

HAVING A LOVE FOR THE TRUTH

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Praise the Lord. I do not often have very much to say. I was told a while back that we have two ears and one mouth, so we should listen twice as much as we speak! I try to do that as much as I can.

I have been a part of the Fellowship since the mid-seventies. I have seen a lot of changes. A lot of people have come and gone. In the early days, I used to hitchhike or catch a ride to get to the Convention meeting in Bloomington. In those days I would stay in the van and not come into the song service, because to me it was not real as it is now. That is where I was at the time. To me, it was not really praise and worship, and really entering in to what we have now and I did not want to have anything to do with it. I did not know anything at all, but I just knew that it was not glorifying the Lord. Now this is not a good testimony, but I would not even go into the meeting until the word came. All I was interested in was the word of the Lord, for I knew that was what was producing the encouragement that I needed.

When we learn something, it stays with you all your life. You never forget it—it is like riding a bicycle. One of the first Scriptures that I really learned was John 7:17, and we all know it. How we forget these things, I have no idea. You know, I think the Spirit of God needs to bring a lot of things back to our remembrance. But John 7:17 says, “*If any man will desire to do the will of God, he shall know the doctrine.*” The Lord said, “*My doctrines are not Mine, but of the One that sent Me.*” So then, “*If you would desire to do God’s will, you will know of the doctrine.*” I do not think God has changed His mind—His program. I think it is still the same way today.

I was talking with a sister in the office last week, and she had a little newspaper clipping that really distressed her. It was on “The mark of the beast” —you know, this whole electronic system of getting the mark, and you cannot buy or sell, and... “WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO? WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO?”

I said, “Well, Praise the Lord! We are still in the same boat! We still have to hear God, and listen to God! You know? If God tells you not to take the mark, you have to make a decision! You have to make a decision based on what God tells you, and I cannot tell you what to do! I have to make a decision too!”

Later then, as this woman is prone to do, she was in a restaurant brushing her teeth. She does it diligently, faithfully. Every day after lunch, she brushes her teeth. I love that! I love that! I am going to an appointment with a dentist because I did not do that. I am going to pay big money because I did not take care of my teeth, but this girl brushes her teeth every time she eats.

That is diligence! She had learned something, someplace, that, “If I do this, it is going to benefit me!” So then, it happened that, in the bathroom, brushing her teeth, the Lord spoke to her; and He said, “If you seek Me, you will find Me.” And she came out just as happy as can be, and, “The Lord said if I seek Him, I will find Him!”

She blessed me so! I said, “Well, Praise the Lord! You got your answer then,” but I think it was these words that I told her, “If you seek Him with your WHOLE heart, you are REALLY going to find Him.” I think that is what I said to her., but I think she got so excited that she just got a part of it.

The thing I wanted to encourage us in, is that in the twenty plus years I have been coming to fellowship, that although many of the people who came early on are not coming anymore (they may be doing something different now—I do not know), there are many that are still coming from many years ago. Every time we come to a convention, one of my concerns is that there are new people here who were not here last year or the year before, and I wonder and I say, “Are those people going to come back?” Because you hear some things at conventions, you know, and you get exposed to like this “warfare,” and you get exposed to this information and everything and [it can come to where you just say], “Man, these people are goofy! They are weird!” and, “I do not know if I want to be with them or not.” Then the next year, I see some people come back, and I am encouraged! Amen! I know that people are “hearing from God,” because they keep coming back.

Now, several things are happening. I will give a little history of some of the things that are happening. If you remember a convention—I think in about

'92—in Schuyler, Nebraska. The message was given (I think it was on, “War on the Saints”). If you remember, in this teaching the satanic kingdom was really exposed to us: how it functions and how it operates—the whole nine yards! Now, the Devil was mad at us before then, but since then the Devil has been really very angry at the brethren who, you know, are trying to follow Jesus Christ, a certain way. He was so mad at the Nebraska brethren, that they have really been hammered a lot! Now, the thing you notice about the Nebraska brethren is that there are many of them who, if God said to, they would go, they would do. There was a diligence in these folks. They would go and do, and God was very well pleased; and so the enemy said he was going to try and stamp them out!

One of the things we have learned about the enemy is that we should not be ignorant of his devices: He is a liar. He will divide. He is an accuser of the brethren. So that, when we see it happening, we should not be shocked!

Another thing that I learned from this fellowship here (and this is what got my attention and caused me to come out of Babylon a little bit), is that you could actually “question!” You could actually question, and ask, “What are you saying?” “Where did you get that from?” “Who told you that?” “Show me that?” “Show it to me again?”

Now, one of the problems in teaching your children (and forgive the example), is that in teaching your children they will question you. Now I used to get distressed at some parents who would actually talk with their kids—have a conversation with their kids. Instead, I would say, “No! Do what I am telling you to do! Now! Do not talk to me!” But, actually, you should train and teach—you should do all those things, but one of the problems that we have (and it is a good problem) is that we have been encouraged “to question.” We have been encouraged to “dissect,” to “challenge,” as a way to correct ourselves, and to be “right on.”

So the enemy would have us to begin to become divisive. Now I will tell you where the next spirit of division is going to be. I do not want to muddy the waters, but I will give it to you. Okay? Also, it is only a part of what we are seeing now—it is the border of it. THE NEXT SPIRIT (THE SPIRIT OF THE AGE) IS THIS WHOLE “RACIAL” THING. Let me warn you now! The enemy has been trying to interject that thing for a long time. We have avoided it okay, rather nicely, but it is going to happen—because this is the next phase!

You are following ministries, you know, that are not “traditional.” What we do know is that the word that we have is a “colorless” word! Amen! The people that we have and have fellowship with are colorless people. Amen. So then, when the enemy brings this one to us, let us just reject it right away! Amen. Let us just go on and just enjoy the Spirit of the Lord together.

So, we have seen a lot of things over the many years that we have been involved, but what we are seeing now is just the enemy bringing in accusation—a rearing of a head that has been an “ancient” head! The Scriptures describe the Devil as an ancient adversary. He knows all the tricks in the book, and he never plays a card—he never plays his hand—until he feels the time is “exactly right” and it is when he can do the most damage.

Also, we should not be a people who are at all fearful. Bringing fear and distress is another device of the enemy. I am glad that the folks are still coming, and questioning! Keep coming, and keep questioning! Because, the Lord.... The greatest revelation, I think, that Peter had, came when the Lord said, “*Who do people say that I am?*” You know, I love Peter! He said, “I know the answer to that question! I got that one! I know that one! I have the answer to that one!” (He finally got one.) So he jumped out there, and he said, “Some say You are *Jeremias*, some say You are *Elias*, some say you are this and that, but You are *the Christ, the Son of the Living God!*” And the Lord said, “You know what, Peter? You finally got one right!” (Laughter) “...*but flesh and blood did not make you know this.*” Amen! “*It was My Father Who is in heaven that made you know this.*”

Then the Lord said, “I guess I can start telling them some other stuff now, because they finally got it settled—Who I am.” “Well, the Son of man must go to Jerusalem. He must suffer many things at the hands of the elders.” You know—“He may even be killed.”

[Peter replies], “Oh no, Lord! Do not let it happen to You! Be it far from You, Lord! That will not happen to You!” Then the Lord said, “*Get thee behind me, Satan!*” Amen. “*You do not savour that which is of God, but you savour that which is of man!*”

Now, to be rebuked, I think it is a good thing. (You are not going to give me an “Amen” on that one, but, anyway, I think to be corrected is a good thing.) Amen! To be chastised in love—I think it is a good thing! These are not bad things! These are provisions that God has given us to keep us in the “straight and narrow!”

So then, the Lord said, “*Get thee behind me, Satan!*” I do not think Peter got offended like a man would get offended: “Well, I just gave you the revelation of Who You was!” You know?

“The Lord said, “*Get thee behind me, Satan, BECAUSE YOU SAVOUREST THAT WHICH IS NOT OF GOD!*” I think that that has always been the distinction that the Lord makes—that which is of God and that which is not of God. That which is Caesar’s, and that which is God’s. In the House of God, things happen a certain way. So I think that is the distinction that God makes.

Another time (Luke 9:55), the Lord rebuked the other brethren when they wanted to call down fire from heaven: "Let us just show these people our power!" The Lord said, "*You do not know what spirit you are of.*" Sometimes, we move in a spirit that is "anti-God." Does it mean we are going to remain in that spirit? No! It means that when we are rebuked—when we are corrected—we are going to change! We are going to grow. We are going to learn. We are going to overcome! It is not as much of a problem as we make it sometimes.

Sometimes our [willingness] to question, I think, is good. Not this thing of, "Let us agree to disagree." I do not think that that is good at all! I think that is a lie. I think the unity of the Spirit is good, but I think "Let us agree to disagree" is a spirit of the age—a spirit of the enemy—because there is "truth!" THERE IS TRUTH! Amen! There is truth. There is no getting around it. The Lord said, "*I am the way; I AM THE TRUTH; I am the life!*"

Now, if we do not understand truth, then let us look at the life of Jesus Christ. Let us examine His life, and let us pattern our life after His life. Amen! Amen! He did not have a problem dealing with publicans and sinners. He did not have a problem with the brothers there or dealing with Judas; but He was not going to stoop to the level of being a thief, or robbing the bag because Judas did it. He would not do that, because He knew what His job was. He knew what His role was!

So there is much more that I could share by way of encouragement (of the twenty some years that we have been a part of this fellowship), but I think that I just wanted to give you just a little bit of an [outlook]. I am a person who observes. I just listen and observe, and kind of see some things, and just enjoy what the Lord is doing!

We have been in some meetings that have been SO HARD to be in! This is going to be funny for some of you guys, but at the risk of mentioning a name—I will just mention a name. We were in a convention with Brother Katz. You guys remember that meeting? Oh, that was a hard meeting? Wasn't it? That was a hard meeting, but oh the things that we learned!

What did God do? God did a mighty work of teaching us something. You know? (Talk about longsuffering, forbearing.) What I am saying is that it is God Who orchestrates some things for you. It was Paul who said, "*I press towards this mark.*" He said, "*If any of you be otherwise minded,*" (if you get off the track somehow), God will make you know. He will reveal even that unto you! God, therefore, will manufacture some circumstances to test us, to see exactly where we are at, to see what you need; because we can never have enough patience, enough longsuffering. You can never have enough of that!

LET US NOT BE DECEIVED. That is what the Lord says. The Lord says that these strong delusions are going to come, but the word of the Lord is, "IF

YOU LOVE THE TRUTH, [THEN YOU WILL NOT BE DECIEVED].” It is not that you are so great, that you are so smart, or that you give so much—it is not that, but that you love the truth!

That you love the truth! Now, this is something that we all can do. It does not take a whole lot of money, you know? Thank goodness that some things are certainly free (salvation is free), because, could you imagine if someone had a market cornered on that? We all, however, can love the truth; and if we have a yearning and a strong desire for it, God will honor that. Jesus said, *“If any man will serve Me, him will My Father honor!”* Amen!

I like the fact that some things about God never change: *“Jesus Christ—the same, yesterday, today, and forever!”* That is Who we are involved with! Also, we thank God for the brethren. Thank God for the Word. Thank God for the “elder” thing, and for the ministry. All that He gives us is God-planned and purposed, that we might be the better for it! Bless the Lord!

We need to let the Devil know, “We are aware of your tricks, and we are not falling for them!” Amen! God bless you!

