

WHEN THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH COMES

Text

We read here that it can be seen whether the truth of God lives in you. It can be seen by way of one's keeping of God's command. This shows in the way we think, speak, and act.

Now that makes sense, doesn't? It fits in with everything else what Scriptures says about being a member of the Kingdom of God. And this is that the Kingdom of God, or the Kingdom of Heaven, stands for the rule and the reign of Jesus within. "The Kingdom of God is within you" Jesus emphatically said in Lk.17:21.

And just before, in John 13:34-35 Jesus had said, "A new commandment I ...

Moreover, Christ summarized the Law and the Prophets in the words of, "Love the Lord your ...

So, no one can say, "I love God" and than turn around and ignore His command. No one can say, "I love my neighbour" and than fail to seek his/her highest good.

The "highest good", of course, always being what? The truth of God and the truth in Christ. It is the truth of "if you desire to be saved and go to heaven", you do your all to have your neighbour saved too and go to heaven.

Another example is when you and I exchange vows in marriage. Just to say the "for better, for worse" vow is one thing, but to live it out is the proof of the pudding. The saying on that big day, "I do", is to live it 365 days of the year, every year, "until death us do part".

No one can say, "I am a Christian" and live inconsiderately with his wife or husband and children. Do you recall what Peter, the great Pentecost fisherman wrote in his Letter to Christians living in dispersion?

This: "Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers." (1 Pet. 3:7)

Marital quarelling hinders not only vertical communication but also horizontal communication. It hinders prayer. It blocks the spiritual arteries and life line with God.

I am sure that no one wants that. In one of our devotional

booklets of last week we read of a couple who were celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary. But instead of doing it with a lot of fanfare, they did it quietly among themselves with just a cup of tea and a slice of homemade bread.

The husband opened this freshly loaf of bread and gave his wife the crust. She right away exploded. saying, "This is the last straw. For the past 50 years you 've dumped the crust of bread on me. You always think of yourself first. You take the best for yourself, and leave the rest to me. You never think of what I like. Well, I have news for you: I won't take it any longer!".

Just as she was about to leave, the husband said, "But, honey, it's my favorite piece! I always give it up for you."

A bad line of communication between the two. With such an attitude, can you imagine how the wife's prayer life has been for these 50 years?

Now I give these examples to emphasize that if it already stands this way with our "neighbour", i.e. whoever God brings upon our path of life, even as on the day of the the marriage vow, HOW MUCH MORE does it stand as to keeping of God's command.

No one can say, "I do" to God, when making public confession of faith in Jesus Christ, and than fail to regularly worship and fellowship with God's people, faithfully read the Word of God, each day spend time in prayer for oneself and those around him/her, and give generously to make possibly that the Word of God can go be preached nearby and far away.

John 14:15-18

Jesus here reminded his followers that he was soon to leave them. It was by way of the cross, the grave, and the sky. Then they would be like "sheep without a shepherd." And also as "sheep in the midst of wolves". The latter figure of speech emphasizes that Christians live and labour in a hostile environment. We must be ready for spiritual warfare.

So this was GOOD NEWS indeed telling them that when He would leave, He would ask the Father to give them "another Counselor to be with them forver."

In other words, this Great and Special One, this One like Him, would carry on doing the same things Jesus been doing these 3 years. He would take the place He was about to vacate.

Think of that when you read about the Holy Spirit in your life, family, devotions, Bible, church, denomination, and worldwide Christian church. Glorious, isn't? We are having Jesus in and around to teach us truths from the Bible, guide us, lead us, direct us, help us pray, have fellowship, "love God with all of our", and place

words in our heart and mouth in difficult situations.

Needless to say, you and I can't live the Christian life without the Presence and power of the Holy Spirit within.

We can't even understand the holy scriptures without the illumination of the Holy Spirit. Jesus said in John 15:15 that "the Holy Spirit would take what is (his) and make it known to you (and I)."

And here is something else to not forget. This Counselor "will be with you forever" Jesus said. Can you think of anything more authoritative and comforting than this? It meant to the disciples, including you and I, there will be no more breaking up and ending of the Jesus relationship, saying "good bye" and leaving, with no one to fend for them.

In fact, the Great Commission reminded them and us of this as well. We read there, "Then Jesus came to ... (Matth. 28: 18-20)

This could only mean that the Holy Spirit was now to take the place of Jesus. For only minutes thereafter He ascended into heaven, leaving them behind.

Paul understood these words that way too when he wrote to the Phil. Christians, "In all my prayers for ... (1:4-6)

Also, think of Rom. 8:32-39

Now, this COUNSELOR Jesus further identifies as "THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH". What a Divine, Absolute, and Glorious description this is! Oh, the Spirit of Truth and the Word of Truth. Can you think of anything more needed than this?

The ecumenical emphasis is all on unity, but what is either under-emphasized or ignored altogether is that Jesus' prayer for unity stressed more than anything else two things:

1. Christ prayed, Sanctify them by the truth; Thy Word is truth."
2. This says that it is a oneness like the oneness that is between Father and Son! It is not a throwing together of whatever anyone feels like accepting or not accepting from the Word of God. The church of Jesus Christ cannot embrace any of the things of the world.

Brothers and sisters, younger and older, with the Devil, who is the father of all lies, and hard at work since the beginning of creation, blinding and spiritually sedating anyone he is able to get hold of, here is our answer to resist him, and walk in the truth as it is in Christ: Thy Word is truth.

Truth and lie are as opposite to one another as light and darkness, good and evil, love and hate, right and wrong,

righteousness and unrighteousness, heaven and hell.

That the Holy Spirit is another COUNSELOR is a useful reality and a practical need. For we need a lot of counseling in our Christian walk. Counseling stands for help, advise, discernment, guidance, and direction.

And the Counselor is Jesus in Spirit form. As Jesus could say, "I came into the world to bear witness to the Truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears my voice", the Spirit can say. The Spirit is as much "the way, the truth, and the life" as the Lord Jesus Himself.

Also, whether a whole army of Pontius Pilates would scornfully remark, "What is truth?", none of it would change the essence or nature of Truth as it comes from God.

We have to learn this anew in the day and age we live, both in the land as well as in the church.

e.g., we all highly prize living with democratic principles. They are so much better than experiencing dictatorships. Those of us who have gone through the war with Hitler, and the 5 years of occupation following, know what I am referring to.

But as to the embracing of "the nature of truth as it comes from God", it is not to be superseded or dallied with by majority votes.

When 60% of the people vote in favor of continuing with the horror of annually killing pre-born babies by poisoning, crushing, dismembering, and disposing them like garbage because (quote) "it is a woman's right to do with her body what she wants", it does not say that therefore abortion is the expression of the essence of truth as it comes from God!

And the same as to "mercy killing" or euthanasia. Such absolutes are not determined by democratic principles.

Furthermore, what about gay, lesbian, and bisexual practices which the justices of the Supreme Court have allowed to enshrine in our Constitution?

Well, two things here.

Firstly, God is God, and no one else is. Therefore the Supreme Court justices better not try play "high and mighty". There is nothing more dangerous than that, both for them and for the nation.

Secondly, truth as it comes from God does not give any government the right to ignore any of the 10 Commandments. And where this is being done, it undermines the strength of the nation.

And the same stands for the Christian Church. Except gravely more so.

Next month between June 14-20, our General Synod will vote on the Formula of Agreement to tie us more closely to a church that has nearly 100 homosexual congregations and ordained gay, lesbian, and bisexual ministers serving these churches.

I have written and stated that it is bad enough to fight governments to give special rights to homosexuals, but it becomes incredibly more sad when one has to start fighting the same things in one's own beloved denomination.

I wrote 4 long letters to the General Secretary of our church, pointing out everything from Scripture, BCO, Classes' involvement, undermining family life, inviting God's wrath upon us, and that the truth as it comes from God is not for sale and decided upon by a majority vote.

I am sorry to state that all my admonitions, facts, and arguments have been brushed off by saying that I see things in the wrong way. And that this Formula of Agreement is about "full communion" with the Luthern Church. This is like saying, "Forget about the baggage that comes along with it. I now am being admonished to not bring about division in our church.

We live in dangerous times. The truth as it comes from God is being ignored, set aside, trampled upon, both in churches *here & there,* and nation. This is why we are having such a problem with things that are absolute. They are being replaced by what is relative, pragmatic, individual rights, and the democratic process that the majority can't be wrong.

But, friends, the majority can be wrong. I fact, throughout history the majority very often has been wrong.

Only God is truth. Consequently, the Spirit is truth and the Word is truth, period. This is what is being applied to the heart, soul, mind, and spirit of those born from above.

And when this takes place, you know this is it. There is no other way. Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. This is what happened on the day of Pentecost. And what an excitement it brought.

Thereupon the disciples never been the same anymore. That day, they became the "sent ones". This is what apostle means: A sent one from God, sent with the Word of Truth. This was their empowering.

Had Jesus not instructed them about ten days before Pentecost, "I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high." (Lk. 24:49)

Friends, it stands the same today. Don't let anyone tell you otherwise. For then you are not in the presence of the Spirit of truth. You than are facing some spirit of Satan's lie.

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You and I cannot be effective witnesses for Christ in our own strength. We must be filled to overflowing with the Holy Spirit. Don't try to escape it. Seek it. Embrace it.

Remember, the Spirit of truth always bears witness to Jesus and never to anything else. Never to a denomination, World Council or Canadian Council of Churches, Evangelical Fellowship, Regional Synod of Canada, local church, *bible college,* Seminary, pastor, board of elders, deacons, women's group, evangelism committee, or whatever.

The Spirit of truth always holds up that Christ is the one and only Savior. He says there is no other Redeemer sent from God.

The Spirit of truth sets people free from the powers of sin, no matter what kinds of powers of sin that may be and one is struggling with to break free from.

This is how the "The Word of God is living and active. Sharper than any (Hebrews 4:12-13)

The Holy Spirit always and without exception, glorifies Jesus, God's Sent One, Messiah and Christ. And when that takes place, you will respond by thinking and saying, "Oh, Jesus Christ, if it wasn't for You being crucified for me, dying, rising, ascending into heaven, empowering, and always living to intercede for me, I 'll be still unsaved and enslaved.

But glory, hallelujah! Now, because of You, I am a pardoned sinner. Now, I am justified and declared righteous by the blood of the Lamb. Now, I am set free from the bondage of sin. Now, I can tell the devil in Your mighty Name to get out of my way.

Now, I have eternal life. Now, I am a member of the Kingdom of heaven. Now, I am serving Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Now, I am filled to overflowing. Now, I am empowered to witness. Now, I have been granted gifts of the Spirit. Now, I can discern between the truth as it is from God and the Devil's sneaky lies. Now, I have the fruit of the Spirit ripening in my life.

And in closing, for anyone who cannot say this, here is Jesus' word of encouragement and reality: "If you love me, ...

On that day (and let that day be now)
show myself to him/her."

Amen.