

IMPORTANCE OF SPIRITUAL TRUTH

Scripture: John 14:1-6

2018-08-27

INTRO: Our subject this morning is spiritual truth. Since we are between series of messages I am dealing with a few subjects that have interested me of late. Turn to Proverbs 23 for a moment. We want to read a most interesting verse of Scripture. We go to verse 23. Here is what it says:

23 Buy the truth, and do not sell it,

Truth is under attack today in a number of different ways. In a message some time ago I asked why truth is such a difficult subject. It is not difficult because it is truly difficult. It is difficult because we are truly sinful. Sin makes it hard to define truth.

But consider our verse. It says, "Buy the truth..." And here is what I recommend, we have to buy the truth. We don't have it by nature. And I recommend to you that it is costly to acquire. Further, once we have it, chances are most likely that we will want to sell it. We will sell it for peace and comfort and freedom from what truth requires of us.

Let me tell you what got me interested in this subject. I listened to a news item from Fox News. They had a man on who had predicted Donald Trump would become president a year before it happened, and he shared how he did it. I can't tell you much about it because I have too much else I want to say. But the reason I read the book is because he dealt with methods of persuasion.

You see, what interested me in the subject of persuasion is that to be persuaded, in the language of the NT is to come to believe. And what we believe, we have been persuaded is true. The words, 'whosoever believes' in John 3:16 means, 'whosoever is persuaded.' To believe is the heart of the Gospel. If one truly believes in Christ, one will truly repent of sin and truly

go on trusting in Him. And if one does not do those two things one is not truly believing, nor is one persuaded.

The man who wrote the book says that most of us think we live by truth at least about 90% of the time. But he says the facts are we live by truth about 10% of the time. And what we mistake for truth is based on our feelings or desires. If he is only half right we need to consider truth in our lives very carefully. He said if you want to persuade people, use that which affects their feelings, and truth won't matter much. People will mistake what makes them happy for truth and follow like lambs to the slaughter. If you want to persuade people, do not use truth or facts. That will not do much. This man showed how anyone who knows how to tap into our likes or happiness, regardless of truth, can take many people wherever he wants us to go.

Now I have no doubt that is different for any serious Christian, but even there, there may be more to it than we would think there might be. Isaiah, in his day lamented the shameful condition of the nation of Israel, and he said, "Truth is fallen in the streets." Then he says, "So truth fails, And he who departs from evil makes himself a prey." In a society where truth has fallen honest people get hurt and liars are exalted (Isaiah 59:14-15).

I. DEFINITION OF TRUTH

As usual, and this time as a refresher, let us begin by defining truth. If you want to check out an interesting study, check out this question on the internet: What is truth? That is an age old question. If you want to see how man can complicate simple things, check out the internet on the question: What is truth? And when you are all done, you will likely ask, "What is truth?"

So, just what is truth? I used to define truth as, "Truth is that which conforms to reality." I'll explain in a moment. But I would add to that now like this: "Truth is any proposition that conforms to reality." The proposition may be given in various ways, but the general way of giving a proposition is in words. For example, if I say, "Two plus

two", end of sentence, I have not given a proposition. But if I say or propose that 2 plus 2 equals 4, I have made a proposition that is true. If I say, "Two plus two equals three", now my proposition is not true. You see, in truth, one thing is given that must conform to the other.

A proposition is a statement or assertion that expresses a conclusion. In the proposition $2+2=4$, the conclusion is that 4 is the answer to $2+2$. So truth is any proposition that conforms to reality. Now we want to identify or delineate the area of truth we will be considering in this message.

II. DELINIATION OF TRUTH

So, let me delineate what precisely we are talking about in this message. There are two large, important fields of truth. There is what I will call scientific truth, and there is spiritual truth. Or one might call them secular truth and sacred truth. Let me identify both and then go to the area of truth we want to consider.

A. Scientific Truth

Let me identify first that which I have called scientific truth.

It is that realm in which we determine truth through the five senses. The proposition, $2+2=4$ is in the realm of scientific truth. It is not a spiritual truth. Truth that can be discovered through the five senses is a very vast area, and deals with the entire material universe. It deals with all that is knowable through the senses.

It deals with mathematical truth; industrialization, aerodynamics, history, geography and on and on. You can learn these truths from anyone who knows them. It does not matter if they are Christians, non-Christians, Buddhists or any other belief. But, this is not the area of truth we want to consider this morning. What I want to talk about is spiritual truth. This gets much,

more dicey for most people. Many don't want to talk about it.

B. Spiritual Truth

So what then is spiritual truth or we might call it sacred truth? It is truth as relates to the immaterial realm, if in fact there is an immaterial realm, and we believe there is. And the greatest question is, how can truth be determined in the spiritual realm, if there is such a thing as a spiritual realm?

For the sake of time we have not looked at other views of truth, and won't look at other evidence for truth in the spiritual. Let me cut through it all to say that I believe the very best evidence for a spiritual realm is the Bible. But now one has to ask, "How can we know that the Bible is true?" Well, for all things we cannot conclusively prove we seek the best evidence. That is what is done in a court of law. And when you make decisions based on evidence, what you have is evidence, not absolute empirical proof.

If someone says, "I was there. I saw what happened", that is still not absolute proof because by and large man is very dishonest. So now it depends on the credibility of the witness which, in turn, is also determined by evidence.

So here is the upshot so far. Truth in the physical realm can be verified using the physical senses. If there is in fact truth in the spiritual realm, it is based on evidence, if in fact there is evidence. Now if there is enough evidence to show that the Bible is true, then there is enough evidence to show that there is such a thing as a spiritual realm, for that is the major subject of the Bible.

So, what evidence is there that the Bible is true? What makes the Bible credible evidence? I might refer you to our message on sermonaudio called, "Is The Bible The Word

Of God?" To find this, go to www.sermonaudio.com/mecl. Here I give 10 large areas of evidence and you will be amazed at the abundance of evidence. Now I did not come up with that evidence myself, I got it from others, but I believe it is enough to pronounce this verdict, "The Bible is the Word of God"!

There is no other book like the Bible under the sun, and you have to study those areas of evidence to realize how strong that evidence is.

I used to teach a course called *General Introduction To The Bible*, known as GBI. Here is how I started the course:

Try to think of life for a moment, as to how it would be without the Bible. No divine direction in life. No personal relationship with God, as Paul describes us before salvation, "...having no hope and without God in the world" (Eph. 2:12). That's how it was with the great Greek thinkers in the past. The following is a discussion of Socrates with some of his students regarding immortality. "In the course of the conversation one of them, Simmias, made the following statement: 'I think a man's duty is one of two things: either to be taught or to find out where truth is, or if he cannot, at least to take the best possible human doctrine and the hardest to disprove, and to ride on this like a raft over the waters of life and take the risk; unless he could have a more seaworthy vessel to carry him more safely and with less danger, some divine doctrine [or, as Jowett translates it, 'some word of God'] to bring him through.'" (The Bible: The Living Word of Revelation pg 13).

These men lived around 450 years before Christ, and one can tell by that quote that they were talking about spiritual truth and also how lost these great thinkers were regarding spiritual truth. And to the honest seeker, there is a vessel much more seaworthy than the hardest to disprove human doctrine. It is the Bible.

Our subject then is spiritual truth, and that it is to be found in the Bible.

III. DEMONSTRATION OF TRUTH

I wanted to give demonstrations of spiritual truth from what the Bible has to say about it from the OT. I ran out of time. You might wish to look up the word 'truth' in the OT to see what it has to say about it. Because of time we will go to just a few important NT passages.

A. John 14:6

We begin with John 14:6. Turn to it. This passage takes place before Jesus was crucified. Jesus has told them He is leaving and they are deeply troubled. He said He would be with them a little while longer and then He would be gone. Peter asked Him where He was going and Jesus said where He was going Peter could not follow Him now. And Peter said to Him, "Why can't I follow You now? I will lay down my life for You." And Jesus said, "Really, Peter! This night, before the rooster crows you will deny Me three times!" What Jesus is saying, "Three times you will fail to stay with the truth this night." And then we come to chapter 14 and we begin in verse 1:

- 1 *"Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me.*
- 2 *"In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.*
- 3 *"And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.*
- 4 *"And where I go you know, and the way you know."*
- 5 *Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?"*

Well, doubting Thomas speaks up. "Lord, we don't know where You are going, so how could we know the way?" And then Jesus gives this phenomenal verse. We read verse 6:

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

Here we have three great propositions. First, Jesus said, "I am the way." So we must naturally ask, "The way to what or whom?" The obvious answer from the context is, "I am the way to God the Father." Notice verses 5-6 again:

5 *Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?"*

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

So clearly, He is the way to the Father. Then Jesus said, "I am the truth." Now this is more difficult. If my definition of truth is right, that truth is propositional, how can a person be the truth? And some say, "Well, Jesus is truth personified." Well, if you can explain what that means you are beyond me and I would ask you to help me understand what that means. Here is the conclusion I have come to. Jesus said, "I am the way." The way to what or whom? The way to God. Then He said, "I am the truth." And I ask, the truth about what or whom? And the answer to that is, the truth about God. Now is there evidence for that conclusion?

Well, we go on in verse 7. Jesus said to Thomas:

7 *"If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him."*

8 *Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us."*

9 Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"

10 "Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works.

11 "Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves.

So, what realm of truth was Jesus talking about? Spiritual truth! In His physical life He had revealed spiritual truth about the Father! If God were to come to earth and live here, and we could see Him visibly, how would He live? Well, read the life of Christ and you will know.

A. John 18

Before we go to our next passage in John 18, let us go to Matthew 26. In John 18 Jesus is undergoing trial. The Jews want Him killed. I mentioned that the book I read said most live by truth about 10% of the time. What does man then live by the rest of the time? According to that writer, the rest of the time most live by what they want to be true, or what makes them feel good, or what makes them happy. Their truth is determined by what makes them happy. Think about that before you write it off. Now I ask you, what did these Jews want? What did they think would make them happy? They wanted Jesus killed. If Jesus would be removed, they think that would make them happy. What would make them feel bad? If He continued to live. So what conclusion did they naturally come to? He is guilty of death!

Look now at Matthew 26:57. Here Jesus is before the Jewish leaders:

57 And those who had laid hold of Jesus led Him away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled.

58 But Peter followed Him at a distance to the high priest's courtyard. And he went in and sat with the servants to see the end.

59 Now the chief priests, the elders, and all the council sought false testimony against Jesus to put Him to death,

60 but found none. Even though many false witnesses came forward, they found none. But at last two false witnesses came forward

61 and said, "This fellow said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in three days.'"

62 And the high priest arose and said to Him, "Do You answer nothing? What is it these men testify against You?"

63 But Jesus kept silent. And the high priest answered and said to Him, "I put You under oath by the living God: Tell us if You are the Christ, the Son of God!"

64 Jesus said to him, "It is as you said. Nevertheless, I say to you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven."

65 Then the high priest tore his clothes, saying, "He has spoken blasphemy! What further need do we have of witnesses? Look, now you have heard His blasphemy!

66 "What do you think?" They answered and said, "He is deserving of death."

Now on what ground did they say He is worthy of death? Was it on the ground of truth? No, it was because they did not like the facts He stated, and which they hated. Facts

played no part in their decision making at all. They found to be true what they wished to be true.

Any unbiased reader can read the account and see that truth played no part in His condemnation. So we go now to John 18. Pilate, the Roman ruler that will try Jesus knew that they delivered Jesus for envy, not truth. Truth played no part in the Jews conclusion. But knowing all that, he too failed to uphold truth. So Jesus is now brought before Pilate who has the authority to put Jesus to death, and we'll read the account in John 18. We begin in verse 28:

28 *Then they led Jesus from Caiaphas to the Praetorium, and it was early morning. But they themselves did not go into the Praetorium, lest they should be defiled, but that they might eat the Passover.*

29 *Pilate then went out to them and said, "What accusation do you bring against this Man?"*

30 *They answered and said to him, "If He were not an evildoer, we would not have delivered Him up to you."*

What kind of answer or evidence is that? If they had given the conclusion they have just arrived at Pilate would have said, "That is not a worthy accusation of death." So they gave an answer that was not an answer. Verse 31:

31 *Then Pilate said to them, "You take Him and judge Him according to your law." Therefore the Jews said to him, "It is not lawful for us to put anyone to death,"*

32 *that the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled which He spoke, signifying by what death He would die.*

33 *Then Pilate entered the Praetorium again, called Jesus, and said to Him, "Are You the King of the Jews?"*

This is a question regarding truth in the material realm. Are you a King?

34 *Jesus answered him, "Are you speaking for yourself about this, or did others tell you this concerning Me?"*

The Roman ruler is stumbling around and Jesus knows it. Verse 35:

35 *Pilate answered, "Am I a Jew? Your own nation and the chief priests have delivered You to me. What have You done?"*

Pilate now asks the real question. If they wanted Jesus killed, He must have done something. But Jesus had not done something that called for death, the Jews called for His death for who He claimed He was, and had they known the Scriptures, they would have known it to be true. So Jesus answers Pilate's first question. Verse 36:

36 *Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here."*

Now notice what we have here. It is a spiritual truth Jesus is giving. Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world." No, it is of the spiritual world. What we are dealing with is truth in another realm. That is also the reason the Jews want to kill Him. Verse 37:

37 *Pilate therefore said to Him, "Are You a king then?"*

Pilate now says, "If we are talking about another realm, then my question still stands, are you a king then?" Now listen to this most incredible answer:

Jesus said in essence, "Pilate, you are right. I am a king." And now follows what is most incredible in this verse:

For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world that I should bear witness to the truth.

Jesus is saying, "Yes, I am a King. You are right. That is precisely why I was born into the physical realm by birth which is also precisely the reason why I came

into this world. It is this: "I came to bear witness to the truth of the spiritual realm in which I am King."

Now this is most amazing! Jesus said He came into this world for a great cause, He was born for this cause. And what was that great cause? It was to bear witness to the truth! And what kind of truth was that? Well, it was not scientific truth. He never taught math or science or geography. He taught spiritual truth. Read Jesus' teaching and you will find spiritual truth upon spiritual truth.

And then Jesus dropped another bombshell. He said something like this: "Oh, by the way Pilate, everyone who is of the truth hears My voice." Do you know what He is saying? "Pilate. You are not of the truth. If you were of the truth you would be able to hear what I am saying." The Jewish leaders were not of truth either. Pilate then, without knowing it, verified what Jesus has just said in verse 38:

38 Pilate said to Him, "What is truth?"

What did Jesus say to Philip earlier? He said, "He who has seen Me has seen the Father!" But because they were not of the truth, they did not recognize Him. Now in light of what Jesus said to Pilate, that he who is of the truth hears Me, we go to John 3. We begin in verse 16:

16 "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

He that believes, He that is persuaded about Jesus being the Son of God, has everlasting life. Why? It is spiritual truth! And such a person will repent and he will go on putting his trust in Christ and it will conform him to the image of Christ. The impact truly believing in Christ has on life will cause all the rest to happen. Verse 17:

17 *"For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.*

God loved the world. He did not want to condemn the world. But if sin was not justly dealt with somehow, sin would condemn the world. Verse 18:

18 *"He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.*

Bringing out the tenses in this verse it says this, "He who goes on believing (pres. tense) is not condemned (pres. tense); but he who does not go on believing (pres. tense) is condemned already because he has not continued to believe with abiding results (perf. tense) in the name of the only begotten Son of God." You see, believing has to be ongoing. Verse 19:

19 *"And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.*

The light that came into the world was Christ. This is spiritual light. This is spiritual truth. But mankind hates the light, or spiritual truth, and loves darkness. We are talking about spiritual light and spiritual darkness. Spiritual darkness is sin. And why do we hate the light? Because our deeds are evil, and the light exposes us. And what is it about light, or truth that we hate? Let me bring out the tenses of verse 20 by translating like this: *Everyone continuing to do evil, (pres. tense) goes on hating the light (pres. tense), and does not come to the light for himself (pres. middle voice), lest his deeds should be exposed (aor. tense).*

I'll expand Verse 21 to bring out the tenses here:

But he who does the truth (pres. tense) comes to the light that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God.

So Jesus said to Pilate, "He who is of the truth hears My voice."

VI. DEDICATION TO TRUTH

We come then to our last point, and it is dedicating myself to truth. Knowing truth demands a decision. It is my view that every human being who comes to any age should seek truth, and especially truth in the spiritual realm. Surely every thinking person must ask questions such as this somewhere in life: Where did everything come from? Why am I here? And the answers to those questions will be sought in vain in the material or scientific, or secular realm.

If there is an answer to such questions, and I believe there is, it must be in the immaterial realm. And I believe that any person that will seek for truth objectively, will come to the view that the Bible is the source of spiritual truth. And anyone who comes to that will find that Jesus Christ is the way to God the Father, the truth about God the Father, and the life from God the Father.

And any person who comes to that will find what Peter found in Luke 4. Turn to it. The disciples had had a fruitless night of fishing and they were going to clean up their gear and call it a night. We begin in verse 1:

- 1 And it came to pass, that, as the people pressed upon him to hear the word of God, he stood by the lake of Gennesaret,*
- 2 And saw two ships standing by the lake: but the fishermen were gone out of them, and were washing their nets.*
- 3 And he entered into one of the ships, which was Simon's, and prayed him that he would thrust out a little from the land. And he sat down, and taught the people out of the ship.*

4 Now when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught.

5 And Simon answering said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net.

6 And when they had this done, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes: and their net brake.

7 And they beckoned unto their partners, which were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came, and filled both the ships, so that they began to sink.

8 When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord.

Peter learned a great spiritual truth from this material event. And anyone who finds he is a sinful man, and who desires truth in the inward parts, will mourn his or her sinfulness and repent from sin and then live by faith. When that happens, one becomes one who is *of the truth*. And any person who finds Jesus Christ as his or her personal Saviour has entered a very, very serious relationship with God. It is a life-long dedication. Jesus said that any man having put his hand to the plow and looks back, is not worthy of the kingdom of God.

Any person who is 'of the truth' has made a commitment so important that it is the crime of all crimes to turn away. Let me add an important word though, there is such a thing as backsliding and it has one cure; repentance. This same apostle Peter lied three times about Christ later, and when he repented with bitter tears, he was forgiven, and became a great apostle.

My wife read this quote for me the other day from John Hus. He was born in the 1300's. Hus was one of those who began to open the way for the reformation to take place, which happened some 100 years after he died. He took exception with the Catholic Church. He was apprehended by the Church,

and on July 6, 1415, he was tied to a stake and burned to death. And here are among his last words:

Seek the truth
Listen to the truth
Teach the truth
Love the truth
Abide by the truth
And defend the truth to the death

And that is what he did that day.

Today you can become a Christian. And then in a while you can turn from your confession, and live in sin, and contrary to biblical teaching there are no consequences from fellow believers. And we fail to stress to one who professes Christ that this is a very serious and life-long commitment.

In light of that let me read a most incredible verse for you. It is Psalm 85:10, and it says, "Mercy and truth have met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other." Mercy and truth hardly ever meet together. Mercy is based in feelings. It is compassion. We do not discipline our children sometimes because of our compassion. So we set truth aside. We do not want to live by truth because of our feelings. We do not obey some of the Scriptures because of our wants and don't wants. We might find some truths very comforting but we find other truths most discomfoting.

And before God's feelings of compassion for us and the truth which He knows about us can come together, something has to happen in us. Let me share with you what can bring God's mercy and truth together in our lives: repentance! And when mercy and truth come together feelings and truth are working in tandem. That is absolutely rare. Repentance, humility, and meekness allow God to show compassion and remain absolutely truthful at the same time.

For the most part, we exercise mercy at the expense of truth or vice versa. That is where unconditional love, unconditional grace and such teachings come in. Do you know why we think those teachings are true? We want them. They make us feel good. They don't cause us to separate from sin. They allow mercy at the expense of truth.

Buy the truth and sell it not! Dedicate yourself to it for life!
And here is what true, godly, agapee love does according to 1 Corinthians 13, it rejoices in the truth!

CONCL: And in conclusion, maybe someone is listening to this message now, or maybe in the future and you cannot make up your mind about Christ. May I encourage you to seek truth objectively? And then, maybe you are a professing Christian, and if so, are you committed to spiritual truth as revealed in the Bible? Are you sold out for God? Do you want to please Him above friends and family or maybe a whole group of people? Is the God of the Bible the joy of your life? Do you read His Word and seek His face? Is His word your delight? Is it more precious than money to you? Does God Almighty rise above all else in your thinking? If you were called on to stand for truth among people, would you do it? If you were called on to stand for truth among unbelievers, would you do it? If you were called on to die for spiritual truth, would you do it?

Let me quote from a message I did at a baptism years ago. It went like this:

Richard Wurmbrand, a Romanian pastor, and the founder of the Voice of the Martyr's knew about persecution. He spent some 13 years in Romanian prisons and experienced tremendous torture. Afterwards, when he would preach he often had a hard time standing because his feet had been burned so badly. In one term, the torture came close to breaking him down. They gave him drugs, and tried to brainwash him in order to break his will. Sometimes, at all hours of the day they would have loudspeakers blaring, "Christianity is stupid, Christianity is stupid. Christianity is stupid. Why not give it up? Why not give it up."

This would go on and on until those words were burned in the mind and would repeat themselves over and over in his mind.

Then one day Romania's Deputy-Minister came personally to talk with Wurmbandt. When he came, Wurmbandt wondered if he would finally be killed. But he was not to be killed. Rather, he was told he could be a great help to the country if he would become the bishop of a large group of churches and he would be free to do as he wished. The minister had all people removed from the room and then he personally pleaded with Wurmbandt. He told him they had been wrong in how they had dealt with him. And right here Wurmbandt met his hardest trial of all. He had not seen his wife and child for a long time. And if he refused, what would happen to them now? And he began to waver. Wurmbandt was being enticed to compromise, and in this enticement was the serpent's hiss and Wurmbandt in his weakened state could not hear the hiss.

When the deputy minister left, he gave Wurmbandt time to think things over. So when he was back in his cell, he tried to think of the Lord but thoughts of freedom and other things brought such hope, that for a time it distracted him from the Lord. He could be the Lutheran Bishop of Romania. Then he thought of how his visiting card would read, "Richard Wurmbandt, Lutheran Bishop of Romania, by appointment of the secret police." He knew he would not be a bishop of Christ. He would be a spy.

Then he was called in again and he told them he could not accept. Then the deputy minister, Negrea asked everyone to leave the room, as he had on his first visit. And when he had Wurmbandt alone, he urged him to reconsider. Then Wurmbandt said, "I don't feel worthy to be a bishop - I wasn't worthy to be a pastor, and even to be a simple Christian was too great for me. The first Christians went to their deaths saying, 'Christanus sumi' - I'm a Christian!' - and I haven't done that; instead I considered your shameful offer. But I cannot accept it." The minister then said, "You know, of course, what this will mean for your future?" And Wurmbandt said, "I have considered well, and weighed the dangers, and I rejoice to

suffer for what I am sure is the last truth" end quote. Well, Wurmbrandt survived. Many others have not.

In the same message I read what one Christian mission in Nepal asks new believers who want to be baptized:

-Are you ready to go to jail?

-Are you ready to leave or be forced out of your home?

-Are you ready to be beaten and tortured for the sake of Christ?

-Are you ready to go and preach no matter what cost you have to pay?

In modern evangelism we don't prepare new believers to stand for life. I have told you what Martin Luther said when he was called in for the faith in front of the Roman Catholic Cardinals. He said, "Hier stehe ich, ich kann nicht anders. Gott hilf mir." "Here I stand. I cannot do otherwise. So God help me."

I want to ask you this morning, are you sold out for God? Are you sold out to spiritual truth? Are you sold out enough that you want to be rid of all sin?

I have recently gotten a new look at an area in my own heart. Things I might have thought nothing of at one time now seem exceeding sinful to me. Oh to become like Christ. Is that your desire? Might we get a picture of our own hearts and may we be brought to mourning, until we become humble before God Almighty! May we all come to say, "I want nothing more than to live clean and right before God the Father and to glorify Him forever." Is that your cry?

May we dedicate ourselves to truth and say with the Apostle Peter, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life." May we say, "You have overcome sin, that evil destroyer of mankind. And I will find the victory in You, and I will never, ever leave You. I am committed for life."