



The Voice of Truth

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"Charges To Christians"

By Jimmy Pettigrew

One of the real problems of Christianity is a lack of dedicated service to Christ. You must serve Christ zealously and faithfully. Living the Christian life is pictured in the New Testament as: warfare (**Eph. 6:10-18**), an athletic event (**1 Cor. 9:24-26; Gal. 5:7**). A good start, so important in a race, does not insure a successful finish. Christians need to remember these charges for running the Christian race.

(1) ". . . stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong" (**1 Cor. 16:13**). Paul exhorts the Corinthians to stand fast. Meaning, stand fast in the truth (**Jno. 17:17**), God's word (**Psa. 119:9**), the New Testament (**2 Cor. 3:6**), the gospel of Christ (**Rom. 1:16**), the doctrine or teaching of Christ (**2 Jno. 9**). This is the urgency needed by all saints! We must prove our worth as a soldier of Christ and fight the spiritual warfare that Christians must wage! Stand fast in the faith, always be eager to defend (**1 Pet. 3:15**) and contend (**Jude 3**). Stand for things which Christ stood for, stand for the things which Christ died for, stand and ask for the old paths (**Jer. 6:16**).

(2) "Abstain from every form of evil" (**1 Thess. 5:22**). When one has learned what is good or true, and what is evil and false, he should hold fast the true and abstain from the evil. In **1 Timothy 6:11-12**, follow a discourse on a number of evils and the disastrous results that come upon those that follow such things. Paul addresses Timothy as a "man of God", indicating that he is one who is committed to God in this life. In view of the evils just mentioned (**1 Timothy 6**), Paul urges Timothy to "flee these things" (**vs. 11**). There are times when running is not cowardly, but wise. It is absurdity, foolishness and madness to remain in the presence of temptation needlessly. It is not wisdom to deliberately place one's soul in jeopardy. When Joseph was approached by the wife of Potiphar for the purpose of fornication, Joseph fled the scene completely. We cannot always avoid temptations, but we do not have to remain in their presence. "Do not enter the path of the wicked, And do not walk in the way of evil. Avoid it, do not travel on it; Turn away from it and pass on" (**Prov. 4:14-15**).

(3) "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (**Jno. 14:15**). This says in effect, that love for the Lord is evidenced in keeping His commandments. If you'll keep on loving Me, you'll keep my commandments. "And hereby we do know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He that saith, I know Him, and keep-eth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him" (**1 Jno. 2:3-5**). "As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love, even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love" (**Jno. 15:9-10**). This love for God is not simply an emotion. It is a disposition that seeks the glory of God. It is an attitude of submission to His will. It is the desire to do His bidding! Love is not only obeying commands; it is having them! "He who has my commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and

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manifest myself to Him" (**Jno. 14:21**). Love **MUST** be expressed in obedience! Such glorifies the Son and thus, glorifies the Father. Do you love the Father? Do your actions show that you do?

(4) "... Be ye yourselves also holy in all manner of living" (**1 Pet. 1:15**). We are encouraged to live lives of complete dedication to God. As the song we sing, we need to:

*Take time to be Holy,
speak oft with thy Lord;
Abide in Him always,
And feed on His word.*

Are we taking time to be holy when we want worship services shortened? Or, when we want the sermon not to be over twenty minutes? We want the prayers short, the songs few. What's the big hurry? Are we in a hurry to visit the sick and erring after services? No, we want to go to a restaurant and eat a delicious meal, watch TV or whatever we desire. If the Lord's Supper is served first, some brethren will partake of it and leave on a trip the minute after they partake! Is this taking time to be holy, or is this taking time for our own desires? We need to forget the cares of the world and take time to be holy! We should study God's word and pray every day.

The truth of God has been placed in the care of those who love the Lord. It is an awesome responsibility, so let us handle it aright, love it, obey it, live it and stand fast for it!

All Liars

By Thomas A. Thornhill, Jr.

Revelation 21:8 says, "But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

We have heard much discussion on how serious a lie is or is not by the media discussing the character of various individuals. There are attempts to redefine what constitutes a real lie and to say that depending on the circumstances, it is okay to lie. But no matter how our society may distort this word, a lie is always a lie. What is a lie? Stated in simple terms, it is a failure to tell the truth in any way whatsoever. Let's note some things the Bible says about truth and falsehoods.

The Bible clearly teaches that we are to be truthful in ALL things. **Philippians 4:8** teaches, "Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble... if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy-meditate on these things." **Proverbs 12:17** says, "He who speaks truth declares righteousness, but a false witness, deceit." **Ephesians 4:25** instructs us, "Therefore, putting away lying, 'Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor,' for we are members of one another." **Ephesians 4:29** says, "Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers." In **Colossians 3:9**, Paul admonishes, "Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds." **1 Corinthians 13:6**, speaking of true Christian love says that it, "does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth."

Everything about the Christian life is to be true. We follow the truth which is God's word (**John 17:17**). This same truth makes us free (**John 8:32**). In speaking to others, we are to mean what we say (**Matthew 5:36-37**). We are to buy the truth and not sell it (**Proverbs 23:23**). We are to be above reproach which demands that we speak and live the truth. This is contrary to the world's idea of what truth is! We live in a society that wants to deny that there is any absolute truth. Consider the words of a U.S. Senator, "Morality is like beauty. It is in the eye of the beholder." Is there any wonder that our nation is so corrupt? We must

clearly understand that there is absolute truth and those who reject it will answer to God one day.

Concerning lies, those who practice lies and deceit are spoken of in **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." These words of Jesus say it all. Any time there is an attempt to hide or even cloud the truth, you can rest assured that Satan is behind it. Peter told us, "For he who would love life and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips from speaking deceit" (**1 Peter 3:10**). David, speaking of God and His word said, "You reject all those who stray from Your statutes, for their deceit is falsehood" (**Psalms 119:118**). And let us not forget the text we began with, "...All liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone..." (**Revelation 21:8**).

But what does "all liars" mean? It means anyone who is guilty of any type of lie. Too many people, while they say that an outright "bold-faced" lie is wrong, will excuse "lighter" forms of lies. For instance: they might say that circumstances dictate whether or not one can lie. They might say, "If a lie is made for a good cause then it's excused." But, I ask, where does the Bible make this distinction?

Some speak in half-truths claiming what they say is not really a lie, but it is certainly not the truth. An example of this is Satan telling Eve she would not die (**Genesis 3:4**). Note it was this half-truth that caused Jesus to call him the father of all lies in **John 8:44**. A half-truth involves intent to deceive someone and thus is WRONG!

One can be guilty of supporting a lie by not correcting error that is taught. **2 John 1:9-11** warns us against such behavior.

One who speaks gossip can be guilty of a lie, if what they say is untrue in any way. If they repeat what they have heard without investigation and it is later determined to be untrue, that person is guilty of lying. We must investigate before we speak. (There are other sins associated with gossip, too).

Often times when one gives an excuse, they are lying. If you tell someone the reason you do something or don't do it, and it is not the primary reason, it is a lie. Consider again the excuses of Adam and Eve in **Genesis 3**. While they were not outright lies, they were hiding the real reason they disobeyed Him, they lusted after the forbidden fruit.

Bad Friends **By Brian Yeager**

(**1 Corinthians 15:33**) "Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners." I studied for some time in school the theories of people being effected by their surroundings. While most Psychologists would argue that there is no basis for such a theory, the Bible tells us differently. The Bible warns us not to be deceived by such beliefs of our surroundings not affecting our behavior. The Bible tells us that such evil communications can corrupt us. The world is just simply not a place a Christian can properly fit into. A Christian is to be a peculiar person. (**Titus 2:12-15**) "Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee." In this passage we are told to avoid worldly lusts, and that we should live righteously. We are to avoid corrupt actions, and anyone that may draw us near

to those actions.

We have a great parable found in the book of Luke chapter fifteen. This is the parable of the lost son. **(Luke 15:13-15)** "And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living. And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want. And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine." In this section of passages we have the story in progress, up to this point the younger of two sons asked his father to give him his portion of his inheritance. His father did so. Then the parable reads that the son spent his money on riotous living. The son was consumed by the lusts of the world. What happens then to this young man, he is broke, and the world does not love him any longer since he has nothing to offer it. He then takes on the worst of jobs to a Jewish young man. He had to feed the unclean, the swine. The record even states that he was at the point of even eating the husk that the pigs had eaten. This is what happens to a Christian when they give in to the world and lose at the gambling game that the world has to offer.

If the world consumes a Christian, the Christian then has to make a choice. In this choice that has to be made, the Christian can come back to the Lord, or wait and see if his next hand is dealt any better. In this parable it is stated that he "came to himself". **(Luke 15:17-24)** "And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants. And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him. And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry: For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry." The parable tells us how God would have the fallen act in such a situation. He would like them to come home. In the book of Revelation chapter three and verse twenty Christ is speaking to the lost of the Church. He says: "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." This is based on the prerequisite of repentance in verse nineteen. Let this be an article that will make you come to yourself and realize that bad friends will not bring you to the Lord!

What Must I Do To Be Saved?

Hear and Learn - Rom. 10:17 m. 10:9-10 ; 1 Pet. 3:21 ; John 6:45; 17:3

Believe - Heb. 11:6; John 6:29; 8:24

Repent - Luke 13:3; Acts 3:19; 17:30

Confess the Lord - Matt. 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10; 1 Pet. 3:21

Be Baptized - Mark 16:16; Acts 22:16; Gal. 3:26-27

Continue in the Apostles' Teaching - Acts 2:42; 2 Tim. 3:14-17