

CHAPTER TEN - LOYAL TO THE TRUTH

Reading: Jn. 8:44; Matt. 12:19; 2 Tim. 2:24.

Absolute loyalty to the Truth is a matter that must have priority in the life of every Christian worker. It is possible, and indeed it not infrequently happens, that a worker modifies the Truth because he is influenced by men, or by circumstances, or by his own desires. The truth is absolute, and it demands undeviating loyalty of all men under all circumstances. All we possess we can sacrifice if need be, but the Truth we dare not sacrifice. We must never seek to bend it to our purpose, but must always bow to it.

We Have a Tendency to Twist the Truth to Favor Ourselves

We are all prone to ignore the Truth when it clashes with our personal interests. If we find ourselves in a dilemma, or if calamity strikes the family circle, or if a close friend is in distress, how swift we are to waive our convictions in order to save ourselves from an awkward situation, or to save our loved ones from any trouble that can be averted by accommodating the Truth to prevailing circumstances!

- For instance, the son of a Christian worker expresses his desire to be baptized. If his father is out to uphold the Truth, he will pass his son on to the leading brethren in the church, as he would pass on anyone else's son, and leave it to them to decide whether or not he is a fit subject for baptism; but as this particular candidate is his own son, he tries to make certain modifications in his case. He is set on having his son baptized; he is not set on upholding the Word of God. If his primary concern were to uphold God's Word, he would be delivered from bias regarding his son and would be perfectly open to the judgment of others.
- Take another illustration. In a certain place a doctrinal controversy arises. A number of the saints are favorably disposed toward one particular worker and side with him, whereas quite a number have a preference for another worker and line up on his side. Sadly, neither party is absolutely committed to the Truth, because both have compromised on the ground of personal attachment. Oh! how insidiously our affections influence our decisions, so that we pervert the Word of God instead of capitulating to it.

Let Us Hold on to God's Word as the Truth, No Matter What It Costs Us

The standard of the divine Word must NOT be lowered to harmonize with our standards. We dare not tamper with it in any way even when it shows up our deficiencies; we must proclaim it as it stands – eternally unchangeable and invariably transcending our understanding and attainment. We must still uphold it even if it contradicts our experience and baffles our intellects.

And we must above all beware of expounding it in one way when it affects other people, but toning it down when it has to be applied to ourselves, or our families, or our friends.

Let us take warning, for there is a subtle snare here. Many difficulties crop up in the churches because Christians sacrifice the Truth rather than their own personal interests.

- One of the members of a certain local church intimated that he was not coming to the meetings any more because something had arisen in the church of which he had not been informed. What had that brother seen of the absolute nature of the Truth? If it was right for him to sever his connection with the other brethren, then even if they had informed him he was under obligation to do so; and if it was wrong for him to sever connection with them, then he had no right to break fellowship on the ground of their failure to notify him about some church matter.

If we are in an association that is not in harmony with God's revealed purpose, we must forsake that position: if, on the other hand, our position is in keeping with His purpose but involves us in trouble, we dare not trifle with the Truth and justify ourselves in leaving on account of difficulties.

Who are we that we insist on having deference shown us by our fellow-Christians? And who are we that we dare set God's Word aside because it involves us in awkward situations? Oh! we are far too big and far too bold.

Unless our self-life is shattered, we shall never become true servants of God. We must learn to regard His Word dispassionately, whether its acceptance is to our advantage or disadvantage. If only we saw the nature of God's Word we should not always be obscuring its glory by dragging ourselves into view. May we be saved from our presumption!

Let us illustrate again.

- A brother had heard a certain local church adversely criticized in some quarters; but later he identified himself with that church, and in his contacts with the believers there he always expressed himself favorably, though he had never honestly looked into the situation but was just feeling his way among the believers and being generally polite. After a time one of the brethren, discerning his spiritual condition and wanting to help him, dealt with him faithfully, "speaking the truth in love." He at once took exception to what was said and separated himself from the company, spreading abroad all sorts of disparaging tales about them. That brother lacked a fixed attitude toward the Truth and could therefore twist it when it affected his personal comfort. If he had honestly inquired into the Truth and committed himself to its implications, he would have taken a firm stand against that company from the very outset if the Truth so required; but if the Truth required his identification with them, even the sternest personal correction could not have caused him to sever connection with them.

Let us illustrate once more.

- A Christian worker who has a gift of leadership felt led to take a certain course, and being a leader, it inevitably happened that others took the same course. If the way that leader decided to go was right, it was not his going that way that made it right; and if the way

was wrong, his going that way could not make it right, no matter how earnest a Christian he might be. If at a later date this man should fall into sin, his sin would not make the course he adopted a wrong course.

Let Us Not Be Influenced By Other's Views and Interpretations of the Truth

Bear with me if I say yet again that the Truth of God is absolute, and it is not the fact that this one or that one supports the Truth that makes it so: it is inherently so. But there is a tendency with us to fix our gaze on men and to conclude that if someone we think spiritual goes a certain way, that must be the right way; and if someone who is in a bad spiritual state takes a certain course that course must be wrong. Are you going to give up being a Christian because some Christians of your acquaintance are such a poor lot? Are you going to repudiate Christianity because some Christians fall into sin? Will you cease to trust the Lord because of the failure of some who profess to trust Him? Surely not. If the Lord is trustworthy we shall still trust Him. The question is not one of men's reactions to the Truth, but of the Truth itself.

Some brothers have said to us: "How I thank God for leading me to these local gatherings! I have received much help here." We are not unduly elated by such remarks. They are no indication that the absolute nature of the Truth has been recognized. The possibility is that the people who pass such remarks come simply because the meetings appeal to them. But just wait awhile till something transpires that does not meet with their approval and see if they do not pronounce the place all wrong.

If a place is right, it is right; if it is wrong it is wrong. It is not its favorable or unfavorable treatment of me that makes it right or wrong. The Truth must be the sole determining factor in all our associations; but if that is to be so, then this self that warps our judgments will have to go.

The numerous divisions in the church and the many dissensions in the work would be eliminated if only our personal preferences could be eliminated. If we would simply capitulate to the Truth, irrespective of its effect on ourselves, not only would the problems in the church and in the work be solved, but our personal problems would end too.

Watch Out For Taking Slight Deviations From The Truth Just To Be Maintain Relationships

Of course, we would never entertain the thought of abandoning the Truth; but we allow a slight deviation here and a slight deviation there, and gradually the Truth ceases to make an impact upon us. The result is that we lose our sense of direction and drift hither and thither. If people treat us well we walk in the way the Lord has shown; if people treat us ill we seek another way. How self-important we are! We occupy the place the Truth should occupy. We make ourselves the pivot of the universe, and everything is made to hinge on its relation to us.

O, brothers and sisters, it is the Truth that matters, not its effect on puny creatures like you and me. It may demand of us that we forsake the happiest of personal relationships for constant association with incompatibles. It is not happiness in our environment that proves our association right, nor natural incompatibility with our associates that proves it wrong.

Let us settle it once for all that the Truth is ultimate and must govern all our associations and all our judgments. Even in earthly courts the personal preferences of the judge are not allowed to

influence his judgments. He cannot obey the dictates of his heart and refuse to pronounce his own son “guilty” if the law proves his guilt; and he cannot refuse to pronounce his enemy “not guilty” if the law so requires. The law is absolute, and the judge has to subject himself to it.

Do Not Compromise the Truth Just to Forge Mutual Agreements

If as a body of fellow-workers we would unconditionally subordinate ourselves to the Truth, how swift and smooth our deliberations would be, and how the work would prosper! When our one consideration is the Lord’s will, we shall be saved many fruitless discussions and shall speedily reach clear conclusions; till then we shall spend much precious time discussing our individual opinions, and we shall have to study our words and resort to diplomacy in order to please everyone. We shall always be stopping to consider if brother A. would take offense in the event of our doing such-and-such a thing, and if brother B. would refuse to co-operate if we took a different line, and what concessions it might be necessary to make in order to conciliate brother C. Even if our careful consideration of one another’s opinions and our constant adjustment to one another’s convictions should save us from positive disagreement, what have we gained if we have compromised the Truth?

Let Us Focus on Discovering God’s Will, and Simply Do What He Says

If instead of pandering to one another and drafting plans and policies to preserve the peace among this band of fellow-workers, each one of us would accept the Truth as final and humbly subject himself to it, the blessing of the Lord would rest upon the whole company. Oh, that we might make it our one concern to discover the will of God and simply do what He says!

Let us make this our serious business. But let us remember that in the work of the Lord there is no place whatever for our soulish activity. It may be with earnest desire for the prosperity of the work that we bring our influence to bear on other lives; and we may even succeed in influencing them to accept the Truth, but the end does not justify the means. The Truth is far too great to need our manipulation of it. We can well trust its inherent authority to make its own impact. Our part is in humility of heart to take our right place in relation to it.

Summary of Chapter 10: "Loyal to the Truth"

In this chapter, Watchman Nee challenges Christian workers to practice unwavering loyalty to God's Truth -- even when it is uncomfortable or costly. He warns against compromising the Truth to protect personal interests, relationships, reputations, or ministry outcomes. Truth is absolute and must never be adjusted to fit our preferences or circumstances. There are several examples of how self-centeredness, bias toward loved ones, and emotional attachments often lead believers to distort the Word of God.

The truth, based on God's Word, should govern all relationships, decisions, and church affiliations -- not sentiment, popularity, or pragmatism. When Christian leaders deviate from Truth for the sake of peace, comfort, or social harmony, they lose moral direction and become ineffective in God's work. Instead of manipulating situations or others in the name of ministry success, workers must submit humbly to God's will, trusting Truth's own authority. Loyalty to Truth is essential for unity, clarity, and divine blessing in any spiritual work.

Remember this axiom that we practice in LNP: *"On essentials, obedience and unity. On non-essentials, grace and liberty. In all things, charity and love."*

Key Questions for Reflection and Discussion:

Please submit your reflections into the Discussion Forum, and share and discuss your answers with your District Coordinator. No need for peer review, but I will personally respond to your reflection.

1. *In what areas of my ministry or leadership am I tempted to adjust or soften biblical truth to avoid conflict or discomfort? Do I make decisions based on who supports or opposes an idea, rather than testing the idea against Scripture? Am I seeking consensus in ministry by appealing to personal opinions or preferences, rather than a shared submission to God's Word?*
2. *How can I train myself to recognize subtle forms of compromise—even when they appear loving or practical? How can our District grow in submitting more fully to Truth than to one another's sensitivities or influence?*

Challenge for Application:

Hold a short prayer and discernment session with your team focused solely on asking: "What is the Lord's will in this matter?" Avoid debating opinions or personalities. Practice responding to Truth as the final word, regardless of personal cost.

- God Bless Us All -