vv. 12-13, NIV). Jesus used Hosea 6:6, the very scripture the Pharisees preached, to challenge their hardened hearts. Later in Matthew 12, Jesus uses the same scripture from Hosea to challenge the Pharisees: “If you had known what this means...you would not have condemned the guiltless” (v. 7). Scripture remains the guiding light of the Church. It is the Truth of God.

In Mark 12, the Sadducees challenged Jesus about the resurrection. Jesus said to them in the wake of their ignorance: “Are you not therefore mistaken, because you do not know the Scriptures nor the power of God? (verse 25). You see, we need to know the Scriptures. We need to know the power of God, lest we also walk in deception and apply the Word of God incorrectly. We need to be careful of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees (Matthew 16: 6), thus mixing error with truth. After all, it says in Galatians 5:9 that a little leaven leavens the whole lump, thus even little error can cause massive deception and spoil what may seem right and true.

Just based on the simple conclusion that if we are not entirely led by the Spirit of God when it comes to Scriptures, the reality of such implications should leave us cold. For the Spirit of the Lord is supposed to guide us in all matters of the Kingdom. The Spirit of the Lord should be our ultimate guide when it comes to Kingdom wisdom, knowledge, understanding and counsel. He should be the power to empower us to serve the Kingdom as true disciples. Yet, if we are not led by the Spirit, which is clearly evident in all the different doctrines and interpretations of the Scripture, then what does this say about the ability of the Church to walk in wisdom, to walk in God’s character, to walk in holiness, purity and truth? Clearly we are not united in the Truth of God for we are not united with God in His Truth. Thus, we are hardly making an impact to firstly win the inner war of the soul and the spirit, and then win the lost at any cost.

Indeed, we are living in the days of 2 Timothy 3 where it says: “1 But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come.” It will be trying times, and times of great stress and trouble. ‘Perilous’ also speaks something which is dangerous, savage and fierce. We are indeed in such days for the truth of God has already been savagely mauled, and these are indeed dangerous times where people within the church will be led astray by all kinds of deceptions. Thus trying times to hold onto the Truth like never before.

Of the first disciples, we read in “Acts 2: 42 And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.” Right in the beginning, the disciples were still united in the Truth of God. The apostles had learned directly from the source – Jesus who is the Truth. There was not yet any time for such Truth to be distorted, twisted and manipulated for own gain. The first Church in the days of Acts flourished because they preached the Truth of God, and no other truth. They stood upon it, they fought for it, they died for it and they defended it.

And such source has never changed. Jesus remains the source. He is the head of the church. But this is where the problem has slipped in. Man so often has taken the place of Jesus when it comes to ministry, coveting the “seat of Moses” just like the Pharisees and Sadducees. Now man’s opinions, ideas and truth enjoys priority even over Scripture! And if deny such a truth, then we certainly have become blind guides ourselves, for so many believers these days are

following the pastor instead of Jesus, and are hanging onto every word of the pastor instead of weighing every word against the teachings of Jesus. Even the Apostle Paul never contradicted Jesus. Never. And never can we preach Pauline doctrine as the highest authority, supplanting Jesus. But this is what has been happening in churches – man has taken the ‘seat of Moses’, and has now coveted the rightful place of Jesus for man seeks to influence, to be known, to be adored and seeks to be loved. Ironically, the devil tried to take such a seat. Yes, many are wanting to take the seat of Jesus, and so we even sit with strange doctrines where man see themselves as little gods, and where man in his ego and pride now want to command angels and can supposedly wield authority to bring forth out of nothing anything they want and desire (for is then the will of man overriding the will of God).

Jan Huss, one of the early Reformers, wrote: “Therefore faithful Christian, seek the truth, listen to the truth, learn the truth, love the truth, speak the truth, adhere to truth and defend truth to the death. For truth will set you free from sin, the Devil and the destruction of the soul, and ultimately from eternal death which is eternal separation from God’s grace and the joy of salvation.” What was this truth Huss so fervently defend? Yes, the truth of God, and no other truth. It is the same truth of the Gospel of the Kingdom as written by Paul in “Galatians 1: 8 But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. 9 As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed. 10 For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ.”

Sadly, much of the “truth” preached and taught and advocated these days hardly deserve any form of defending or dying for. Paul suffered much and was beaten and imprisoned for the Truth of the Kingdom. Certainly not any other truth. The truth taught today hardly deserves any need to be sought or pursued. Such “truths” are dangerous, and creates bondages and causes destruction of the soul. The divisions in the church regarding Scripture is not a laughing matter. We cannot take it lightly. It is very serious. The disciples 2000 years ago were united in the one Truth of God. They preached the Gospel as taught by Jesus. As Paul mentioned, anyone who teaches a different Gospel is ACCURSED. Yes, it is a curse to speak any other Gospel which is not the Word of God, for we speak then not life but we lead people into slavery instead of liberty by the Blood of the Lamb.

We are after all smack in the middle of “2 Timothy 4: 1 I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: 2 Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. 3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; 4 and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables. 5 But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.” And also “2 Peter 2: 2 But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift

destruction. 2 And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed.”

Yes, we live in a time where people who preach and teach false gospels, thereby things which are accursed, draw large crowds of people. Why? Because this is why people want to hear. This is what people thirst and long for. It tickles the ears. Smooths the carnal desires. Even subdues the conviction of the Holy Spirit. Ears are hardly turned or tuned to the truth of the Kingdom. It is a truth sought to sooth the selfish soul and carnal nature. It is a gospel void of God’s life, truth, light and power. It is certainly not the Kingdom of power that Paul preached, but is the gospel of persuasive words to entice and seduce. It is not the message of the cross which is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God (1 Corinthians 1:18). Indeed, God will destroy the wisdom of the wise and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.

It says in “1 Corinthians 12: 13 For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit. 14 For in fact the body is not one member but many.” Of the Spirit it says where He is present there is liberty (2 Corinthians 3:17), and this is liberty of John 8:36 which says “so if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.” It is the liberty which Paul referred of Galatians 5 when he writes: “5 Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage.” Yet we have even forsaken such liberty as we wallow in the muck of self-deception and desire.

In the days of Paul, there were huge struggles between preaching a pure Gospel of the Kingdom and those who for example were still trying to hold onto the laws of Moses. Today, we have similar struggles, but so much more. Indeed the Church in the beginning after Pentecost was full of the Spirit of God and was led by the Spirit in all Truth. It was the sweet new wine that drove them to be warriors of God, wrestling against the powers of darkness yet loving their enemies. The Church was bold, fearless and convicted of sin and immorality, all because they served God and not any self-interests. Sadly today, our self-interests and desires have clouded the way and the church has lost much of her boldness because of strife and division over the Word of God.

Take for example the divisions among the cessations vs continueists (which focuses on the work of the Holy Spirit in the church) and Calvinism vs arminianism (debate surrounding critical issues involving our salvation in connection with election, atonement, grace, and man’s will). The debate around grace has sparked other debates focusing for examples on the validity of the Law, and also led to the birthing of doctrines on hyper grace, while atonement has sparked views on universalism (that all mankind has already been saved by the Lord’s sacrifice).

We also sit with huge debates regarding the Trinity of God vs Jesus Only, while even the prosperity debate continues to cause deep division as some will argue for tithing and others will vehemently deny it. We will not even talk about the massive divisions in the Church regarding end time prophesies, including the Book of Revelations (encasing tribulation and rapture). Or how about the divisions regarding water baptism, or the baptism of the Spirit

(with varying schools of thoughts on speaking in tongues). We will not even get into the vast array of ideas and doctrines regarding deliverance, healing and faith. Or how about the conflict in the church regarding ethical Israel verses the church becoming the spiritual Israel. And so the differing doctrines continue and the arguments and the debates wage. Yet in the meantime we trample on the truth. And with all these doctrines, you will find camps of followers and believers defending their truth, and Scriptures are thrown around as if we are shooting missiles at each other.

In the midst of all of this, the Church has certainly lost her way, because believers are constantly bombarded with different truths. No longer can we say we are truly following the “apostles’ doctrine” as found in Acts 2. We are not united, but scattered and have thus allowed the enemy to come into the camp to sow greater confusion, discord, destruction and chaos. We have sadly forsaken the pursuit of God’s Truth. And so the Church is even advocating same sex marriages, approving abortions and is turning a blind eye to a number of other immoral actions, even denying the devil, demons and that hell exists! Yes, in the midst of these struggles, we are called to wrestle to first know the Truth from God, and by such Truth to stand upon it and defend it.

Sadly, the Church is bleeding in immorality and idolatry as apostasy continues to rear its ugly head. For truly, in order for the Church to make an impact, and to see God’s Kingdom established in the hearts of man, we need to know the Truth, and to preach and teach it. For this is the heart of the Great Commission, for it mobilizes and activates us to tell the world of Jesus and manifest His Truth, and not ours. Yet, even in the commission we have failed, for the world has been continually presented with a skewed image of God, of His Word and of His Kingdom. This is indeed a mighty tragedy, and even the true prophetic voice is being silent in the cacophony of false voices that cry “peace, peace” when there is no peace, and the false voice that cry “glory” when it smells of divination. Yes the Church prays for revival, but we need the revival of the ‘dead bones’ of God’s truth by the Spirit, lest we continue to teach as the scribes rather than one with authority. For the true Gospel of God carried life, hope and redemption, nothing else.

## Standing for the unadulterated Truth

The definition for uncompromising can be summed up to say that one is not prepared to give ground or to compromise, not to be prepared to make concessions, and being prepared to keep firmly to a particular attitude. The definition of unadulterated can be summed up as pure, not mingled or diluted with extraneous matter.

Jesus, in the Great Commission as found in Matthew 28, said the following: 19 Go then and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 Teaching them to observe everything that I have commanded you, and behold, I am with you all the days (perpetually, uniformly, and on every occasion), to the [very] close and consummation of the age. Amen (so let it be).

We all know the great commission. We all know the mission and the vision, but so often we forget that Jesus said to teach them to observe everything that He has commanded you. And this is where we get stuck. We are called to teach what the Lord has commanded ... without giving ground or concession when it comes to the Truth. We are not called to teach what the Church or man or any doctrine or ideology or policy has commanded. The Truth belongs not to man or a church or a ministry, but to God.

But this is what we have been doing. We have been going into the world teaching and preaching what a certain denomination, pastor, preacher, church leader, or ministry has been commanding us.

Such individuals or organizations or institutions are indeed called to disciple or to equip, but sadly, if you look at what kind of truth is being taught and preached these days in Churches across the globe, then you have to cringe in horror. We are then not proclaiming the uncompromising truth, but deception and lies. We are not proclaiming the unadulterated word of God, but we have allowed God's Word to become defiled and contaminated and polluted by our interpretations and perceptions and traditions.

We teach erroneous doctrines such as the class difference of laity and clergy [fallacy on ordinations], on tithing, on the sanctity of the Church building, of church membership, of man-made offices such as the pastor, all the while turning the assembly of believers into a den of thieves and robbers.

We have not been the Church, we have created an institution called Church that runs like a business, and we have created followers of such an institution. We follow not a faith, but a religion that is rotten by the infiltration of the yeast of tradition. Thus, when Jesus said we must go into the world to teach what He has commanded, then he was saying we must go and declare the uncompromisingly Truth, unapologetically. What then is this Truth?

It is the Truth of Jesus, and no one else. Jesus is the TRUTH, and the WAY, and the LIFE. There is no other truth besides Jesus. These days, we preach more about Paul than Jesus. We point people not to Jesus but to the idea of Jesus as if Jesus is but a symbol of good like Satan is a symbol of evil. We are called to preach the Gospel of Jesus, and not the gospel that features Jesus.

There is a HUGE difference these days between our truth and the Truth we were commanded to teach. If we were all teaching the truth of Jesus, then we will not be divided according to the thousands of denominations. A denomination speaks of varying options on doctrines.

How can this be when there is one TRUTH, one Gospel, and one Spirit? We have lost the idea of what it means to be the Church – meaning a living and breathing priesthood. We have turned the Gospel into a circus of entertainers, motivational speakers, businessmen and celebrities, all seeking to exploit and manipulate for own gain.

It says in Acts 2: 42 And they steadfastly persevered, devoting themselves constantly to the instruction and fellowship of the apostles, to the breaking of bread [including the Lord's Supper] and prayers. 43 And a sense of awe (reverential fear) came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were performed through the apostles (the special messengers).

The first believers held to the instruction and fellowship of the apostles. Remember, these apostles were the direct disciples of Jesus, so there was no opportunity yet for the Truth to be distorted and watered down. The Truth was still burning strong with these apostles, who passed it on uncompromisingly to the followers. And because they were adhering to the Truth, we read how a sense of awe (reverential fear) came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were performed through the apostles (the special messengers).

Aren't we truly missing such a sense of awe and the true signs and miracles among believers? Jesus said in Mark 16 that signs and wonders will follow His true disciples. There is no more fear for God in the "Church" today, and neither is the Lord's Power evident anymore. We are talking about constant supernatural and out of the ordinary power by faith. This is not because God is slumbering, it is because there are so few who are truly walking in God's uncompromising Truth.

We can argue that we do walk in truth, but here is a quick test: how many people in the Body these days are religiously tithing? If we are, then we are NOT walking in God's Truth, for tithing as stipulated for example in Deuteronomy 14 is clearly an Old Testament Law linked to the land of Canaan. We have the ministry of giving under the New Covenant, but not tithing.

Are we not divided on baptism, on the work of the Holy Spirit, on holiness, on sin, on redemption, and so many other things? Where then is the uncompromising Truth of God, which we are supposed to be preaching to the entire world.

God's real and true power is evident among His true disciples, and such disciples walk in God's uncompromising Truth. How can we say we are His disciples [meaning follower] if we cannot even follow His Truth? We, therefore, walk in deception, and deception is nothing more than idolatry. If the holy priesthood of God – thus the real disciples – seek to move in God's anointing, in His glory and in His power, then we need to walk in Truth.

Truth is the key that unlocks His Glory. This is because Jesus is the TRUTH. If we love God, then we must love the TRUTH and obey His TRUTH, as set out by His commandments and teachings.



The Holy Spirit was poured out and according to John 16 it was to lead us in all TRUTH. The work of the Spirit is thus to lead God's people according to the TRUTH that must be declared across the world. Why then is it that the Church is really struggling to make an impact on a dying, broken and heathen world? Is it not because we are not corporately walking – united – in God's uncompromising Truth?

So we find disciples scattered – here and there – standing and declaring His Truth, but this is how the Body should be functioning, corporately, according to Acts 2. Jesus says in Mark 16: 7 And these attesting signs will accompany those who believe: in My name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new languages; 18 They will pick up serpents; and [even] if they drink anything deadly, it will not hurt them; they will lay their hands on the sick, and they will get well.

To believe means to be a follower - this means to be a disciple. Why are we struggling to walk in this authority? Is it not because we are failing to walk in God's uncompromising Truth? And only the entire TRUTH will suffice with God. We cannot walk in half-truth, 80% truth or even 99% truth. Jesus was not 99% Truth, He was and is the complete and uncompromising TRUTH.

Truth unlocks our spiritual bondages and captivity, for it shatters our perceptions, our traditions, our mind-sets, our view of operation and functionalities and it loosens our spirit to walk in God's Spirit. Truth sets us free to walk in His unlimited power, but then we need to embrace the TRUTH, adhere to it, defend it, preach it, teach it, apply it, and allow it to work within us.

Jesus says in John 8: 31 So Jesus said to those Jews who had believed in Him, If you abide in My word [hold fast to My teachings and live in accordance with them], you are truly My disciples. 32 And you will know the Truth, and the Truth will set you free.

This is as clear as daylight. If we abide in His Word – meaning obeying and staying faithful – then we are truly His disciples. And then, only then, will we be set free. This Scripture has often been loosely translated and pulled out of context. The Truth sets us free, but then it not my truth, but the Truth of God. And we must apply such Truth, adhere it, obey it, stand for it and defend it. No other truth can exist except the Truth of God. If we apply only part of it, then we are rebellious, and if we are rebellious, then we are not abiding in God's will.

We also read in John 8 how Jesus takes this theme further by saying that if we do not follow Him – thus also the Father- then how can God be our true Father? Jesus is therefore saying if we do not walk with Him in Truth and in all Truth as disciples by following Him as the Truth, then how can His Father be really our Father, which places a damper on the Believers' Prayer. 37 [Yes] I know that you are Abraham's offspring; yet you plan to kill Me, because My word has no entrance (makes no progress, does not find any place) in you. 38 I tell the things which I have seen and learned at My Father's side, and your actions also reflect what you have heard and learned from your father. 39 They retorted, Abraham is our father. Jesus said, If you were [truly] Abraham's children, then you would do the works of Abraham [follow his example, do as Abraham did]. 40 But now [instead] you are wanting and seeking to kill Me, a Man Who has

told you the truth which I have heard from God. This is not the way Abraham acted. 41 You are doing the works of your [own] father. They said to Him, We are not illegitimate children and born out of fornication; we have one Father, even God. 42 Jesus said to them, If God were your Father, you would love Me and respect Me and welcome Me gladly, for I proceeded (came forth) from God [out of His very presence]. I did not even come on My own authority or of My own accord (as self-appointed); but He sent Me. 43 Why do you misunderstand what I say? It is because you are unable to hear what I am saying. [You cannot bear to listen to My message; your ears are shut to My teaching.] 44 You are of your father, the devil, and it is your will to practice the lusts and gratify the desires [which are characteristic] of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a falsehood, he speaks what is natural to him, for he is a liar [himself] and the father of lies and of all that is false. 45 But because I speak the truth, you do not believe Me [do not trust Me, do not rely on Me, or adhere to Me]. 46 Who of you convicts Me of wrongdoing or finds Me guilty of sin? Then if I speak truth, why do you not believe Me [trust Me, rely on, and adhere to Me]? 47 Whoever is of God listens to God. [Those who belong to God hear the words of God.] This is the reason that you do not listen [to those words, to Me]: because you do not belong to God and are not of God or in harmony with Him.

It says in John 4: 24 God is a Spirit (a spiritual Being) and those who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth (reality). If we therefore walk not in His Truth, how can we then truly worship Him? Is it good enough for God to sing our praises if we walk not in His truth? Therefore, as Jesus said in John 8, our father is then not the Father of heaven, for we are not following Jesus as a true disciple. We are called to be living sacrifices, thus vessels of worship. We can only be such vessels of glory – exuding a sweet aroma – when we thus walk in His Truth.

We think it is a trivial matter to play around with God’s Truth. This is not the case. It is not trivial at all. It is very serious. If we are a true disciple, we will follow Jesus, and thus His Truth. And if we do, we stay true to His Father, and we stay faithful to the Holy Spirit. Then, we are in unity with the Trinity, and then signs and wonders shall follow and then only shall we be truly free.

We all know the story of Daniel, but there is an interesting Scripture that reads as follows: “Daniel 1: 21 And Daniel continued there even to the first year of King Cyrus [at the close of the seventy years’ exile of Judah in Babylonia, which Jeremiah had foretold].” Daniel was thus a prophet of God who was at Babylon while Nebuchadnezzar, Balthazar, Darius [Persia] and Cyrus [Persia] ruled. Daniel thus watched as four mighty rulers came with some losing their crowns. He was there when Babylon was invaded by the Persians. He witnessed the fall of Babylon, and the demise of mighty Nebuchadnezzar and Balthazar.

And despite all of this, Daniel did not compromise his loyalty, devotion or dedication to God, to God’s Word or God’s Truth. He remained steady, single-minded and focused on the task at hand. We as believers are rooted and grounded on the Rock of Jesus. Around us, many things constantly change, which includes world views, perceptions, morals, ethics, and even what is truth. Constantly, day it and day out, the truth in the world changes. Right and wrong has

become blurred. Evil is no longer frowned upon. We have a world condoning abortions, same sex marriages, and adultery and heathen practices. All things forbidden according to Deuteronomy 18 are no longer legal. All things frowned upon by the Bible has become acceptable and the norm. The world has slipped into a dark void of lawlessness, rebellion, paganism and secularism.

Yes, despite all of this, we are called, like Daniel, to remain standing on the Rock and to remain standing in His uncompromising Truth. While everything around us changes, and while the dark settles in, we are called to remain in the light, walk in the Light, adhere to the Truth and fight the good fight of faith. Around us, leaders will come and go, ideas will come and go, celebrities will come and go, but we are called to remain standing on God's uncompromising and unchanging Rock of Truth that is settled in heaven!

We live in a time of age where the world is denying absolute truths, where everything is relevant. Those who follow the Truth are accused of promoting a narrow point of view, forcing the Truth down people's throats and living in a world of fantasy.

At the end of the day, I would rather be a fool in the eyes of man than a fool in the eyes of God! It says in Ezekiel 22: (New International Version): 29 The people of the land practice extortion and commit robbery; they oppress the poor and needy and mistreat the alien, denying them justice. 30 "I looked for a man among them who would build up the wall and stand before me in the gap on behalf of the land so I would not have to destroy it, but I found none.

Ezekiel was prophesying at the time when the northern kingdom of Israel had already fallen into the hands of the Assyrians. Such punishment has befallen them because they had drifted away from God's truths, and failed to adhere to His laws and commandments. They had failed to live according to God's truths. Ezekiel was at this point of history speaking directly to the southern kingdom, especially the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for they had also, like their neighbours, followed wicked practices by no longer honouring God in their words and deeds. The words of Ezekiel is about 2550 years old, but if one looks back throughout history since the death of Jesus, one has to wonder how faithful has the church remained to the teachings of the Lord and to His truths about righteousness, about holiness, purity and to the great commandments?

If we bring it closer to home, we should all, as His children, take stock and ponder that if the Lord casts an eye upon this land and this world, if He will indeed point to us as a person who has stood up for His ideals, His truths and His Word. For sadly the church, even today, is riddled with tales of extortion, corruption, mistreating people and oppression. It simply cannot be denied.

During the days of the Reformation and the growth of the Protestant Church, religious clashes, inquisitions, tales of purging, violent deaths, stories of injustices and the mistreating of people has filled the pages of history. All those who professed to follow God, from all walks of life, remained guilty to such practices.

Today, such practices still continue, be it more subtly. How many times have we not treated someone unjustly? How many times have we not mistreated or exploited someone, be it

spiritually, physically or even emotionally? In the days of Ezekiel the alien was regarded as those who did not fall under the same covenant as the Jewish people. In our times we have to remember that people from all walks of life fall under the Covenant of Grace.

Apart from that, the Lord placed emphasis on treating those who fall outside the faith, with respect and dignity. This is after all a walk of love. Treating people right and walking in righteousness speaks of walking in holiness and love, which delights the Lord. For it has also been written in Matthew 5 that blessed are the poor in spirit, while in Isaiah 61 it speaks about us, called by God, who must in Spirit preach the Gospel to the poor. Indeed, if we fail to tell the world about God, and if we fail to enrich the world spiritually, and if we fail to honour God and glorify Him in all things, and if we fail for our light to shine and to bring others closer to Him, then we become nothing more than oppressors to the poor and oppressors of the truth.

Proverbs 2: 6 For the LORD gives wisdom, and from his mouth come knowledge and understanding. 7 He holds victory in store for the upright, he is a shield to those whose walk is blameless, 8 for he guards the course of the just and protects the way of his faithful ones. 9 Then you will understand what is right and just and fair—every good path. 10 For wisdom will enter your heart, and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul. 11 Discretion will protect you, and understanding will guard you. 12 Wisdom will save you from the ways of wicked men, from men whose words are perverse, 13 who leave the straight paths to walk in dark ways, 14 who delight in doing wrong and rejoice in the perverseness of evil, 15 whose paths are crooked and who are devious in their ways.

In these days of many ideas, opinions and perceptions regarding the truth, and in these days where the self of man has become all important, we are called more than ever to remain standing on God's Word and to live by His teachings, His truths and His ways of righteousness and holiness. The Lord delights in those who walk according to His Wisdom, to His commandments and teachings. He delights in those who walk in love and in the light of His splendour, to His glory. He delights in those who will stand as a beacon of light as the storms of darkness rage.

The Lord is looking for those who will stand in the gap of the wall, meaning those who will stand for His justice, honour and truth where the world has tried to destroy His ways and His love. He is looking for those who are willing to stand for His truths, to see His love blossom and to see His light shine. This means not going with the flow of the world, but truly standing with God no matter what and no matter the opinion of man. For God's truths and ways remain, and He is searching for those who will not make excuses or apologies but we will stand for He stands for and proclaims.

This is not easy – the world's ideas differ radically from God. But one day before God there is no excuse. Either we have chosen to stand in the gap or we have drifted away like Israel of old. Proverbs 11 says "19 The truly righteous man attains life, but he who pursues evil goes to his death. 20 The Lord detests men of perverse heart but he delights in those whose ways are blameless."

Indeed, we all live in extremely harsh times, as we struggle with growing physiological pressures. At times it feels like we can no longer walk this road and that the burden of even carrying out cross and denying ourselves in the pursuit of the Lord is a price too high to pay. Darkness seems to have crept into every corner of the world and at times we wonder how long can we survive in the storm.

Paul wrote in Romans 8: (New International Version): 36As it is written: "For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered." 37No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. 38For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, 39neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Praise the Lord for there is such a beauty and an absolute certainty of knowing Jesus as our Lord and Saviour. We shall not fear or dread but hold our heads high and overcome. We shall be like David that slew Goliath, like Gideon that put to chase a large army and like Paul that endured even when the storms blew day and night.y should be functioning, corporately, according to Acts 2. Jesus says in Mark 16: 7 And these attesting signs will accompany those who believe: in My name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new languages; 18 They will pick up serpents; and [even] if they drink anything deadly, it will not hurt them; they will lay their hands on the sick, and they will get well.

Truth unlocks our spiritual bondage and captivity, for it shatters our perceptions, our traditions, our mindsets, our view of operation and functionalities and it loosens our spirit to walk in God's Spirit. Truth sets us free to walk in His unlimited power, but then we need to embrace the TRUTH, adhere to it, defend it, preach it, teach it, apply it, and allow it to work within us.

Consider that in the days of Paul the Jews were under enormous strain as they fell under the dominion of the cruel and brutish Roman Empire. Apart from having to deal with a foreign power that seeks to destroy and also dominate, Paul also had to deal with enormous opposing spiritual forces as he was preaching the Gospel of Jesus in Gentile countries where the spirit of paganism was rife and loosened to the extreme.

Paul was dealing with physical and emotional pressures from his own countrymen and also from the Gentiles, while he was also being bombarded and beleaguered by demonic forces seeking to prevent him from teaching the pagans the truth. For this reason Paul wrote his epistle to the Ephesians regarding the spiritual battle and the struggles of overcoming. Within this context, Paul addresses the Gentiles and even some of the Jews in the Book of Romans, and his wonderful conclusion is that no matter what he endures, be it spiritual, emotional or physical, no matter the attack, the labour or the struggle, that through it all God is so much greater and so much more powerful and we are safe under His wing (Psalm 91).

Nothing, but nothing, in the spiritual or in the physical, no matter the adversary or the obstacle, can triumph over us to the point that we are defeated. For we are conquerors, full of holy fire, full of the Spirit, sealed by the Blood, redeemed, reborn, consecrated, sanctified and

we are known by Majesty! Praise the Lord for there are such a beauty and an absolute certainty of knowing Jesus as our Lord and Saviour.

We shall not fear or dread but hold our heads high and overcome. We shall be like David that slew Goliath, like Gideon that put to chase a large army and like Paul that endured even when the storms blew day and night.



## **Dangerous waters of disunity and perversion**

It has become increasingly of concern that within the Body of Christ there is a prevailing point of view that it is all right and even respectful to agree that we can disagree regarding doctrines. There is growing support that we should settle for various 'truths', and rather view it that God deals with each person differently and shares His word in shades and colours.

This idea of "disagreeing to agree" is to promote a sense of unity in the Body of Christ. While in the Body of Christ we need to live in peace and to show love and respect towards the brethren, it is very dangerous to keep on pushing an agenda that at the end of the day we all know the 'truth', and the only difference is that our 'truth' carries different shades, textures and colours. The underlying argument is that we all serve Jesus, and that we all preach the Good News and that Jesus saves.

We need to understand there are certain points of views that have nothing to do with the Kingdom yet belongs to the culture of church. This deals with aspects such as the nature of music allowed during services, the nature of the service, dress code and so forth. These things are actually part of religious rituals and traditions. When we are dealing with Kingdom, we are dealing with the foundational and essential truths of all eternity – it deals with very important aspects such as the nature of God, including the nature of Jesus and the Holy Spirit. It deals with the Word of God. It is such values and truths embodied by the Kingdom that we need to pursue and seek, as commanded by the Lord in Matthew 6.

Right now the Church is terribly divided on the nature of God – torn between the Trinity camps and the Jesus Only movement. Some serve Jesus only and some the Father, Son and Spirit. So yes, we are divided even in the worship of God! The church is sadly divided on the work of the Holy Spirit – known as the cessationism versus continuationism teachings (which is a huge deal considering the outpouring of the Spirit birthed the New Covenant church). The church is even divided on the morals and the values of the Kingdom – such as same-sex relationships and abortions. We will not even talk about the growing confusion regarding the baptism of water and Spirit, of the relationship between grace and the Law (considering there was even a Law before the 613 Laws of Moses!), and a myriad of opinions regarding God's salvation plan (Calvinism verses Arminianism).

The church is in a terrible mess and making no impact because we are so divided. How can we even preach the Gospel if we are not even sure we are preaching the true Gospel! And how we are supposed to disciple anyone when one person teaches one thing and another person another teaches a different point of view? And while it is respectful to respect the different spiritual walks and the teachings that people have garnered, the reality is that despite all the respect, peace and love, the Church is divided, and is shrouded in confusion. Are we not showing respect towards man for respecting different doctrines, yet showing disrespect to God for adopting 'a agree to disagree' view?

We are truly in the time of "2 Thessalonians 2: 9 The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, 10 and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they

might be saved.” If we look at the world today, and even the state of the church, then you can clearly see that the love of the truth – meaning God’s truth – has grown cold in the hearts of many. And this has always been the intention and strategy of the devil – to lead mankind away from the truth of God. We even read in Daniel 8 the following “12 Because of transgression, an army was given over to the horn to oppose the daily sacrifices; and he cast truth down to the ground.” Whatever the identity of the little horn as seen in Daniel’s vision, it is a person or a system opposing God, and one of its purposes is to “cast truth down to the ground”. And right now we have cast it down even in churches and are trampling upon it.

So why is it dangerous for us to become complacent about doctrine differences and about agreeing on the validity of different camps of theology? Well, for two reasons as spelt out in Galatians 1 and Mark 6. One is because there is only one Truth, and secondly because all other truths that are actually a pseudo-religion of man’s man ideas and perceptions only serve to divide and weaken.

In Galatians 1 we read: 1 I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, 7 which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. 8 But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. 9 As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed. 10 For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ.

The reality is, there is only ONE Truth. Jesus is the Way, Truth and Life. There is not various shades to this Truth. It is dangerous to accept varying opinions and teachings because despite our various shades and colours of truth, there is only one Gospel as taught by Jesus, and upheld by the Scriptures and defenders of the Gospel such as the Apostle Paul. Matthew 4:23 says: “And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people.” Jesus was not preaching a gospel of any man or denomination, but of the Kingdom. Do we even know what God’s Kingdom is? Do we even know the truth of such a Kingdom?

Paul made it clear to Galatians about the dangers of an “another gospel”, which is a perversion of the true Gospel. The definition of perversion is a distortion or corruption of the original course, meaning, or state of something. How can we then agree on our disagreement of doctrine when there is only one Truth and the rest are mere distortions and corruption of such a truth? 2 Timothy 4:4 speaks about how eventually people “will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.” The Greek word for fables is ‘muthos’, which can be translated as an invention or a falsehood. We are living in such times when so many fables, thus an invention of man, are being shared and labelled as Gospel.

Paul underlined that anyone who preaches a different, thus perverted gospel, should be accursed. Thus, any other doctrine or “truth’, no matter our levels of respect or love, is actually a curse because only the Truth of God and no other truth sets man free (John 8:32). Only God’s Truth brings life, for Jesus is Life and He is the Word (John 1). We should therefore be extremely concerned about so many different opinions and agreements regarding doctrine

because ultimately the unifying Truth of the Lord brings life and peace, and all the rest brings a curse, thus death. We should be concerned because we advocate all kinds of teachings and preaching, we thus allow perversion into the church. And such perversion is mere spiritual corruption.

Take note of what Paul also says that “even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed.” Paul wrote in “1 Timothy 4:1 Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons.” It is been part of the devil’s strategy to sow discord and confusion regarding the Truth of God. And this has even been done through demons who are teaching and sharing doctrines! Thus the warning of Paul.

Also take note of “2 Corinthians 11: 14 And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. 15 Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.” Paul is again warning of those who have infiltrated the church to bring about the devil’s work! He actually calls these servants of the devil ‘ministers of righteousness’. He issued such a warning in 2 Timothy 3 as well, and we can also take note of what Peter wrote in 2 Peter 2. In 2 Timothy 3 he writes about those who are lovers of money, the Self and pleasure that they have “a form of godliness but denying its power” (verse 5). Thus people operating in the church that look so religious and pious but are operating without the Holy Spirit.

So yes, we must be very concerned about different opinions and shades of truth, for not all truth is the truth! There is only one truth. The reality is, many do not like God’s Truth, even in churches, because for some it still offends, and for some, it is outdated and even foolish. Yet God does not submit His truth to the changes in society or the shifting landscapes of our carnal desires. His truth is eternal, everlasting and stands engraved in the Kingdom. We take note of “1 Corinthians 1: 20 Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? 21 For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. 22 For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; 23 but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, 24 but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. 25 Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.”

Also consider what it says Mark 3: 23 So He called them to Himself and said to them in parables: “How can Satan cast out Satan? 24 If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. 25 And if a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand.”

We should be concerned for the simple reason that a house divided against cannot stand. If that doesn’t make us concerned then we are in trouble. In Ephesians 6, Paul talked about standing our ground in the storms of spiritual warfare. Yet if we are divided, how we can stand against such onslaughts? How can we stand against principalities, authorities and the powers of darkness along with all their lies, deceptions and seductions? Ergo, a rise of witchcraft, including divination posing as prophecy, along with New Age teachings have flooded the

church. The church has become saturated with such deception because we are not standing in the authority of God, simply because we are failing to stand in the Truth of God. And to stand on the truth of God means standing for Jesus, thus abiding in His majesty and greatness.

Paul writes in “2 Thessalonians 2:15: Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which you were taught, whether by word or our epistle.” We can only stand when we hold onto what we have been taught, and what we are taught should primarily be done by the Holy Spirit. In the Great Commission of Matthew 28 we read that Jesus said: “teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you” (verse 20). We, therefore, have to teach and preach and share what we have learned and are still learning from God, for God is the Lord of the church. He wants to impart the truth of the Kingdom to the church. The concept of teaching what we have learned and standing upon it is also found in Acts 2 where we read of the disciples meeting directly after Pentecost: “42 And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.”

In Colossians 4:12 we read: “Epaphras, who is one of you, a bondservant of Christ, greets you, always laboring fervently for you in prayers, that you may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.” Yes, we can only stand when we abide in the will of the Lord. And the will of the Lord is to stand in God’s Truth and His Truth alone. After all, we are called to be worshippers in spirit and truth.

Take note of what Paul writes in “Philippians 1:27: Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel.” Paul urged for believers to “stand fast in one spirit.” The Spirit of God after all leads us to understand and comprehend all truth. Not shades and variants. We are therefore urged to be united in ONE Spirit. For it says in “1 Corinthians 12: 4 There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. 5 There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. 6 And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all.” Thus we are called to follow the one God, but again, are we following the Father, Son and Spirit or only Jesus? Are we truly following the Spirit or quenching the fire, thus the work and the manifestation, of the Spirit?

Indeed, Philippians 4:1 says: “Therefore, my beloved and longed-for brethren, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, beloved.” And also “Galatians 5:1: Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage.” We need to thus stand strong in one Spirit by serving the one Lord and abiding in God (John 15). We need to stand strong, willing to yield to His ways, for in Him is life and hope.

In Matthew 16:18 we read: “And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.” What Rock is this? Of course Jesus. It says in Matthew 7: 24 “Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: 25 and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. 26 “But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: 27 and the rain descended, the floods came, and

the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall.” 28 And so it was, when Jesus had ended these sayings, that the people were astonished at His teaching, 29 for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.”

The church has been hit with all kinds of storms for almost 2000 years – be it demonic, philosophical or academic onslaughts. And the church has been ravaged and brutalised by these storms. This is because we are not truly standing on the Rock, and as a house that is supposed to serve the one Lord we remain terribly divided. Unity is vital for a Church that is spiritually healthy and strong. We need to therefore pursue unity in truth, thus unity in doctrine, lest we are subjected to being tossed to and fro by every wind of teaching, and we remain spiritually disorientated, double-minded and divided. In God, we walk in Truth and His Truth still sets us free, and in such liberty, we need to stand. Let us proclaim no other truth than the Gospel of our Lord Jesus, thus the Gospel of the Kingdom, lest we preach and teach something perverted and bring about division.

## The Truth Prevails

“Therefore, faithful Christian, seek the truth, hear the truth, learn the truth, love the truth, speak the truth, adhere to the truth, defend the truth even till death; for the truth will make you free from sin, the devil, the death... My dearest, live according to the discerned truth, which prevails over everything and is powerful forever.” – Jan Hus.

We need to think long and hard about this quote. Who is really still prepared to fight for the truth of God and not man's truth even unto death? Who is willing to defend such truth and uphold it no matter the cost? We are willing still to hear the truth, to seek it and truly love it? Are you willing to defend the truth you believe in unto the death? For the Reformers like Jan Hus and Martin Luther they so believed in the truth that they understood to be the truth that they were willing to die for it, to be imprisoned and even become alienated. Do we see such passion in the church these days?

The problem is we have settled for the truth of man, no longer truly concerned about true unity in the truth, thus the Gospel of the Kingdom. We have agreed to disagree which is very dangerous and catastrophic for the Body of Christ. We have to consider what Jan Hus said, a man who was imprisoned more than 100 times for fighting for God's truth. There is only one Truth. Nothing else. And the Spirit has come to lead us in all truth - John 16. My truth means nothing. God's Truth sets free. Are we still willing to fight and die for it? Think about it. For the truth does prevail and God's truth shall stand the test of time.

Hus was a preacher in Prague during the Reformation and he stood against the many abuses he saw in the Roman Catholic Church. He was certainly willing to defend and even die for the truth that he believed in and preached. Hus eventually died at the stake as a heretic. It is said that he died for the truth and indeed, he himself declared he would rather have his body consumed by fire than to be constantly silenced. Hus became a great Czech who maintained his inner integrity and faith face to face with death. He did not fear death, was not afraid of shame or pain. There was something that Hus loved more than his life - he lived for certain values, preached about them and died for them as well. Do we see such passion and commitment to the truth in the church anymore?

Today Hus has been acknowledged as a reformer of the church and society. People regard him as an example of a genuine and courageous man who did not allow the pressure of religious or secular leaders to break him. He stood for the truth, and for such passion, he shall be remembered. A monument of Hus stands in the centre of Prague and in many cities, there are streets and schools called by his name. Hus left behind a timeless heritage not only for the Czech nation but for other nations as well, a heritage consisting of love for the truth, respect for people and faith in Jesus Christ.

Hus was prepared to stand for the truth no matter the suffering. Can we still say this is the attitude of Christians today? Are we willing to be mocked, ridiculed and even to suffer for God's Truth? In John 15:18 it says: "If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first." Oh yes, the world (meaning those who walk not with God) should actually hate and oppose those who stand for the Truth. After all, the truth of God is offensive to the carnally minded and



those walking the flesh. It also says in “John 16:33: These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.” Despite the challenge we may face for standing for the truth of God, we are encouraged to be at peace and to be of good cheer, because Christ has already walked the road and has overcome. In such truth, Hus most likely found his strength.

But what is truth? This question was asked by Pontius Pilate who sentenced Jesus Christ to death. People have asked the same question from the beginning and they are going to ask it till the end of the world. Bishops, priests, masters, scribes along with Herod and Pilate, inhabitants of Jerusalem and the whole city denounced the Truth, killed and laid Jesus into a tomb, but then He rose, overcame all of them and empowered disciples to be proclaimers of such a truth. And then Jesus ascended, but with the promise of sending the Holy Spirit – our helper, adviser and counselor – to continue leading all those who believe in the truth of God. Still today, our Lord Jesus strengthens all of us like Hus to seek, defend, uphold and fight for the truth because He is faithful, and so we must be faithful unto Him as the Truth. For it says of Jesus: “I am with you even to the end of the world.” (Matthew 28:20).

For Hus, the truth was personalized in Jesus Christ and contained in the Bible. For such truth, he readily died, because he loved it more than his own life. The point is not only to know the truth but also to live according to the recognized truth. The point is not whether we hold the truth, but whether the truth holds us. Life in the truth is life in integrity and authenticity when our thoughts, words and deeds are in harmony. God’s truth is powerful, invincible; it is living and eternal. It may be defeated for some time, but it will prevail in the end.

Hus said the following: “From this conclusion it follows that whatever Jesus Christ proclaimed to be truth, it was, is, and will be the truth.” On the sufficiency of Christ’s law, Hus said Christ Himself is the truth, and that is why denying the truth is denying Christ. Indeed, in Christ is the Truth, and He is our sufficiency to walk in such truth.

Martin Luther was of course another very famous Reformer who refused to renounce all of his writings at the demand of Pope Leo X in 1520 and the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V. At the Diet of Worms in 1521 he was ex-communication by the pope and condemnation as an outlaw by the Holy Roman Emperor. At the Diet of Worms, he was informed that he had been called to the meeting to acknowledge as his own the books that had been published in his name and to repudiate them. He eventually declared that he could not and would not recant the substance of his writings. He refused to repudiate his works unless convinced of error by Scripture or by reason. Otherwise, he stated, his conscience was bound by the Word of God. According to a traditional but apocryphal account, he ended his statement with the words, “Here I stand. I can do no other. God help me. Amen.”

Today Luther is known as a 16th-century monk and theologian who was one of the most significant figures in Christian history. His beliefs helped birth the Reformation—which would give rise to Protestantism as the third major force within Christendom, alongside Roman Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy. The Protestant Reformation's five pillars are well noted as *sola Scriptura* (Scripture alone), *sola gratia* [grace alone], *sola fide* [faith alone], *solus Christus* [Christ alone] and *solus Deo gloria* [glory to God alone] with 'sola fide – the doctrine of

justification by faith alone' as the trigger for the Reformation. Like Hus, Luther's legacy has stood the test of time, because they believed in the truth and were willing to uphold it no matter the cost.

Before Hus and Luther, the apostles also were not teaching anything else than what Christ had taught and what He had commanded them to teach. All Christians are to believe what God commanded to be believed, though not everybody knows and understands what to believe, everybody should be prepared to gladly receive the truth which will be shown from the Holy Scripture and by the Spirit of God. For when we truly recognize God's truth as compared to the truth of man then we should adhere to such a truth even till death; for the truth will liberate in the end, as the Lord Jesus said: "If you abide in my word, you are my disciples indeed. You shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:31–32). So the question is, for what truth will we die for? For what truth will we fight for, defend and learn no matter the cost?

## **Destroy carnality to promote true unity**

Can the church of today truly be united in doctrine? This is a bring question it seems of late, and one of pressing urgency. For most, the answer will be a resounding ‘no’. We are after all divided on so many things regarding doctrine, just consider the debate around the Trinity, around predestination, around the work of the Holy Spirit, and around the Law and grace.

Granted, we will be divided on some things, which are fine, but such things as we will mostly find is religious in nature. This is churchianity stuff – like what clothes to wear, the kind of music to play, the décor, use of titles and clergy structures. Thus man-made traditions. Why quarrel over things that have no bearing on the Kingdom? It says in “Romans 14:17: For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.” The doctrine of the Kingdom is what should concern us, for it says in Matthew 4:23 that Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people. Jesus was not proclaiming the good news of a denomination or a church but the everlasting and eternal Kingdom.

But one fears that we have settled for division regarding doctrine, thus the truths of the Kingdom. And we use the old adage that we should settle on agreeing on disagreeing. And yes, as children of God we can still work together because of doctrinal differences, but maybe, just maybe, the church is falling into a rather strange trap of delusion and deception, and this trap is accepting division as being the norm and the status quo. Has the church not been lulled into a false sense of peace, thus no longer pursuing doctrinal unity but instead pursuing agendas to prosper personal beliefs?

You see, the church has in fact been pursuing unity, but this is lateral unity. Let me explain. In the Protestant churches, there are many denominations – thousands – and many of them are actually divided on doctrine. Granted, maybe divided on only certain small issues, and for others, the divide is greater. Lateral unity is created when believers agree on doctrine between themselves. So believers will flock to a certain denomination based on the doctrine that stands in agreement with them, and thus stand in agreement with those who attend that specific church or abide by a certain denomination.

This is the reality of 2 Timothy 4. 3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; 4 and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.

And this is exactly what is happening in churches, and it seems there is a growing passivity not to address this worrying trend. Yes, we see it so clearly where people are drawn to ‘teachers’ that please them and speak of things that indeed their ears want to hear. And so people do church hopping. And you find that congregants will defend their pastor or teacher no matter their cost, even though what they may speak is deception, simply because it is ‘truth’ their itching ears ache and long for. It is a most worrying trend that so many Christians have settled for false doctrine, blatant lies and blasphemy right in the church! Are we so deceived, or have

we welcomed the deception as long as it doesn't offend or rock our boats of familiarity and comfort?

Without naming names, for we are not in the business of naming and shaming, a respected worship leader casually spoke on her experiences with God in front of a packed audience. She spoke on how the Holy Spirit is like a genie in a bottle to her and how the angels around the throne are probably having farting competitions. And yes, the crowds cheered laughed and clapped. The church is actually settling for blasphemy! And remember, if we look at the end of times, everything which is satanic in nature is characterized by blasphemy against God. This is after all the work of the devil. To oppose the will of God, to resist God's perfect order, and to bring forth spiritual corruption. Yes, the devil defies God, and this defiance will become more and more blatant towards the end of the ages. And we see such blatant defiance and blasphemy right in the churches, even while people are clapping and laughing! And yes, laughing can be fun and entertaining, but it can also be mocking in nature. Churches by embracing deception are now openly laughing at God, mocking His glorious truth.

But what about vertical unity? We are supposed to be a people – a holy priesthood – that is first and foremost united with God in His Truth. Thus the unity between us and divinity is paramount and takes precedence over lateral unity. It is the correct order of first adhering to the greatest commandment of loving God above all and then the second commandment of loving your neighbour. Lateral unity above vertical unity flips the two commandments. And take note, God will never unite with our Truth, but we are called to unite with His. This is of course another huge problem in churches these days, for we want God to unite to our will, to our way and to our truth. We want to bring God down to the gutter of our muck, instead of declaring His Word and Truth as believers seated with Jesus at the right hand of the Father. This is part of the moral relativism mindset that we find in the world today and in churches, where we want to determine the truth that fits in our world of reference and understanding. This is an outflow of the Age of Enlightenment, where man deemed himself to be god-like (the same trap Adam and Eve stepped into when the devil deceived them). God's intention has always been that we are FIRST united in His truth, thus doctrine, and then as we are united in submission and obedience to Him then we are united laterally with those who are united vertically.

Thus vertical unity brings forth lateral unity. This is very important to understand. You see, we can be united with believers laterally, but what if what unites us actually divides us vertically with God? People have a tendency to flock together where one feels comfortable. So in churches, people are flocking together where a brand of truth is being taught that makes one feel comfortable and at home. The general term is seeker-friendly churches. But it is not just such churches that seem so welcoming and appealing, for people are flocking to churches for the signs, wonders and miracles, or to churches where supposed prophetic word flows like honey, or to churches for its great worship or maybe just to a church because the pastor is a celebrity. Whatever the attraction, it is what the congregant wants to experience.

Yet, what about the truth? What about hearing the truth of God? Are we going to church to be entertained, or to be equipped to be soul winners? Are we going to church to enjoy the sermon,

or to be edified for the purpose of growing in spiritual maturity to the glory God? And we may ask, the truth according to who? Well, God's Truth. Never man's version of it. And this is where everything is now unravelling in churches and why the church has so little impact. Man's version of the truth is now exalted, declared and advertised like a marketing ploy, yet God's Truth is now being discarded and trampled upon.

And here is the conundrum. How can it be that we are so divided in a doctrine where there is only one TRUTH? After all, those who are divided on doctrine will argue and debate their points of view. They will say that they have spent years studying or that they spent untold time with God learning. Yes, everybody will say they stand upon what they believe, and they shall not be swayed. Yet, the division remains, and this doesn't quite make sense, now does it?

John 16 is very clear that the Holy Spirit was poured out to lead us in all truth. Not the truth of a denomination, but God's Truth. For only His Truth sets us free (John 8:32). Jesus is the Truth. 1 Corinthians 1 and 2 speaks clearly of the wisdom of God and the need to follow the Spirit of God to have the mind of Christ. And to have the mind of Christ is of great importance because the reality is we tend to digest information and process knowledge based on our experiences, education, perceptions, points of view, cultural understanding and yes, even our levels of IQ and EQ (emotional intellect). These are filters through which we perceive and recognise the truth. The mind of Christ only has the truth of God – the unadulterated, pure, uncorrupted and perfect truth- in mind. There is no distortion. No shadows. Nothing. Just the Truth. As Jesus taught Kingdom when He was on earth. And as taught by the Holy Spirit. John 16 says: “3 However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. 14 He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. 15 All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you.”

Jesus never spoke on His own authority, thus in rebellion to the Father. He spoke on the authority of the Father, for they are united as God, thus the Trinity along with the Spirit of God. Equally, the Holy Spirit never speaks on His own, therefore according to His version of the Truth, but according to “whatever He hears” and “He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you.” What belongs to Jesus belongs to the Father and thus belongs to the Spirit. Complete unity. The Father doesn't speak one thing and Jesus another and then the Holy Spirit decides to add his own spin on things. No. Everything is the same Truth. Perfect order. We are called to ONLY speak what we hear from God, what we understand from God, what we perceive from God, and thus to declare what belongs to God, and not man, to the world.

And the Spirit will not say one thing to one person and then another 'truth' to someone else. The reality is that we have different truths or different shades of the truth, then one of these 'truths' cannot be the truth. After all, there is one truth – upheld and taught by the Spirit of the Living God. It says in “1 John 2: 20 But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you know all things. 21 I have not written to you because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and that no lie is of the truth.” And also in the same chapter: “27 But the anointing

which you have received from Him abides in you, and you do not need that anyone teach you; but as the same anointing teaches you concerning all things, and is true, and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you will abide in Him.” Thus by the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit – the anointing – we shall know and walk by the Truth.

So why are we not walking in the truth? Because we are not walking in the Spirit (in accordance with Romans 8) as we should. At times we are still more in the flesh than in the Spirit. At times our intellect, our will, our imagination and our pride overrides the teachings of the Spirit of God. In Ezekiel 13 we read of the false prophets that they follow their own spirit and have seen nothing and that they have envisioned futility and false divination, “but the Lord has not sent them.” In verse 8 it says “because you have spoken nonsense and envisioned lies, therefore I am indeed against you.” If we truly stay in the Spirit, we thus speak by the Spirit, and such truth is the same and leads us in true unity.

What is then going on if we are so divided? And is it alright to be divided? Must we settle for the division, and work through it? Honestly, regarding questions 2 and 3, we must never ever settle for disunity. For we are called to follow God in Spirit and truth. God is not disunited. How can His Bride be disunited in His Truth! So why are there so many divisions? Simple. Because we are following our own spirit. Yes, let us just be brutally honest, and if anyone wants to be offended, then we need to get offended and get over it. The reality is that not all our truths are actually the truth. This will mean God is divided in truth. Yet God is Truth. There is only one truth. So while we may stand upon all our studies, research and resources, a lot of doctrines in the church is not the truth. It is that simple. And if we do not wish to accept it, then we have fallen into a very deep hole of pride. And yes, we will say but we know the Holy Spirit and follow the Holy Spirit, but the Spirit will never ever speak of differences in doctrine, as declared by Jesus and the Father, so there is a problem! We need to face this reality and quickly.

Paul said clearly in Galatians 1 that any other Gospel except the Gospel of Jesus is accursed. If we, therefore, preach ANY other Gospel, except the one taught by Jesus, then we are speaking a curse! This is why it so important for every believer to make sure they are truly and utterly walking in the Truth. And the only one who knows the Truth is God. We sit with a massive problem in churches of Gospels that is not the Gospel of Jesus and thus an accursed Gospel is being preached from the pulpit! And yes, we are not to name and shame people or ministries, for this is witch-hunting, but we need to discuss doctrines and through all the muck and slime discover God’s Truth once again. For an accursed Gospel is not going to set anybody free! No wonder so many people in the churches are not free. And how can this be if Jesus has come to set us free, and if Jesus sets us free then we are free indeed. Here is the answer: we are not preaching the Gospel of Jesus, but of man and of religion!

In Acts 2, we read of that the first disciples held to the doctrine as taught by the Apostles. This was directly after Pentecost. Jesus came to speak the truth to 12 disciples. The 12 then had the honour to disseminate the truth. In Acts 2, there was not really time yet for the doctrine to be become diluted and distorted for it still resided with the 12. Yet we also learn how Paul for example would begin to disagree with certain Jews ... How quickly had the Truth not faded!



Here is the reality, and we may dismiss this or not, but the only way to know the truth is through the Spirit of God. Thus the Spirit of truth. If we pursue the truth through our intellect, we are in deep trouble. For we all view and learn through filters, such as our education, our ethnicity, our culture, and our influences. The only one who does not view through any filters is the Holy Spirit. Thus, He teaches us in all truth, and thus the mind of Christ. So what is the problem then? Simple. The church is divided because we are still a church of flesh and not of the Spirit. Yes, we may be offended by this, but why is the Church having no impact, is riddled with so many fake prophets and pastors and has become a laughing stock for its pursuit of earthly riches and pleasure? How can we be divided in truth when the Spirit comes to teach us all the same truth?

So the problem is not with God as the master educator, but us who as disciples are supposed to be learning from Him, and we can only do so when we are truly and utterly submitted to the Spirit of truth. And if we are not learning the truth, then are we truly yielded and following the Spirit? And if we are not, we are in the flesh. Thus, the argument of Paul in “Romans 8: 5 For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. 6 For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. 7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. 8 So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God. 9 But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.”

Are our minds truly on the Kingdom, and do we truly have the mind of Christ? If so, we shall walk in the truth, and declare the truth as taught and shown by the Spirit. Yet, if we are in the flesh, despite all our protestations, then our minds will be on earth. Thus, the Kingdom is not one of eating and drinking (earthly matters), and just so Jesus taught in Matthew 6 that we must not worry about what we will eat, drink or wear. Jesus thus taught that our minds must be on the spiritual matters, thus the Kingdom, which we need to pursue above all and else. Yet if we look at the Church these days, what we are preaching and teaching are earthly matters, thus things of the flesh, and not really Kingdom matters, thus things of the Spirit. And for this reason, we find so many divisions, disunity and strife.

Remember 1 Timothy 4 about demons teaching false doctrines? How do we guard against such deception? Simple. Through the Holy Spirit. He who grants us wisdom, knowledge, counsel, understanding and discernment (Isaiah 11).

Paul makes a strong argument also in “1 Corinthians 3: 1 And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ. 2 I fed you with milk and not with solid food; for until now you were not able to receive it, and even now you are still not able; 3 for you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men? 4 For when one says, “I am of Paul,” and another, “I am of Apollos,” are you not carnal?”

James 4 we read: “1 Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members? 2 You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask. 3

You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures. 4 Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. 5 Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, “The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously”?6 But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: “God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.”

James thus shines the light on some areas of sin in the lives of these believers. They were engaged in quarrels and conflicts (vv 1, 2), fleshly pleasures (v 1), lust (v 2), murder (v 2), envy (v 2), selfish, fleshly prayers (v 3), adultery (v 4), enemies of God (v 4) and pride (v 6). These are clearly not spiritually mature people! How do you recover from that spiritual state? That’s where James gives some pastoral counselling in verse 6-10. He begins with a cardinal point of doctrine: God’s grace towards the humble (v 6). It says to submit therefore to God. What does it mean to submit to God? Submitting to God means submitting to His revelation, and applying His Word to all areas of your life. Instead of living by your own wisdom, plans, and fleshly desires (cf. 3:15), you live by His wisdom. You become a doer of the Word, and walk according to God’s truth. This leads us in all truth, and not down a path of deception.

In Colossians 2 we read: “6 As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, 7 rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving. 8 Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ. 9 For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; 10 and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.”

Paul had two major goals in his letter to the Colossians. Number one, Paul wants to encourage these believers that they might grow in their relationship with God IN CHRIST. Number two, Paul does not want these believers to be deluded by man-made systems or by truths that are nothing but religions rituals. So Paul commanded these believers to be on the lookout so that no one takes them captive through empty deceptive philosophy. Thus don’t be deceived into trying to attain spiritual growth through anything that is not centred on Christ. We are thus called to live a life with a faith in Christ so that we are rooted and built up IN HIM. For then we shall walk in God’s truth, and understand such truth and uphold such truth.

And this has been a key problem in the churches. Are we truly growing in Christ, therefore in the Spirit? Only when we grow in Christ, can we truly grow in unity, and thus in the unity of doctrine. For only in Christ do we know the truth, and as we follow Him we are united with God first and then united with those also abiding and growing in Christ.

And as a last word, remember when it comes to the truth, it’s your duty to test every word from every preacher, pastor, and an evangelist against the Word of God (1 John 4; 1 Thessalonians 5:21; Romans 16:17-18; 2 Corinthians 11:14-15) in order to remain pure.

## **Truth, not opinion, defines the Kingdom**

Everybody can have an opinion. In fact, we all have opinions. And an opinion is a view or judgement formed about something, not necessarily based on fact or knowledge. While there is nothing wrong with having an opinion, the problem is that in churches you will find too many doctrines and theology is formed by opinion.

Of the Holy Spirit we read in John 16: 13 However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.

And also in Isaiah 11: 2 The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, The Spirit of wisdom and understanding, The Spirit of counsel and might, The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord.

Remember, an opinion is based on determining reality which is not based on fact or knowledge. When it comes to the Kingdom of God, there is no room for opinion. Our entire doctrine and theology must be based on fact and knowledge. And where does such knowledge come from? From God. The Holy Spirit – part of the Trinity – is the Spirit of knowledge, understanding and wisdom. If we are not led by the Spirit of God, how then we can know Truth, or the knowledge of the Kingdom?

For the Spirit was poured out so that as believers we are not led by opinion but by truth! And we can easily move from truth to opinion when we move out of the presence of God and into the flesh. It is easy to move away from the eternal truths of God when we begin to rely on our own intellect, our own understanding and knowledge based on personal perceptions, ideas and theories.

Sure, we can all have opinions within the Church, but when we begin to announce such an opinion as the truth then we are on dangerous ground. For so easily such opinion turns into doctrine, and such doctrine when not based on the Kingdom's Truth will only destroy for it is based on a lie. Remember, the thief only comes to steal, to destroy and kill (John 10:10). It says in Acts 2 following the outpouring of the Spirit: 41 Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. 42 And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

When we read of the apostles' doctrine, we need to understand this is the Truth as taught by the believers by Jesus. This is the Truth of the Kingdom. They therefore held onto such Truth, and not the opinions of man.

Paul writes in Galatians 1: 6 I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, 7 which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. 8 But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. 9 As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed.

The reality is there are a lot of perverted gospels being preached in churches across the world. It is twisted, distorted and accursed because you will often find it is based on opinion, and not on the knowledge, wisdom and understanding as provided by the Holy Spirit. There are thus countless of false doctrines and theology which is not grounded in the Word.

We read in John 8: 31 Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, “If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. 32 And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” So how do we know the Truth? By abiding in the Lord (also read John 15). And the Truth shall make us free. Not the opinion of man, but only the Truth of the Kingdom, for Jesus is the Truth, Way and Life. This is why it is so incredibly important to have a real and living relationship with God. Such a relationship is not one of religion, but where we have true fellowship with God daily. God is a personal God. He is not dead. He is alive. Neither is He silent, but He longs to fellowship and abide with us so that we walk in His ways and in His Truth.

Too many people in churches these days are spiritually confused and even spiritually still bound because of opinion, instead of being fed the true Gospel of the Kingdom. It says in 1 Timothy 4: Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, 2 speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron.

So yes, some doctrines will be based on the influence of demons! This is the sign of apostasy which is already upon us. And remember, apostasy only applies to the church, for it is the falling away from the Truth of God. We are living in the days of great and final apostasy because we have abandoned the truth for opinions, for lies and selfish motivational talks. It says in 2 Timothy 4: For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers.

Remember, demons tend to manipulate, twist and distort the mind of man to believe a lie instead of the truth. We then need to be very careful that we abide in the Truth, because it is easy to believe something is true instead of only discovering it is a lie. This is the onslaught of the devil – to lead people away from the truth and to walk a path where man has formed and determined his own truth.

Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 2: 13 These things we also speak, not in words which man’s wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. 14 But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. 15 But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is rightly judged by no one. 16 For “who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct Him?” But we have the mind of Christ.

Thus, we can only know the Truth of God when we are led by the Spirit. Paul wrote many times on being led by the Spirit, and not the flesh (Romans 8). After all, there is great danger in being

led by the flesh instead of the Spirit. If we are led by the flesh and our own needs, we exalt the Self and this causes us to fall for the trap of believing our opinions is fact and truth.

It says in “Matthew 4:23: And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people.” Take note, Jesus preached the true Gospel of the Kingdom. This is of vital importance. It also says in “Mark 1:14: Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God.” Jesus only preached the Gospel of the Kingdom, for this is the Truth. He did not teach based on opinion, but the reality of the Kingdom! We are so busy teaching all other gospels based on opinion is that we are leading people further away from God rather to God! For again, only the Truth of God sets us free, and not the opinion of man. For this reason Jesus taught in “Matthew 6: 33 But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.”

Yes, first seek and preach Kingdom, not religion, because in Kingdom is the Truth and in the Truth is freedom! Remember, John 8:32 speaks of the Truth setting us free. And according to John 16 the Spirit of the Lord leads us in all truth. Therefore, this leads to the reality of 2 Corinthians 3:17: Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.

So if we truly want to walk in Kingdom, in the Truth and in the freedom of God, we need to abide in the Spirit of the Lord, lest we go astray and we lead others astray. For only the Spirit of the Lord can lead us to understand the Kingdom, and what the Kingdom is, and how to preach and teach Kingdom. Yes, we must seek the Kingdom, but we do so in the Spirit of the Lord.

So why are so many Christians/believers being so deceived these days by false teachings and doctrines? Partly because we do not have a true relationship with God, meaning not abiding in God. For if we abide, then we know the Truth and the Truth sets us free. To abide means we know the Word – Logos and Rhema. When we truly walk with God, we shall know the way, for we shall be led by the Holy Spirit and it shall move us in Truth and in the manner of the Kingdom. This calls for intimacy and knowing God, not just knowing of God.

The Lord pressed it again on my heart recently so many who declare “Lord, Lord” do not know Him, for they walk only in religion similar to the Scribes of the Pharisees and Sadducees. They are led away both by the stranger, and by the wolf in sheep’s clothing. For we can only know Him when we abide in Him, when we yield, submit and follow.

May we truly know the Truth of God and only preach and teach the Gospel of the Kingdom. May we seek the Lord in this day and ask the Lord to expose where we have believed opinion as being the truth, and where we have been forming doctrine based on our opinion. May the Lord correct us and lead us by the Spirit, lest we speak words as doctrine and gospel which are accursed.



## Connoisseur of the Word

A connoisseur means basically to be 'acquainted with' or 'to know somebody/something'. In secular terms, it is a person who has a great deal of knowledge about for example the fine arts, or wine or who is a keen appreciator of cuisines, or who is an expert judge in matters of taste.

Connoisseurs thus evaluate for example works of art on the basis of their experience of the style and technique of artists. Judgment informed by intuition is also important, but it must be grounded in a thorough understanding of the work itself. The responsibility of the connoisseur is therefore to attribute authorship, validate authenticity and appraise quality. Such responsibility applies across the board to connoisseurs no matter to what field their expertise applies, for they are called in general through experience and knowledge to determine quality, authenticity and in some cases indeed authorship.

Now consider that God calls for a people who are also connoisseurs of the Word. We are thus called to be disciples of God who know the Word, and by truly knowing the Word, we can test and weigh up every doctrine and teaching based on quality, authenticity and if it is true to the real author – God.

Just like a connoisseur of the arts can determine if something is fake, just so a connoisseur of the Word should be able to determine when something spoken or declared or pronounced is fake, a pretence and doesn't weight up the true value of the author. If we do now know the Word, how then shall we know what is fake and what is true?

After all, experts in the art can for example determine if a work is genuine based on knowing the work and the style of the artist. They know for example the paint used by the artist and the techniques applied to the finer detail. Just so, we must be so acquainted with the Word of God that we can determine when something is not from the original author – God. We must all become experts, not just theologians or pastors, by studying the Word as led by the Spirit of God. We need to acquire a deep knowledge of the Word, thus become 'experts'. It is simply a matter of reading the Word, studying it from Genesis to Revelations, and above all seeking the wisdom and understanding and counsel of God to become a connoisseur.

It is also important to note that translations of the Bible are important. This is because words are important, and so is the style in which things are written. Someone who for example reads a lot of my writings will be able to determine if a certain volume of work was truly written by me. I use words and type of words in very specific ways.

Each person uses words differently, and constructs sentences in a certain way and uses different styles of writing to express and convey a certain thought or idea. They are thus identifiable by the way they express themselves. This is also true with the Bible. A lot of translations simply destroy the authenticity of authorship, and thus the true meaning of what the author is conveying. Remember, a connoisseur should be able to determine quality, authenticity and authorship. Modern translations have, however, destroyed such quality, authenticity and authorship of the Bible.



Remember Ted Kaczynski? He was the Unabomber in America that evaded capture for 17 years, bombing a number of targets and killing a number of people. Interestingly enough, the FBI profiler who caught him used forensic linguistic work. You see, in the 1990s, the Unabomber began sending letters about his crimes to the media and some of his victims. In 1995, he sent a sprawling, 35,000-word "manifesto" to The New York Times and The Washington Post.

FBI criminal profiler James R. Fitzgerald began working on the case in July 1995. He said the Unabomber's writings were a "pivotal factor" in cracking the case. He and his colleagues used them to help pinpoint the age and geographic origin of their suspect — evidence that helped lead to the arrest of Kaczynski. Forensic linguistics was back then unheard of and was actually invented in a way by Fitzgerald who realised how people could be identified by the way they use words and phrases. It is today known as the application of linguistic knowledge, methods and insights to the forensic context of law, language, crime investigation, trial, and judicial procedure.

Kaczynski was exceptionally smart with an IQ that measured off the charts. He was very careful in constructing and sending his bombs and left no DNA evidence that could be used by investigators. It was basically therefore his use of language that was his downfall.

He was very articulate and spoke using a particular and out-of-date vernacular. This is what gave Fitzgerald the idea to use linguistics as a way to catch him. Fitzgerald was clever, urging for the publishing of the manifesto, hoping that someone would recognize the writing (thus authorship). David Kaczynski, Ted's brother, was shown the manifesto by his wife. He recognized the writing style immediately to be his brother's. And the rest is history.

Thus style of writing and use of vernacular is very important. Thus stick to the older Bible versions, such as the King James or New Kings James Version. Be a connoisseur and weigh up these translations to other translations and see how the style and the meaning can easily be changed by using different words and by changing the style used to express a thought.

Again, we need to know the Word but then we need to know the Word as far as possible in its original context. Again, we are not all learned in Hebrew or Greek, but some of the older versions at least try to be as genuine and true to the original. Thus, know and study the Word for if we know the Word of God then it prevents contagious error and it also leads to a closer walk with Jesus. Why? Because it says in "John 1: 1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. 4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. 5 And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it."

God is the author of the Word. Just like Fitzgerald began to "know" Kaczynski through his writings, just so we shall begin to know God deeper through the written Word — the Logos. And as we are led by the Spirit of God, the Logos becomes alive to be Rhema. We need to be thus connoisseurs of Word of God as Logos and Rhema, therefore striking a balance between the intellect and the spiritual.

Jesus said in “John 6: 63 It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life.” Yes, the Word of God is alive just as the Spirit makes us alive (Romans 8). We must embrace the Word as being alive, therefore we must be careful how we dissect, study and interpret it. It must be done in the Spirit of Truth (John 16), for then we shall not rely purely on our own intellect, education, experience or expertise. There is no one greater to explain the Word than the author Himself!

We have to remember the Bible is breathed out by God (2 Timothy 3:16-17) and its Spirit guided words (2 Peter 1:21) in order to deliver unto us the very mind of God (Romans 8:27). When Jesus died and paid for our sins, He shattered the priestly system (clergy) that stood between God and men. The curtain of the Temple was torn open (Matthew 27:51) and no longer was the mortal separated from the divine. Our hope of salvation is now anchored behind the curtain (Hebrews 6:19) and no preacher, priest, reverend, Cardinal or Pope is needed for my salvation. It is the Word of God that is our true standard, for it also teaches us that Jesus alone is our mediator (1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 9:15; 12:24). Jesus is alive, and so is the Word. And if we truly follow Jesus, then we need to obey and yield to the living Word as Logos and Rhema.

It says in “Psalms 1: Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful; 2 but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law he meditates day and night.” Not only must we be connoisseurs of the Word, but we must love it and delight in it! David writes in “Psalm 119: Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord! 2 Blessed are those who keep His testimonies, who seek Him with the whole heart! 3 They also do no iniquity; they walk in His ways. 4 You have commanded us to keep Your precepts diligently. 5 Oh, that my ways were directed to keep Your statutes! 6 Then I would not be ashamed, when I look into all Your commandments. 7 I will praise You with uprightness of heart, when I learn Your righteous judgments. 8 I will keep Your statutes.’

We can only know the heart of God, who God truly is and understand His commandments, His teachings, His truths and values when we study and know the Word! We will then be able to stand against every wind of devious teaching and every thought that exalts itself against the kingdom of God (2 Corinthians 10).

Paul declared that our sufficiency comes from God and rests with him (2 Corinthians 3:5-6). Thus our sufficiency rests in the Word of God! Yes in God, thus in the Word, we have all we need (2 Corinthians 9:8).

Scripture is truly ablaze with the passion of God for us. We need to consume the Words He has spoken, thinking on them often, repeating them to ourselves over and over, until they are etched into our hearts, until we can hear His divine voice in our minds.

Indeed, as we study the Word of God, we become living epistles. Paul wrote in “2 Corinthians 3:1-3: Do we begin again to commend ourselves? Or do we need, as some others, epistles of commendation to you or letters of commendation from you? You are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read by all men; clearly you are an epistle of Christ, ministered by us,

written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of flesh, that is, of the heart.”

Yes, the world must know us as disciples of God, but they must also be able to recognise that we are living the Word of God! We must so study and know the Word and we must live it in such a manner that it is truly written on our hearts by the Spirit of the Living God! For then we shall truly live the Word, for it becomes the breath of God in our lives, and it becomes the power to change, to edify, to correct and to define our walk with the Lord.

Jesus said to that He is the bread of life and those who come to Him shall never hunger (John 6:35). It also written that ‘man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.’” Matthew 4:4.

Thus, we need to constantly feed on the Word of God, be sustained by Him and be nurtured so that God becomes our only source of true life, hope and strength. Yes, we need to study and consume the Word, and not lightly and not frivolously, but in the fear of God so that we stay true to the Word and stay obedient. For we overcome when we stand upon the Word, for what is written is the Truth and by that Truth we are indeed free (John 8:32).

And so it says in “Psalm 34:8: Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man who trusts in Him!” And also “1 Peter 2: 1 Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, 2 as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby, 3 if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.”

May we desire the Word, may we taste it, may we consume it until we become connoisseurs. For then we shall know the blessed way of God, His blessed Truth and His blessed will on earth as it is in heaven.

## The Lie that Poses as the Truth

\*Here's a nice, very true, story...

*According to a 19th century legend, the Truth and the Lie meet one day. The Lie says to the Truth: "It's a marvellous day today"! The Truth looks up to the skies and sighs, for the day was really beautiful.*

*They spend a lot of time together, ultimately arriving beside a well. The Lie tells the Truth: "The water is very nice, let's take a bath together!" The Truth, once again suspicious, tests the water and discovers that it indeed is very nice. They undress and start bathing.*

*Suddenly, the Lie comes out of the water, puts on the clothes of the Truth and runs away. The furious Truth comes out of the well and runs everywhere to find the Lie and to get her clothes back.*

*The World, seeing the Truth naked, turns its gaze away, with contempt and rage.*

*The poor Truth returns to the well and disappears forever, hiding therein, its shame.*

*Since then, the Lie travels around the world, dressed as the Truth, satisfying the needs of society, because, the World, in any case, harbours no wish at all to meet the naked Truth.\**

How true is this story not! For indeed there are many practices, customs, rituals and "doctrines" within the churches that have become foreign and alienated to the "truth" of God. They pose as a lie, and so the Gospel of Jesus has, overtime, been diluted with different shades and colours and textures and shadows of "truths" by mankind, who have allowed themselves to be deceived by the "truths" and "realities" of the world.

The wisdom of this age has sparks to life all the destructive forces of excesses, greed, materialism, wealth, power, and the exaltation of the Self through selfish desires, wants and needs. This world has become lovers of itself, cold to love, boastful in its "wisdom" yet void of godly truth. And so the church has so often fallen victim to the folly of such wisdom, allowing for the spirit of religion and rebellion to take its course. How we need the wisdom of the Lord once again in our churches and for the wisdom of the Lord to rest upon the lips of His servants! For then we shall counter the wisdom of this age!

It says in "Job 28:28 But to man He said, Behold, the reverential and worshipful fear of the Lord—that is Wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding." We live in a world where man seeks after his own wisdom, and relies upon his own intellectual faculty to determine the Truth of God. And such Godly wisdom comes by fearing the Lord, obeying Him, seeking Him and walking in His Spirit. Such wisdom speaks not of foolishness, ignorance or deception as we seen so often in Churches, but it speaks of God's will, His plan, His Kingdom, His Truth and His Way.

It says of God's wisdom the following:

Job 12 v 13: To God belong wisdom and power; counsel and understanding are his.

Isaiah 40 v 28: Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom.

Romans 11 v 33: Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out!

God is all-wise, infinitely wise. It says for example in Psalm 147 vs 5: Great is our Lord and mighty in power; his understanding has no limit.

God's wisdom is also vastly superior to human wisdom. Isaiah 55: "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the Lord. 9 "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Let us remember God remains the source of wisdom. It says in Proverbs 2 v 6: "For the LORD gives wisdom; From His mouth [come] knowledge and understanding", and also Daniel 2 v 20: Daniel answered and said, "Let the name of God be blessed forever and ever, for wisdom and power belong to Him."

It speaks of the mind of God, His intentions, His plans and purposes. There is indeed much deception and deceptive teaching in churches these days (2 Timothy 3, 2 Peter 2, Book of Jude), as well as idolatry, New Age practices, enlightenment, humanism and rationalism. What we need is the wisdom of God! What we need is God's Word spoken in a time like this! Not a word to please man, not a word out of which man can benefit, not a word that will entertain, not a word to exploit God's Kingdom, not a word without power, but indeed, we need a word that shakes the gates of hell, sets people free from spiritual bondages, shatters demonic strongholds, that breaks every false teaching and prophecy and that manifest the power of God! How we need to walk in Truth again by exposing the Lie that poses as the Truth!