

April 2014

The Holy Ghost Is The Best Teacher

Dear Friend,

Recently, I had the opportunity to listen to messages taught by one of the premier “faith” teachers of our time, who has since gone on to be with Jesus. I have tremendous admiration for this man’s ministry and have benefited from listening to him as far back as I can remember. This preacher testified of several visitations by Jesus over the course of his life, but never did he speak of these visits in an effort to validate himself or his message, as if to say, “You better listen to me, I had a visitation from Jesus.” I was struck by the “matter-of-fact” way he told of one visit in which he spoke to Jesus in his room for an hour and a half. How many preachers might be tempted to take out a full-page ad in the newspaper promoting their talk with Jesus in an effort to draw in bigger crowds and receive bigger offerings? Not this preacher. What I did find was a man who consistently delivered an understandable, well-balanced message, and whose goal seemed to be to stay out of the ditches on either side of the road. Over the years, I have heard accusations made about how he over emphasized “faith”. What really seemed to be the case was that God used him, as well as others, to bring correction to the “Body of Christ, which had gone so far in the direction of believing everything that happened, good or bad, was controlled by God and we are merely pawns in His hands. The message God used this preacher to deliver was that God was not our problem and that He has a good plan for our lives not an evil plan and it is by developing and walking by faith that we walk into the fullness of His plan.

Having firmly established my admiration for this man of God, whom I have not identified by name, I don’t mind pointing out that a few things I heard him say this time did shock me, not necessarily in a good way. So, here’s something we ought to consider, what should we do when a trusted man of God teaches something that contradicts what we have learned elsewhere, and believe to be Truth? I know for myself, hearing him preach with such strong conviction about something that I believed and had been taught completely differently than what he was teaching caused me great concern. People who experience what I did can easily find themselves questioning whether or not what they believe is

actually Truth. Just because we admire certain teachers, doesn't necessarily mean everything they say is Truth. In fact, any given message they preach might be full of Truth, all except for a little bit here or there. To make matters worse, they can't tell you the parts that are not correct because they think all of it is correct. What are we to do? Should we adopt the idea that we are only going to listen to preachers who teach **100% Truth**? Jesus was the only perfect preacher that has ever walked the earth. The rest of us preachers share one major flaw, none of us are perfect.

For myself, once I hear someone contradict what I believe to be Truth I immediately begin to measure every word they say very carefully. Granted, if what they said is **blasphemy** like, "Jesus was not the Son of God", then without a doubt **my time of listening to them is over**. But, if what they are teaching regarding a secondary issue contradicts how I believe, then what do I do? Do I accept it; reject it, or possibly just tune them out altogether because I don't agree with them on a "non-heaven and hell" issue. Be careful, because when we start shutting the door to anyone who's not saying everything precisely the way we believe, we might eventually find ourselves with a very small selection of ministers we are willing to hear, which is fine so long as what they preach is **perfectly correct**. Which begs the question, "Do any of us preachers or groups of preachers have all the right doctrine?" Keep in mind; we all have blinders, which cloud our perception of the Truth to a degree. **Isn't the best we can hope for to agree on practicing the same method for receiving Truth from the one true Teacher of the Body of Christ, the Holy Ghost?**

Think about it, the older, well established preacher I referred to earlier preached doctrine that the Holy Ghost has proven to me not to be correct. Yet, **this preacher had far more of God manifested through him** than anyone I know of in recent days. So, what does this say about needing to have **every bit of doctrine correct before God can move?** If what we believe about a **secondary doctrinal issue** isn't 100% correct, how can that disqualify us from being used by God? It didn't seem to affect the preacher to which I am referring. The idea that the reason God hasn't yet been able to manifest Himself through us more because we don't have all our doctrine exactly right; I believe to be a horrible misconception. Doctrine in and of itself isn't the real issue. The real issue, as I see it, is what degree of **transformation** into His image has been worked in us, enabling us to enjoy deeper levels of fellowship with Him, and not whether we have every "jot and tittle" correct. God's ability to manifest Himself through us is about **the change** that has been worked in us allowing Him to do so and **not** about us having all the right doctrine. Thank God!

Let's also thank God for the Holy Ghost who has been sent for the express purpose of teaching us, individually, all things. (John 14:16, 26)

(16) "And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever."

(26) "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

The preacher I was listening to often made this statement: "Be smart enough to eat the hay and spit out the sticks." Since it's the Holy Ghost's job to teach us all things it's the Holy Ghost who will also help us to know the difference between hay or sticks. In more recent years I have heard this; "It's the minister's job to pull out **all** the sticks before feeding the sheep." I agree, we as ministers need to be spending time with the Holy Ghost and allowing Him to remove the sticks from our message, but don't ever think any minister is "**stick free**". Only Jesus was "**stick free**".

In a perfect world, preachers would all be saying the same thing and there would be no question as to who's right. But, as I'm sure you've noticed, this world's not perfect. What makes matters more difficult is the sincerity and conviction preachers have when delivering what they believe to be the Truth. As I listened to the older minister's message and heard the conviction in his voice, as well as, the strong, authoritative way he made his point, I felt myself wanting to accept what he was saying as Truth. I began to consider his visitations with Jesus and wondered how a man who sat and talked with Jesus could still be wrong. Something that both Debbie and I noticed was that as we listened to the preacher quote a scripture to support the point he was making, neither of us could remember how we had been taught the same scripture, but we knew it was different. No wonder the sheep are confused. Here I am, a minister who spends my days meditating the scriptures, and just by hearing a verse explained a different way, I could not remember how I had heard it taught before. Again, should we close ourselves off from anyone that might teach something contrary to how we have been taught? The problem is, if we did that we would never again listen to men of God like this man and we would miss all the pure revelation he dug out of the scripture over the course of his 60+ years of ministry. There was probably 95% of this man's message that was in line with what we had already been taught and believed to be Truth and about 5% that was different. I don't know about you, but that's a pretty good percentage. The areas that differed were not what I call, "Heaven and Hell" issues, in other words, no one's eternal destination hangs in the balance because these points were taught

one way or the other. You might say, “But both ways can’t be right, Mark. One of them is right and one of them is wrong and I can’t put up with **any** wrong doctrine! It scares me to think that I might unknowingly be taught wrong.” Oh, get over it. (grin) It’s just as scary, if not more, to think that a person could have the idea their favorite teacher says everything correctly. The minute we think everything that comes out of the mouth of any preacher is as pure as the driven snow, we are in trouble. We are not talking about “heaven and hell issues”. What we are looking at are the other verses, the ones most preachers don’t dare even try to understand, let alone preach on them. Don’t be like I found myself becoming, cutting yourself off from anyone except those in your little circle of preachers. Even though a preacher might not say everything the way you believe it, cutting yourself off from them, especially a true spiritual leader, the instant you hear the slightest difference, is not a wise thing to do. Give the Holy Ghost the opportunity to bear witness in your spirit and teach you what is right or wrong. Trust the Holy Ghost and don’t be afraid to re-examine something that you have accepted as Truth if you hear it taught differently. Again, I am not talking about “heaven and hell issues” here. Let’s go back to the hay and the sticks analogy.

As listeners, we need to recognize that no one has the full revelation of everything and because of that there are going to be times that what a preacher says may have a few sticks in it. **“No, Mark, I refuse to listen to anyone who preaches anything with any sticks in it.”** Ok, but, again, the only preacher I know of whose message never had the first stick is **Jesus**. Paul told us why this problem exists in his first letter to the church at Corinth. (I Corinthians 13:9-12)

“For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. (10) But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. (11) When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. (12) For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face-to-face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.”

What is it that obscures our ability to see clearly? Our main problem is our unmortified flesh! As long as we are on this earth we will always have our flesh to deal with, which impairs our perception of the Truth. Thank God, we can do something to put more and more of our unruly flesh to death so that the light of God’s Word can shine more clearly. Even at that, there will always be something causing our perception of Truth to be off to a certain degree. This is why it is an erroneous assumption on our part to think that whomever we are listening to has removed all the sticks. Whatever sticks are present in their message are there because of the person’s inability to receive the Truth in that area. In other words,

they don't even know that what they are seeing and consequently saying isn't the Truth. They think it is. That being the case, don't ever just accept what I, or any preacher for that matter, says is Truth because we say its Truth. Take what you hear and pray over it and study the verses out yourself and see if the Holy Ghost shows you the same thing or not. Then, hold on to whatever He shows you.

Just as this preacher admonished listeners to "spit out the sticks", I have also heard preachers pounding their chest and claiming any good preacher is supposed to get **all** the sticks out first. That's all well and good so long as the preacher has already identified and eliminated **all** of his own sticks, which is impossible since no one is "stick free". This brings us to an even more elusive problem for preachers, which is being so very convincing and confident about our messages while all the time being unaware of our own "sticks". So long as we are looking through a glass darkly it is impossible for any of us, preacher or not, to walk in 100% Truth. There's no disputing the heart of what this preacher is saying is good. He is saying that we as ministers should do our best to pre-digest the message and remove as many sticks as possible for the sheep. But, even with all the best intentions, a stick will still slip though because of our own imperfections, forcing the sheep to have to decide what to do with it. "Should I eat this or spit it out." What's worse is that the little sheep must also be able to identify that **a stick is a stick and not hay**.

All too often, innocent people sit in congregations for years listening to about 30% hay and 70% sticks and don't ever know the difference. Sadly, they are so under nourished that they can't differentiate between a bale of tender hay and a pile of dried up old sticks. In many cases, the ministers responsible for all those sticks are absolutely sincere about what they are preaching, they are just sincerely wrong. Unfortunately, sincerity and conviction aren't accurate indicators of Truth. Convincing words and a dogmatic persistence can easily be used to spread Truth or error. In fact, when a preacher resorts to emotional ploys to try and drive home his point, instead of relying on the Holy Ghost to reveal the Truth to the people, watch out!

I know that some people have come to the conclusion that no one is worth listening to and they are so tired of trying to decide what's hay or sticks that they could just scream. Please, don't give up. To begin with, stop putting all your confidence in men. No matter who it is, we must face the reality that no one preacher has all the Truth. There's really only one who we can truly, wholeheartedly trust, that is the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost will never hurt us, He will never disappoint us, He is always for us. Our Father gave us access to the third member of the Godhead, the Holy Ghost, to be our Comforter and our Teacher, to walk with us and be our closest confidant. (Refer back to John 14:26)

“But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost...” “He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you.”

Even though this is most likely a familiar verse for you, look closely at the word, **“all”**, which is used two times in this verse. The Holy Ghost will teach you **“all”** things and bring **“all”** things to your remembrance that Jesus taught. Notice, Jesus didn’t say the “preacher” will teach you **“all”** things. Jesus said the Holy Ghost would teach you **“all”** things. Unfortunately, too many believers have the idea the preacher is supposed to do all their spiritual work for them, but that’s not what Jesus was saying here. Certainly, preachers are supposed to help inspire believers to press into the things of God and help show them the way. But, if the believer chooses to pass through life living only on what little bit a preacher is able to get over to them once a week, their spiritual development will be minimal. We can empower the Holy Ghost to be our Teacher by enrolling in the class of the Holy Ghost by opening our mouth and beginning to pray in tongues. The Holy Ghost will teach us all things so that the instant any preacher, “spiritual general” or not, begins to teach us something that’s wrong a red flag will begin to wave in our spirit and we will know whether what we are hearing is Truth or not. “Is this hay? Should I eat this or spit?”

Here’s a friendly word of advice, if you do spit it out, you don’t have to make a big scene about it, just spit it out. **“But it’s my responsibility to make everyone else aware that they are eating sticks.”** Oh really? **“Yes, really! If I don’t point out the sticks, who will?”** What about this, maybe you say they are sticks because of what’s inside you. How about let’s leave that job to the Holy Ghost because He, unlike you, or me, has no sticks in Him. I would imagine there isn’t any other one issue that has split more good churches than this one. A person or people get the idea they have been called to be the defenders of Truth for their group instead of teaching the people how to empower the Holy Ghost to guide them into all truth. (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 show you things to come.”

How much “Truth” will the Holy Spirit guide us into? He **will guide** us, you and me and anyone who will empower Him, into **all Truth**. Not just preachers, but anyone who will pray in tongues and activate the ministry of the Holy Ghost to be their Teacher. So, let’s say someone not called to ministry finds themselves in a situation like I was in, listening to a message from a man whom most spirit-filled

believers would consider a “spiritual leader”, and suddenly the red flags begin to wave inside them. Should they toss out everything he said, more or less as a knee jerk reaction, or ask the Holy Ghost to show them what to hang on to and what to get rid of? He might have them hold onto most everything the man preached and discard the little bit that the Holy Ghost has shown them to be incorrect.

I suggest you begin to put this message into practice today by asking the Holy Ghost if you should accept any or all of this message? Whatever He directs you to, do that. I believe the point to be made here is that we as individuals must take responsibility for what we believe and stop looking to preachers to tell us what to believe, or accepting what we are taught without praying and asking the Holy Ghost to either confirm or disprove the message.

In closing, it is our responsibility to spend time cultivating our relationship with the Holy Ghost by empowering Him to be our **main** Teacher, guiding us into all Truth. He will stand at the ready to alert us to any sticks that might exist in the messages we are hearing, but not for the purpose of picking apart the messenger, but rather for our own spiritual development. The Holy Ghost is so wonderful and has such a gentle way of teaching us if we will only take the time to get to know Him and empower His ministry by praying in tongues. Trust the Holy Ghost. Do not substitute a man in place of the Holy Ghost. As ministers, our first responsibility is to teach people how to turn themselves over to the true Teacher of the body of Christ, the Holy Ghost.

Even at that, knowing Truth isn't the same as getting to know the author of Truth. In other words, this isn't a race to acquire more Truth at the expense of developing a relationship with all three members of the Godhead. That would be like studying in minute detail every part of an automobile, but never getting into the car and driving. What we want to do is take all that we learn and make a practical application of it in the form of an ongoing fellowship with each member of the Godhead. What I believe we will discover is that as interested as God is about us knowing about Him, He is that much more interested in us **knowing Him intimately**. The more we know Him intimately the less likely we are to be carried away with messages that begin one degree off and end up taking us out in left field.

~ Grace be with you

Mark Jenkins

This Thursday, April 24th we will begin our weekly LiveStream broadcast at 7:30pm CST. You will be able to watch the broadcast live and the messages will later be archived so you can view them at a time of your choosing.

- You will be able to access the LiveStream from our website under the Media/LiveStream tab.
- Another option is to find the Mark Jenkins Ministries channel at www.TruthCasting.com under Find a Ministry tab and select M then click on Mark Jenkins Ministries.
- There are TruthCasting apps available for your mobile devices at the app store and for android devices as well.

This is a work in progress, please bear with us as we learn and grow in this new avenue of ministry.