



Searching Out the Matter

Spiritual Exercise

It is impossible to love someone you do not know. It is no coincidence that our primary desire toward God – eternal life – is to know Him (and His Son) in the most intimate way possible:

And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. John 17:3

The Greek word that is translated “know” in this verse is used to describe the deepest relationship between two people.

Know (*ginōskō*): learn to know, come to know, get a knowledge of, perceive, feel; to become known; Jewish idiom for sexual intercourse between a man and a woman.

Outline of Biblical Usage, BlueLetterBible.org

The normal Christian life – the normal human life – is a life of growing in our knowledge of God. Oh, how awesome it is to know from the start that the One who has identified Himself as the Truth is encouraging us to an intimate relationship with Himself, and with our Father in Heaven!

As we begin this adventure together, let us commit ourselves to be motivated, sustained and completed by the chief desire of God’s heart for us – that we would love Him with all our heart, soul, mind and strength (Mark 12:30). Let us commit ourselves to fight for what has been given (and stolen away) – to know God that we might love Him more.

Prayer

Dear Father, it is our heart’s desire to love You, Your Son and the Holy Spirit more than we ever have before. As we begin this adventure, we commit ourselves to pursue You and Your Son, by the power of the Holy Spirit. Please Father, give us the grace to surrender, to be courageous, and to persevere through all that stands between each of us and the Three Persons who are the Trinity of God. Give us eyes to see, and ears to hear. In Christ’s name; Amen.

Searching Out the Matter (continued)

Introduction

The availability of Christian resources in America is astounding. I dare say something has been written or recorded about every circumstance and situation that challenges every man, woman and child in this country. I don't know how CBD keeps up with all the books, tapes and study guides. There must be thousands of TV stations, and tens-of-thousands of radio stations dedicated to the followers of Jesus Christ. Who can count the number of websites that are dedicated to the application of God's word?

Jesus said, "And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:32) So why is the church in America so bound up? Why has she become as captive as the world in some of the most obvious sin – abortion, divorce, pride, greed, etc., etc.?

Speaking from personal experience, it is the lack of desire to know Him that has left us prisoners to the deception of Satan, the world and our flesh. Our enemies know that knowledge is power; and that this is particularly true in the Kingdom of God. They will fight us tooth and nail to keep the knowledge of God hidden from His children and the world.

And Jesus answered and said to them: "Take heed that no one deceives you." Matthew 24:4

If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion *is* useless. James 1:26

So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. Revelation 12:9

This adventure is not for the passive, or faint of heart. We must fight for the truth that will make us free. Praise God, we have been given weapons for the battle.

⁴ For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, ⁵ casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, ⁶ and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled. 2Corinthians 10:4-6

In the weeks ahead, we will find many weapons for our warfare. Let us desire to use them!!

Definition

Truth (*aletheia*): Objectively, signifying "the reality lying at the basis of an appearance; the manifested, veritable essence of a matter" (Romans 9:1; 2Corinthians 11:10). Used especially of Christian doctrine, for example in Galatians 2:5 where "the truth of the Gospel" denotes the "true" teaching of the Gospel, in contrast to perversions of it. The word has an absolute force in John 14:6; 17:17; 18:37, 38. In Ephesians 4:21, where the RV, "even as truth is in Jesus," gives the correct rendering, the meaning is not merely ethical "truth," but "truth" in all its fullness and scope, as embodied in Him. He was the perfect expression of the truth; this is virtually equivalent to His statement in John 14:6. *Vine's Expository Dictionary*

Scripture

(I study and teach from NKJV)

Proverbs 25:2

1Corinthians 4:1-2

Mark 4:11-12

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2John 1:9-11

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Ephesians 3:8-12

Romans 6:1-4

John 6:53-56

Romans 12:3-5, 10, 16-18

Does God Still Speak Today?

Romans 10:17

Knowing and Receiving the Truth

Hebrews 4:12

Matthew 5:6

2 Thessalonians 2:9, 10

John 7:17 (NASB)

Luke 11:52

The Truth about Our Heart

Jeremiah 17:5-10

Ephesians 3:14-19

2Corinthians 2:2-3

Psalms 40:8

Romans 10:10

Luke 6:44-45

Luke 8:15

Matthew 12:33-35

1 Corinthians 3:16

1 Corinthians 6:19

Romans 12:1-2

John 14:6

John 8:31-35

Searching Out the Matter (continued)

Assignment

1. Review your notes and the Scripture passages from this week's module. What were the most challenging concepts about the truth of God? What do you think the Holy Spirit is trying to teach you in this regard?
2. Identify a passage of Scripture that you have had trouble understanding with your mind. In a setting with 2 or 3 other Christians, ask each in the group to share what it means to them. You may have to explain the "and" principle of searching out the matter.
3. Ask the Lord for the grace to practice the steps of knowing and receiving the truth:
 - a. A hunger and thirst for righteousness.
 - b. A love of the truth.
 - c. Courage and discipline to come with your "Amen" first, and to enter into the truth you are given.
4. Pray Paul's prayer to the Ephesians (1:15-23) over yourself. It might go something like this:

Heavenly Father, thank You for encouraging me to come to You as a child. God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, I pray that You would give me the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of You. May the eyes of my understanding be enlightened; that I may know what is the hope of Your calling on my life, what are the riches of the glory of Your inheritance in me, and what is the exceeding greatness of Your power toward me. I pray in according to the working of Your mighty power – the same power You worked in Christ when You raised Him from the dead and seated Him at Your right hand. In Jesus' name. Amen.