

The Threat to Spirituality: The Acceptance of Error

Introduction

- A. While there are a number of reasons why the believer may lose spiritual freedom -- the acceptance of error is one of the most prevalent.
- B. There are at least five ways in which we become involved in error.
 - 1. We may accept error because of lack of information.
 - 2. We may accept error because of being poorly taught.
 - 3. We may accept error because of passivity and neglect.
 - 4. We may accept error because of disobedience and rebellion.
 - 5. We may accept error because of inability to cope.
- C. We must keep before us the Biblical emphasis on truth. There is probably no greater possession than truth. To practice truth is not only pleasing to God -- it brings to us the spiritual freedom to live for the Lord.

I. The Seriousness of Accepting Error.

- A. To accept error is an insult to the God of Truth.

He is the Rock, his work is perfect, for all his ways are judgment. A God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he. Deut. 32:4

Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life, no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. John 14:6

Comment: It is a terrible sin to make a choice to believe and practice error -- when error is the very opposite to God's character. Such an attitude and act not only displeases God but opens the door to Satan the Father of Lies.

- B. To accept error is to contradict the Bible -- the Word of Truth.

To whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise. Eph. 1:3

Comment: The God of Truth has revealed Himself in the Word of Truth -- the Holy Scripture. The Bible is our final authority. It is a serious sin to accept and live out of harmony with God's Word.

- C. To accept error is to sin against the Holy Spirit of Truth.

And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever. Even the Spirit of Truth John 14:16

Comment: The Lord Jesus has given us the Holy Spirit of Truth to teach us the Bible so we can live in the will of God. When we choose to violate this relationship -- we grieve the Holy Spirit, refuse to cooperate with Him, and treat Him with contempt. We are saying "I don't need You." We cannot live that way and honor God.

II. Biblical Examples of Accepting Error.

A. Israel's unbelief at Kadesh Barnea.

And the Lord said unto Moses, How long will this people provoke me? How long will it be ere they believe me, for all the signs which I have shewed among them? ... Surely they shall not see the land which I swear unto their fathers, neither shall any of them that provoked me see it.
Num. 14:11,23

Comment: God promised Canaan to Abraham and his descendents. Some 600 years later the Israelites were brought out of Egypt and given many signs of God's power to teach them to believe Him and obey His Word. When they came to Canaan they failed to believe and therefore could not enter. (Note the commentary in Heb. 3,4.)

B. The Pharisee's error regarding Salvation.

Two men went up into the temple to pray, the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are ... or even as this publican ... And the publican ... said, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified Luke 18:10-14

Comment: The Pharisees believed they were "Christians" simply because they were Jews and did good works. They did not understand sinfulness nor the grace of God. Many today believe something of the same error. And, many true believers lack assurance -- and security -- because they base it on a confusion of works and grace.

C. The common error regarding faith and works.

But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves ... Even so, faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.
James 1:22; 2:17

Comment: All believers suffer to some degree under this error. We hear, study, and memorize the Bible -- but often fail to "mix it with faith" and put it into practice. We must train ourselves to respond to what we know by making decisions of faith and practice.

D. The common error regarding wrong priorities.

And he (the Lord Jesus) said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness, for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. Luke 12:15

Comment: Covetousness is the evidence -- not only of discontent with what God has given to us -- but the error that life would be grand if it were only rearranged a bit -- or if I only had more or less of this or that. This is a profound error because it strikes at God's provision as well as the truth that only God is our satisfaction.