

View

“Sir, we wish to see Jesus.” — John 12:21

June 7, 2020

“And You Shall Know the Truth”

by David Barnes

“And You Shall Know The Truth” (John 8:32).

Few things in life are as comforting as this scripture. Jesus is talking to timid, tepid believers. He opens a door for them, the door of positive assurance. The same door is open for us! We can be completely assured about our relationship with God by holding to the truth in his Word.

In a Postmodern world, people reject this as impossible. In postmodernism every idea is equal because there is no truth. With thinking like that a person can worship with God's people one Sunday then attend the Gay Pride march in San Francisco the next Sunday and see no difference between the two (it happened). If every idea is true then confusion is the result.

Christians are called arrogant for thinking they have “the truth.” Are we arrogant? Honest people will consider whether or not the accusation is true (“Lord, is it I,” Matt. 26:22). Yet, God says truth is knowable. What do you think? Is God correct, or not?

First, let's do some weeding so we can see clearly. A Christian should never be arrogant. The question is, does confidence about the truth equal arrogance? The Bible gives an unqualified NO! Passages which support this answer are far too many to list. I will mention only one (maybe two). In Lk. 10:25-28 a lawyer asked Jesus what was necessary for eternal life. The first thing Jesus said was “what is written in the law, how do you read it?” He quoted Dt. 6:5 and Lev. 19:18. The second thing Jesus said was “You have answered correctly.” Apparently(!) the man was not only able but expected to read scripture and find the truth.

Ok, one more. In Matt. 22:29 when Jesus was confronted by the Sadducees about the resurrection Jesus summed up their problem by saying “you don't know the scriptures nor the power of God.” Apparently(!) Jesus' rebuke was not for arrogance but for ignorance! The truth was therefor them to read.

Has that changed in our modern times? Are we now arrogant for believing God when he says the truth is available and understandable? I think not! Don't fall for the “arrogant” accusation. Anyone who says that is doing Satan's work.

Second, multitudes of opinions about truth cause confusion. Satan uses confusion to overwhelm people so

that they become disillusioned. They feel like it's too complex, too difficult. They feel they're not qualified to decide. They look at all the “authorities who disagree, toss up their hands and say “I give up.” Many decide to trust the authority in which they have the most confidence.

False “truths” are nothing but propaganda. Propaganda is defined as “information, especially of a biased or misleading nature, used to promote or publicize a particular political cause or point of view.” Propaganda is deadly.

Last month I learned about a Russian history teacher who said the atrocities Stalin committed “were on par with the other country leaders of his day.” That's absurd! Sadly, the students probably accepted it as truth. If you hitch your wagon to a respected “authority” you will believe the most outrageous lies.

To find the truth you must dig. That's why God says “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth” (2 Tim. 2:15). Timothy needed to work at his preaching and his listeners needed to work at their listening. The Bereans “searched the scriptures daily to see if what Paul said was true.” That is God's prescription for confidence about truth.

Were you at Miller back in the “Dee & Ed” days? Those were wonderful times. The preaching was fabulous, the building packed, the singing thrilling. Their lessons followed two fundamental points. 1st, they were based on God's word and 2nd, everyone believed we could understand what God was saying. Neither Dee or Ed were confusing or arrogant.

Dee is now 85 and Ed is 90. They can't be with us but the power of their preaching remains. They taught and we understood. What a wonderful Christian heritage! Never let anyone shame you (arrogant) or distract you (confusion) from the truth.

What do you think? Can we find the truth? The door of confident discipleship is open for us.

“So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, “If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free” (Jn. 8:31-32).

Statement of Policy Upon Returning to the Building

Our goal is to be considerate of each other and have the best spiritual and physical interest of the congregation in mind as we worship and convene.

We fully realize there are wide and varying opinions regarding precautions that one should take when it comes to wearing face masks and social distancing. It is important to realize also that COVID-19 is different than other infections and poses a greater risk than what we are used to dealing with. It is a virus that can spread while people do not have symptoms. It has an average contagiousness factor where each one of those infected individuals infect on the average an additional 2 more individuals; so 2 becomes 4, 4 becomes 8, 8 becomes 16 very rapidly and many people can become very sick very fast with an infection that does not yet have a good treatment and although research and development laboratories are working around the clock on a vaccine presently there is not one available nor are there medications that are successful in reliably curing those who become seriously ill.

Our aim is to be prudent and apply guidelines that are in the best interest of all and not any one single individual. The criteria is based on official state and county health department recommendations as of May 27, 2020 and are applied with love and with the best interest of everyone in mind. This is a tremendous culture shift for everyone though we are all fortunate to be alive and well and able to have this discussion today. Many families and some even close to us have not been so fortunate.

Specific guidelines:

It is recommended we practice and observe social distancing. Social distancing requires 6 foot distance between one another.

- Face coverings are advised when entering the building.
- Masks will be provided for those arriving without one.
- Children two years old or younger should not wear a face mask. Individuals 10 years or older are encouraged to wear a face mask while in the building.
- High touch areas will be sanitized between services.
- Individuals teaching, delivering sermons, or song leading are not expected to wear a mask though others should maintain a 12 foot distance.
- Gloves should be worn for those participating in necessary service activities related to serving the Lord supper. Hand washing protocols need to be followed.

Live streaming of services will be provided for those who should not come to the building. This would apply to anyone with a fever of 100.4 or higher within the previous two days. It applies for anyone who has a cough or shortness of breath, runny nose, sore throat, new loss of taste or sense of smell, or other symptoms typical of COVID-19.

It also applies to anyone who knows they have come into contact with anyone known to be positive for COVID-19 or someone who is waiting for test results. Anyone who knows they are positive should let the elders know for the safety of all.

Those 65 years old or more with underlying health conditions including high blood pressure, chronic lung disease, diabetes, asthma, and compromising conditions remain at increased risk if COVID-19 is contracted and therefore all of us should follow recommended guidelines with this in mind. Live streaming is also provided for those who cannot assemble at the building due to health reasons. ***This is NOT considered a "forsaking of the assembly."***

We are thankful to have the opportunity to serve you and we appreciate the understanding, patience, and brotherly love as we come together to worship God today in Christ our Lord.

The elders