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**THE TRUTH THAT SETS US FREE**

**BEING LED**

**TO**

**TRUTH**

*May 31, 2013*

# THE TRUTH THAT SETS US FREE

## *Article 5: Being Led to Truth*

The previous articles in this symposium explained that Jesus is the truth, that we must disown ourselves, that we must primarily know the life and ministry of Jesus, and that we must imitate Jesus' spiritual life. Yet after getting this far, we have only just begun the race for life. There is so much more to know and do. This is where the Spirit of Truth comes in. During the first Memorial Supper, Jesus told his apostles:

**“I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you.” – John 16:12-14**

On this night at the end of his ministry, Jesus had taught his disciples all they were able to assimilate at that time. But there was much more he wanted to tell them that had to be deferred until he poured out the Spirit of Truth who would ‘he will tell you what is yet to come.’ This occurred on Pentecost 33 C.E., approximately 50 days after Jesus said the above words.

On the day of Pentecost, the apostles and other men and women disciples, totaling 120 people, were not at the temple celebrating. They were gathered together in an upper room praying. (*Acts 1:12-15*) They recalled that Jesus had told them before ascending to heaven:

**“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” – Acts 1:8**

And as Jesus said, when the spirit was poured out upon them, they were empowered and had an unusually strong desire to bear witness to Jesus and the hope he brought for all men:

**“When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: “In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy.”**  
– *Acts 2:1-4, 16-18*

Though the spirit initially only affected the 120, as others became familiar with the life of Jesus through Peter's eloquent and bold speech (*Acts 2:14-36*), they, too, experienced the pouring out of the spirit upon them, including their children and future generations:

“When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?” Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. **The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.**” – *Acts 2:37-39*

Today, we have much more than the words of Peter. We have the gospel accounts, and the apostles’ letters – the ‘meat and potatoes’ of the Bible. And as we come to know the true authentic Jesus, we too can be filled with the Spirit of Truth, poured out once for all time, and be progressively led into all truth.

### **How the Spirit Leads Us**

Once we have emptied ourselves and taken in the plain and open teachings of Jesus, then the Spirit of Truth fills the void that used to be occupied by the mundane ideas and dead theories of men. And when we are free from man’s leading, the spirit can lead us.

The Spirit of Truth takes us from learning facts to understanding them (information), from understanding facts to wise application of them (wisdom), and from the wise application of facts to living the truth (knowing by personal experience). This is how our ‘by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.’ (*Hebrews 5:14*) This is how the word of God remains active in our lives and why Paul could say:

“For the **word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.**” – *Hebrews 4:12*

The spirit does not necessary reveal new facts; more often it imparts new meanings to the facts already known. We have been studying the Bible practically all our lives, yet the same scriptures that we have read thousands of times have taken on new meaning. It is as if new verses have been added to the Bible because somehow we never saw them or understood them before. Now, when we read the Bible, we see a whole new picture which has given us a whole new look at life and death, and the afterlife. It is like the Bible is a new, undiscovered book. That new discovery is the Spirit of Truth at work.

We often get emails from our brothers who write: “How did I miss that? This is so clear. I’ve been studying the Bible for 30 years and never saw this!” Perhaps you have had a similar experience. Some scriptures seem to have appeared out of nowhere. Like this one that tells us if we are not pursuing the upward call, our mental attitude is off:

“I press on toward the goal to win **the prize for which God has called me** heavenward in Christ Jesus. All of us, then, who are mature should take such a view of things. And if on some point you think differently, that too **God will make clear to you.**”  
– *Philippians 3:14-15*

And this one that tell us **not** to focus on earthly things:

“Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. **Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.**”  
– *Colossians 3:1-2*

We held the view that the heavenly hope of sonship with God was a contingency plan to offset the sin of Adam and Eve. Then we read this scripture which led us to write the article **Foreordained from the Founding of the World.**

“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. For he chose us in him **before the creation of the world** to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us for adoption to **sonship through Jesus Christ**, in accordance with his pleasure and will.” – *Ephesians 1:3-5*

It caused us to look again at the Genesis account of Adam and Eve which led us to write **Why Does God Permit Evil and Suffering?**

Another “ah-ha”(or “Abba”) moment was when reading these scriptures which led to write the article **Everlasting Life Now!**

“And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, **and this life is in his Son.** Whoever **has** the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life. I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that **you have** eternal life.” *1 John 5:11-13*

“Very truly I tell you, the one who believes **has eternal life.**”  
– *John 6:47*

“**Now this is eternal life: that they know you,** the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.” – *John 17:3*

“Very truly I tell you, whoever **hears** my word and **believes** him who sent me **has eternal life** and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life.” – *John 5:24*

We could go on! The point is that the Bible has become a playground of discovery for us. It seems every week, we see something new – a new meaning or different application. All of that is the Spirit of Truth at work!

And we acknowledge that our experiences of spiritual enlightenment were achieved by some long before they became evident to us, but before they became evident to others. This fact should cause all of us to refrain from judging others. While some may not understand or see clearly at this time, they may very well understand in the future – possibly the near future – depending on their own individual love for truth and their individual capacity to comprehend spiritual things.

This was evident in the first century with the Apostle Paul. He was given enlightenment which enlarged his spiritual vision more than even that of the 12 apostles. We recall

his profound and unusual experience on the road to Damascus. (*Acts 9:3-9*) It appears that this experience was more than meets the eye when we read Paul's later writing:

"I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven. Whether it was in the body or out of the body I do not know—God knows. And I know that this man—whether in the body or apart from the body I do not know, but God knows— was caught up to paradise and heard inexpressible things, things that no one is permitted to tell."  
– *2 Corinthians 12:2-4*

This experience no doubt gave Paul his tremendous insight into spiritual matters. His writings are unlike any of those written by the 12. His writings, while in harmony with what Jesus taught, evidence a deeper understanding of those matters. And we recall that he was not in the upper room at Pentecost! Clearly, the Spirit of Truth continued to operate over 14 years later, leading Paul "into all the truth."

Yes, the Spirit of Truth was poured out 'on all people' everywhere and continues throughout time, including our time. It is here, now, around all of us waiting for an opportunity to assist and enlighten us individually. That is how it works. In a group, we can learn facts, but we can only know truth through personal experience in company with the spirit. That is the meaning of John's words:

"As for you, the anointing you received from him remains in you, and **you do not need anyone to teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about all things** and as that anointing is real, not counterfeit—just as it has taught you, remain in him."  
– *1 John 2:27*

For too long, man has seen the Christ through the eyes of other men. The Spirit of Truth enables us to see Christ through Christ's own eyes:

"But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. **He will not speak on his own;** he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. **He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you.**" – *John 16:13-14*

The individual nature of the operation of spirit is troublesome to those who seek to corral and control the Father's children, and those whose motive is to impress others with their vast knowledge. They see the idea of spiritual independence as an earmark of false religion. But spiritual independence is the goal – independence from the stewardship of men, that is.

"What I am saying is that as long as an heir is underage, he is no different from a slave, although he owns the whole estate. The heir is subject to guardians and trustees until the time set by his father...**Because you are his sons,** God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father"  
– *Galatians 4:1-2,6*

"Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, **there is freedom.**" – *2 Corinthians 3:17*

The idea that we must all be taught the same thing at the same time is what stifles spiritual freedom. When we are forced to say “This is what **we** believe” or “This is **our** current understanding,” right then and there our freedom is forsaken and we become slaves of the group. This is the problem with organized religion, it robs us of the freedom to grow and expand by means of the Spirit of Truth and, consequently we become stagnant – spiritually dead. When learning and growing in our faith ceases, and is not stimulated by constant exercise, we lose our strength and we forfeit the power of the Spirit of Truth, therefore silencing the Father’s will for us.

How much better to have an interchange of encouragement where we stimulate each other to take full advantage of the operation of the Spirit of Truth, to strive for the crown of life and to pursue the ultimate mandate to ‘Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.’ (*Matthew 5:48*) All of these things we do at our own pace. Done this way, we are enabled and empowered to stand with conviction because we are personally living all of the truth we know.

Man’s failure to understand and work with the Spirit of Truth is the reason Christianity is still stuck in the first century. We know that we cannot have the mind of God, but we can have the mind of Christ. (*1 Corinthians 2:16*) Yet, Christianity, as a whole, actually punishes those who dare to use that mind! But by means of the Spirit of Truth, we gain ‘the wisdom from above’ (*James 3:17*) and pass down our enhanced meanings and values of spiritual things to future generations so they can continue to grow in the Christ. This is one way the enemies of Christ are subdued. (*Psalms 110:2*)

Yes, the ‘new wine’ of Jesus continues to be poured out by means of the Spirit of Truth. And if we carry with us the ‘new wineskins’ of the mind of Christ, we can catch and carry some of it! When we do, then we experience the freedom that comes from knowing truth.

In our final article in this symposium, **Being Free**, we will discuss ways that we can exhibit and exercise our Christian freedom.

*“Elaia Luchnia”*