

Turning Away From Truth

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2 Timothy 4:3-4 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

John 8:44-45 Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it. And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not.

John 8:32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

Proverbs 13:5 A righteous man hateth lying: but a wicked man is loathsome, and cometh to shame.

Revelation 22:15 For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.

3 John 4 I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.

- I. Truth is conformity to fact or reality; it is the true state of facts or things.
 - A. Honesty is conformity and submission to truth – what is true.
 - B. Integrity implies the idea of being completely loyal, obedient, and submitted to what is true and honest.
 - C. Truth matters in all things – not just spiritual things.
 1. When the Bible speaks of truth, it is not just referring to truth about God, but about all things.
 2. To turn away from the truth about *anything* is to fall into the web of deceit about *everything*.
 - D. People demand the truth in certain earthly, temporal things, but turn from the truth in the most important things.
 1. Everyone demands truth about what is coming toward them from others, but becomes careless with the truth about what is going out from them toward others.
 2. Everyone despises and resents being lied to, but secretly prides themselves in putting one over on someone else.
 - E. To ignore the truth and embrace lies and fantasy is basically insanity.
 1. Legal definition of insanity is “Unable to distinguish between fantasy and reality.”
 - F. When the truth is laid aside for what we imagine or desire we are under the devil’s spell, just as Eve was.
 1. This is what the temptation to sin is made of.
 - G. To turn away from the truth is not the same as being mistaken or misinformed or immature concerning the truth.
 1. This term describes apostasy – knowing the truth, but turning away from it; abandoning it; deserting and fleeing to embrace another.

2. This is what we are dealing with here – not classifying everyone who doesn't have perfect understanding a reprobate and a liar.

II. Why would anyone turn away from the truth?

A. First Bible reason: lust

1. Lust is connected with turning away from truth in both of our text verses.
2. Truth is the major obstacle to our indulging in what we desire.
3. Our heart is the source of all our lust and desire.
4. Our heart contends with our mind to redefine truth to make it possible to go ahead with our desires.
5. Once the mind has found a way to reconcile the desires of the heart with the truth, then the heart may have it's desire.

B. Second Bible reason: imagination

Proverbs 6:18 An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, (things God hates)

1. God destroyed the world one time because of the imaginations of people.

Genesis 6:5 And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

C. Imaginations are not true because they are not real.

1. They are only born of desires, and consist of what we desire to possess, to be, or to believe.
2. This is why the Bible refers to imaginations as “of the heart” and not of the mind.
3. The mind discerns between truth and lies
4. This is why trusting in feelings to discern what is true and false is one of the surest ways to end up deceived.

Proverbs 28:26 He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool: but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered.

III. How can we know that something is true?

A. It must be proven.

1 Thessalonians 5:21 Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

B. To prove means to put it to the test.

C. To ascertain or establish something based upon evidence – not theory, or desire, or imagination.

D. We must be led by the Spirit of Truth (Holy Spirit of God)

1. Not by our own feelings, experience, knowledge, or wisdom.

John 16:13 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.

E. How could a person be led by the Spirit of Truth and turn from the truth to embrace a lie?

1. The only two reasons mentioned in the Bible for believing a lie are lust and imagination (pretending, living in fantasy instead of reality)
2. Jesus called the Pharisees and Sadducees, and Scribes both liars and hypocrites.

- F. How can a person truly worship God if he is resisting the truth and embracing things that are not true?

John 4:23-24 But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

- G. How can a person follow Jesus when He is the way, the truth, and the life, and at the same time follow the world, which is all based upon lies and wickedness?

1 John 5:19 And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness.

- H. We can know something is true when it fits in the whole scheme of things.
1. It must be tried according to the facts we know about God, his creations, his divine order, and his righteousness (or law).
 2. We are foolish to accept something as truth based upon appearances, or circumstances or “gut feelings.”
 3. We are absolutely sure to be deceived and turned away from the truth if we are so careless with the truth (about anything).

IV. How can we recognize a lie?

- A. God has provided for us in great detail the classic, original design of lying, by the father of all lies, the devil himself in Genesis 3.
- B. A lie will begin by challenging what you know to be true already.

Genesis 3:1 Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?

- C. In it's second stage a lie will contradict other known and established truth.

Genesis 3:4 And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:

- D. It will always challenge law and authority, while at the same time promising the fulfillment and indulgence of selfish desires without negative consequences.

Genesis 3:5 For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

- E. It will always appear to be a means to accomplish something good, or improve your circumstances or standing.

Genesis 3:6 And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

1. It's aim is to make evil good and good evil.
 2. It means to make what God has forbidden something to actually be desired.
 3. It means to make God a liar and you the honest and truthful one.
 4. It means to make you more able to discern what is right than God is.
- F. It will be entangled with other lies – no lie stands alone.
- G. Where there is one lie, there will be a web of them.

Genesis 3:7 And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.

Genesis 3:8 And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden.

- V. So how does it happen that a person with a mind that can recognize truth and lies turns away from truth and begins living in lies and imaginations?
- A. Instead of demanding truth and seeking for it, they begin to look around and listen to other voices besides the One they know is true.
 - B. They gaze upon things of the world with their eyes and through curiosity their heart develops a desire for these things.
 - C. Then the imaginations begin in the heart, and the protests of the mind and conscience are silenced.
 - D. Right becomes what I desire instead of what God says is right.
 - E. This becomes OUR righteousness and we dismiss God's righteousness as just old-fashioned, out-dated, thinking, blind faith, and prejudice.
 - F. At this point we are totally deceived and reprobates from God and truth.
 - G. This is the present state of what is called Christianity now.

2 Thessalonians 2:3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;

2 Thessalonians 2:8-12 And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

- H. To turn from truth is to be damned.
- I. It is irrefutable evidence that the Spirit of Truth is not in you.
- J. It is proof that you are not following Jesus, because He is the way, the truth, and the life.
- K. It is proof that God does not have the reins of your heart, but that it is still running wild on desires and imaginations.
- L. The answer is to repent and believe the truth