

Spiritual Warfare & Moral Excellence – Part 2

The Foundation of Truth & Righteousness

In the previous message we talked about what it means to add to our faith virtue. We found **the Greek definition of virtue** to be defined as a virtuous course of thought, feeling or action that leads to moral goodness.

Webster's Dictionary defined it as conformity to a standard of right, a particular moral excellence: manly strength or courage and valor – purity in conduct and intention.

We talked about our need, *as Christians*, to strive for moral excellence in the midst of a society that is without morals and values that reflect the kingdom of God and its righteousness.

Philippians 2:15 - That you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world,

If we are to meet the challenge of becoming morally pure in a society that is morally bankrupt, we must understand and build into our lives the foundation for moral excellence.

If we are to raise godly children, who will grow up to be mature adults, abounding in moral excellence, this **foundation must be firmly laid in their lives**.

The foundation that I am referring to is that of truth and righteousness.

Psalm 89:14 - Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne;
love and faithfulness go before you.

CEV - Your kingdom is ruled by justice and fairness with love and faithfulness leading the way.

Proverbs 14:22 - Do not those who plot evil go astray? But those who plan what is good find love and faithfulness.

CEV - It's a mistake to make evil plans, but you will have loyal friends if you want to do right.

- We must understand that **we are in a battle for truth and righteousness.**
- **Satan** is desiring to **steal truth** from the land,
- Because when he does, he has also **stolen our virtues.**

The Foundation of Truth

When Jesus was brought before Pilate, **He had a very interesting conversation with him concerning what is truth.**

John 18:37-38 - 37 Pilate therefore said to Him, “Are You a king then?”

Jesus answered, “You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.”

38 Pilate said to Him, “What is truth?” And when he had said this, he went out again to the Jews, and said to them, “I find no fault in Him at all.

Some might think that *Pilate was being facetious*, but **I think he was serious.**

Without an absolute source of truth and the absolutes that come forth from it

- **Truth** is a very nebulous thing.
- **What constitutes truth? Power?**
- Rome was the nation of power during this time of history, and therefore dictated what truth was.

Without the acknowledgement of God who is the source of all truth, there is no such thing as truth. Truth becomes what is right for the individual.

Judges 17:6 - In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.

CEV - This was before kings ruled Israel, so all the Israelites did whatever they thought was right.

Isn't this pretty much where our society is today?

- We no longer are being governed by the Judeo-Christian values that our country grew up with.
- We are living in a day in which we have **refused and denied these values as old-fashioned.** They are **no longer relevant** for our times, so they say!

- God has been legislated out of our school systems and other areas of our society and as a result **truth and morality become whatever is right for the individual.**

Because of this, ***Today's youth are facing a crisis of truth.***

- **Truth, to them,** is a matter of taste and as a result there is no standard of right and wrong.
- They **do not** have **moral absolutes** and **core values** imbedded into their hearts.
- **Everyone** does **what is right in their own sight.** Therefore,,,,,,,,,,,,,

A foundation of truth must first be established in their lives, if we are to have any hope for moral excellence coming forth from this generation.

1. Jesus is the Source of all Truth

John 14:6 - Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

Jesus is the source of all truth.

- **All truth** proceeds from Him and is established upon His words and commands.
- He represents the absolute standard from which all measurement flows.
- **He gives us the Holy Spirit, who leads us into all truth.**

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.

2. The Word of God is Truth

John 17:17-19 - "Sanctify them by Your truth. **Your word is truth.** "As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. "And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth.

Again, we see the truth as the foundation for our sanctification and holiness.

So, we see that it is this truth that comes forth from the absolute standard – Jesus Christ, that leads us into moral excellence.

We see this in the following scriptures as well.

2 Timothy 3:16 - All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is **profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness...**

CEV - **Everything in the Scriptures is God's Word.** All of it is useful for teaching and helping people and for correcting them and **showing them how to live.**

1 Peter 1:22 - Since you have purified your souls **in obeying the truth** through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart...

CEV - **You obeyed the truth**, and your souls were made pure. Now you sincerely love each other. **But you must keep on loving** with all your heart.

Proverbs 14:22 - Do not those who plot evil go astray?
But those who plan what is good find love and faithfulness.

CEV - **It's a mistake to make evil plans, but you will have loyal friends if you want to do right.**

3. What Happens When this Truth is Denied?

Our society has basically rejected the truths of Christianity and the morals and values that came as a result.

What happens when these truths and values are denied?

Isaiah 59:14 - Justice is turned back, and righteousness stands afar off; for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter.

CEV - **Injustice is everywhere**; justice seems far away. Truth is chased out of court; honesty is shoved aside.

This shows us how much a foundation of truth means to our basic morals and values.

- We see this and we wonder **why today's youth** are growing up **without values and morality.**
- **Is it their fault?**

We try to put the blame on them, but really *the blame belongs to our generation* for allowing the truth of God to be so compromised in our society.

Our whole societal system has begun to disintegrate into a cesspool of violence, blatant immorality and moral decay.

- **Our schools** have disintegrated.
- **Our justice system** has become so corrupted that criminals go free.
- **Our political system** has become so corrupted.
- **We don't know** what is right and what is wrong anymore.
- **Our culture** has become an abomination to God.

Proverbs 14:34 Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.
CEV - Doing right brings honor to a nation, but sin brings disgrace.

Before we can really make any great changes in our society, political and justice systems and culture, **the foundation of truth must be restored**.

We must come back to the absolutes of Biblical authority, recognizing that God is the source of all truth.

Deuteronomy 32:4 - He is the Rock, His work is perfect; for all His ways are justice, a God of truth and without injustice; righteous and upright is He.

The Lord is a mighty rock and he never does wrong. **God can always be trusted** to bring justice.

Spiritual Warfare and Truth - We must realize the real war with Satan isn't over abortion, homosexuality, murder, drugs, gang violence, corrupted morals, etc.

These are all symptoms and spoils of the war over truth.

Satan's battle is with truth, because he knows he cannot stand amid truth.

1. Satan Cannot Stand in the Midst of Truth.

John 8:44 - "You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. 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 lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.

- **Satan questions the truth** – Eve in Garden - "Has God said?" He's still doing it today.
- **He distorts the truth** – Jesus in the wilderness – "Turn bread into stones."

Since the whole world lies in the lap of the evil one,

- His lies have inundated our society and culture.
- **which has had its effect** upon our lives and our children's lives.
- **Educators are teaching his lies as truths.**

To see how far-reaching Satan's lies are listen to this: *Alan Bloom in his book "Closing of the American Mind"* says, "almost every single student entering Universities adheres to the concept, **'All truth is relative to your situation, personal taste and cultural choice.'**"

With the absence of truth, power is the determining factor. Each person does what is right in their own eyes. As a result, our children are growing up in a society of cultural relativism.

- Everyone **must decide** what is right and wrong.
- You do not impose your values on others.
- You let others live out their values in tolerance.

All ideas of right and wrong **are now** a matter of personal taste, emotional preference or cultural choice.

In the supreme court case of Planned Parenthood & the Federation of America vs. Casey the court ruled **it is up to the individual to determine the concept of existence** and mystery and meaning of life. (1992)

Many Americans are not prepared to **recognize any moral authority** aside from themselves.

- I grew up in a generation **with absolute standards** that came from the Christian perspective.
- They were **standards for right and wrong behavior** and were accepted nationwide.
- **Our** parents, educators, and other adults collaborated **to communicate a standard.**

This is no longer so, because **Truth has been assaulted by the father of lies, who has no truth in him.**

2. Satan's Spoils of War

It is time for us as the people of God to recover what was taken and to put on the armor of God with our waists girded with truth.

Deuteronomy 30:2-4 – 2 and you return to the Lord your God and obey His voice, according to all that I command you today, you and your children, with all your heart and with all your soul, 3 that the Lord your God will bring you back from captivity, and have compassion on you, and gather you again from all the nations where the Lord your God has scattered you. 4 If any of you are driven out to the farthest parts under heaven, from there the Lord your God will gather you, and from there He will bring you.

CEV - Return to him with all your heart and soul and start obeying the commands I have given to you today. 3-4 Then he will stop punishing you and treat you with kindness. He may have scattered you to the farthest countries on earth, but he will bring you back

CLOSE:

We must allow **the banner of truth** according to the sovereignty of God to be raised high in our communities and families.

It is time for absolute truth to be restored: something true for all people at all places and always.

What does this say about **how Satan's disregard for truth has affected** even godly evangelical Christians?

It is time for us to gird our waists with the armor of truth.

Ephesians 6:14 - Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness...

CEV - Be ready! Let the truth be like a belt around your waist, and let God's justice protect you like armor.