

Jessie Henderson
Market Street Fellowship
140720

Obeying the Truth through the Spirit

Romans 2:8 - "...but to those whole are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness...."

I want to talk today about this phrase - "Obeying the truth." When I came across that while I was reading this week, I realized that this is totally what we've been talking about lately having to do with purification. We see the Truth and we have the choice to respond in "obedience." That means agreeing with the truth and desiring to line up with it. We have all seen the Truth. But the choice is whether we will obey the truth or whether we will walk away and be like the man who forgot what he saw in the mirror (James 1:24-25). When we respond to the Truth that we've seen, we desire that all that we are be swallowed up in that truth. To obey the truth is to agree with the judgments of God and let those judgments work in every area of our lives.

We have talked before about how David agreed with the judgments of God and that is seen in his obedience, his alignment with the mind and purpose of God. He cleared the land of the enemies of God. He obeyed the Truth.

"And truly, friend, as it is not an easy thing to come into the Way, so neither is it an easy thing to abide in the Way; for many are the bypaths, many and great the temptations, both on the right hand and on the left. It is sad indeed that any should be convinced of truth but not come into subjection to it; yet it is very easy and very common." - Isaac Penington

And so to be convinced of the truth (or see the truth) is one thing, but to come into subjection to it is a whole other matter. We have all seen the Truth. But will we come into subjection to it?

Now look at this other verse that further explains obeying the truth:

1 Peter 1:22 - "Since you have purified your souls in **obeying the truth through the Spirit** in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart."

We obey the truth *through the Spirit*. If Christ is the Path or the Way, then the Holy Spirit is our

Teacher who is at work trying to keep us on that Path. He is that “small voice” inside of us, speaking to us, leading us, all in an effort to keep us walking in Christ. **He teaches us what it means to obey the truth!** He warns us when we look away or veer off. He points us back to the narrow Way. And as we heed His voice and obey the Light, we grow more sensitive to His gentle nudging. On the flip side, when we ignore the voice of the Spirit over and over and fail to respond to Him, we grow colder, more numb, and less able to hear His voice. And when I say His voice, I really just mean the inner sense, knowing, or revealing that doesn't come from me. He guides us and warns us and hems us in, but when we fail to acknowledge His voice or respond to His leading, our hearts grow fat and it is harder to hear and see Him.

Peter says that the result of obeying the truth through the Spirit is *purification*. And the result of purification is loving one another. It's so interesting to see the Lord's purpose in this verse. Through the Holy Spirit we obey the truth, which purifies our hearts, so that we are able to truly love each other fervently.

Let's look at a few other verses about the role of the Holy Spirit:

***John 14:16** - “And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever – the Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.”*

***John 15:26** - “But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me.”*

The Spirit testifies of and points to Christ. He shows the Way.

***John 16:8** - “And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.”*

He convicts us. He leads us by His conviction. The conviction of the Spirit is a good thing; it is a gift meant to lead us and guide us and protect us.

In our carnal minds it's easy to think that God is taking stuff away from us. We think we know what's good for us and so we hold on so tightly to what is really harming us. We started on this journey of freedom and He just wants to bring us all the way in. If He is exposing things in your heart that He wants to deal with or cut off, it's not just that He wants to take things from you – His desire is to give. He just wants us to be free to walk in Him, not enslaved to the world.

The Spirit teaches us to obey the Truth and live in the Truth. He is our Counselor, our Teacher, our Guide. He puts His finger on places in our hearts that He wants to conquer. It is not for us to determine with our own natural minds how we ought to live, or what is beneficial or not beneficial. The Life growing within us constrains us. As we allow that law of Life to grow and expand in our souls we desire to come into line with that Life in every area. We don't want to live apart—not in our hearts, thoughts, or deeds. We want to obey the law of Life that is working in us.

Psalm 5:8 - *“Lead me, O Lord, in Your righteousness because of my enemies; **make Your way straight before my face.**”*

This has been my prayer lately – that the way of Christ would be straight before us, that we would not waver or lose sight of it, but that it would be a clear path before our faces.

These are a few other verses from Romans that have been on my mind:

Romans 6:16 - *“Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin to death, or of obedience to righteousness?”*

Romans 6:19 - *“For just as you presented your members as slaves of uncleanness, and of lawlessness to lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves of righteousness for holiness.”*

Romans 6:20-23 - *“For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. What fruit did you have then in the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”*