

Foundational Truths for Spiritual Protection and Growth

Introduction

- A. As Christians we cannot be content with a mere intellectual grasp on the doctrines of the Bible. We must learn how to *practice* the Word of God.
- B. One of the evidences of our fallenness, personal sin, influence of the evil world about us, and demonic pressure is that we are *so content to drift through life without a motivating concern regarding our lack of depth* in worship, spiritual growth, believing prayer, awareness of the needs of those about us, and being able to help people with spiritual problems.
- C. God has commanded us to be concerned people—concerned about knowing and doing His will. He has not given us His Word and His grace to hoard. He expects us to obey Him by ministering to those about us. Matthew 22:37-39; 28:18-20; Luke 10:25-37; Colossians 4:12; James 5:16-20.
- D. Not many of us doubt the doctrinal content of the Bible. However, **most of us do have a deeply-rooted and paralyzing doubt as to whether the gospel and prayer will work in most personal and practical situations.** The evidence of this is extremely clear—we do not want to get involved because we do not believe our prayers and words will be effective—we do not believe God will “come through.” And, when we cannot escape involvement, our prayers are too often largely cliches or doctrinal platitudes; our efforts are too often spiritually superficial; and we are all the while trying to think of someone to whom we can send this needy person.
- E. The following is what I consider to be a foundational list of that which must be accepted, believed, and practiced in order to minister to people in a practical way. By this, I am attempting to build on the doctrinal foundation of the Christian world and life view.
 - I. Our Lord, as the Holy Trinity, is the Living God, infinitely great as the perfection of truth and therefore faithfulness; in love and therefore loving kindness; in holiness and therefore righteousness. This means that God is good, and what He does is goodness. I Samuel 17:26-37; John 14:6; Isaiah 6:8-10; Psalm 119:68
 - II. God is active in our history with the goal of fulfilling His great plan to exalt and glorify the Lord Jesus. It is His plan that gives us the key to history, the meaning of our life, and encouragement in that He desires to meet our needs and the needs of those about us. Colossians 1:16-19; John 5:39; 14:13; Luke 10:25-37
 - III. God has created us in His image. This means that we are persons of great and equal value, that the words ‘*spiritual*’ and ‘*sacred*’ would best describe the quality of our personhood, and that we are not simply the sum of, or to be confused with, our functions. Genesis 1:26,27; Isaiah 43:1,2,21. I Corinthians 9:27; II Corinthians 10:4,5
 - IV. The Word of God, our only authority, is life giving, powerful, and may be used as a weapon. This means that God will work with us, and through His Word, to accomplish His will, if we will be concerned, be willing to express faith as risk, share the truth with others, and pray with them and for them. Hebrews 4:12; John 6:63; Matthew 12:10-13; Acts 3:1-16; Matthew 28:18-20

- V. Every believer has been given all spiritual benefits, given certain gifts or abilities for ministry, given the authority and right to represent God and His kingdom, given a prophetic function whereby the Word of God may be shared, a priestly function whereby the grace of God is dispensed, and a kingly function (largely future) whereby the will of God is discerned and implemented. Ephesians 1:3; Luke 10:19; II Peter 1:3; Ephesians 4:7; 1 Peter 2:5,9; 4: 10,11; Revelation 5:10
- VI. Every believer has been given a vital part in the plan of the Father to exalt and glorify the Lord Jesus through involvement in the conflict between God and Satan. We have been given the victory gained over Satan by our Savior in His redemptive work as well as great resources of power in the name of Jesus Christ, the Word of God, and in particular the presence and ministry of the Holy Spirit. However, we are also vulnerable to serious demonic attack, largely but not entirely through error and sin, not only due to our own choices, but those in our ancestral lines as well as our contemporaries. Job 1,2; Colossians 1:13,14; Ephesians 1:3,19-22; Luke 10:17-20; Ephesians 6:10-18; Acts 1:8; I Peter 5:6-11; Exodus 20:5; Ephesians 4:27-31; I Peter 1:18; II Corinthians 2:6-11
- VII. Every believer has the wondrous privilege as well as the profound responsibility to choose to what degree he or she desires to be involved in the exalting of Jesus Christ and thereby being involved in His war with Satan. To be passive in this regard is a terrible sin. God expects us to surrender to Him, unite with Him in His battle against Satan and his demons as a full-time warrior, learn how the enemy attacks and how to resist him, bear the trials and pressures of a soldier with perseverance and patience, and be constantly available to witness to the truths of the Gospel as well as ministering to other soldiers. Joshua 24:15; Romans 12:1,2; II Corinthians 10:4,5; Ephesians 6:10-18; I Timothy 1:18; II Timothy 2:1-7; I Peter 5:6-11
- VIII. The battleground for this warfare between God and Satan is within the life of every believer. Many of us, sad to say, almost immediately, in the beginning of our Christian life, surrendered to the enemy through the wounds, deception, and temptation presented in the evil of the world and the constant recitation of error within our own thoughts and emotions. While it may have been done in ignorance, the control of the enemy over us is clearly seen in **our irrational passivity toward spiritual things and our resistance to the truths related to the enemy**. These amply testify to our state of capitulation. We must confess and renounce what we have done, renounce the enemy, take back the ground we have given him, and unite with our Father and His people in His plan and warfare. Job 1,2; Romans 13:11-14; I Corinthians 15:34; Ephesians 5:11-21; 1 John 1:9

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