

THE IDENTITY OF TRUE FAITH AND PRACTICE

- I. Error begins with accepting some other standard for faith and practice than the word of God. **GEN 3:1-6; 2CO 11:3.**
- II. Personal feelings and thoughts do not determine truth. **PRO 28:26; 14:12.**
 - A. It is possible to be completely convinced that one is doing right though in error. **JOH 16:2; ACT 26:9-10.**
 1. Dedication to an error does not justify the error.
 2. Zeal is not necessarily be a good thing. **2SA 21:2; GAL 4:17-18.**
 - B. It is possible to be in ignorance about wrongdoing. **PSA 19:12; ACT 3:17.**
 1. When this is discovered, the mind is to be changed and the wrongdoing forsaken. **JOB 34:32; ROM 12:1-2; 1PE 1:14.**
 2. God calls men to repent. **ACT 17:30.**
 - a. Repent: “To feel contrition, compunction, sorrow or regret for something one has done or left undone; to change one's mind with regard to past action or conduct through dissatisfaction with it or its results.”
 - b. Acquired corrective knowledge demands an appropriate response. **ISA 55:6-8; EPH 4:17-24.**
 - c. The length of time that a person has believed and practiced an error should be no deterrent to making a needed change. **PRO 19:20.**
 3. An honest man, when confronted with the truth, will either repent of his error or cease being honest.
- III. The newness or strangeness of the doctrine is no reason in itself to discard it. **MAR 1:27; ACT 17:18-20; HOS 8:12.**
- IV. The word of God is to be relied upon above the word of enemies, teachers and ancients. **PSA 119:98-100.**
- V. The fact that actions/beliefs contrary to Scripture may get “results” is no standard for determining what is right. **NUM 20:7-12.**
- VI. How many or few believe a thing does not prove it true or untrue.
 - A. Joshua and Caleb were outvoted ten to two. **DEU 1:22-38.**
 - B. Elijah's ministry was a minority ministry. **1KI 18:21-22.**
 - C. Noah's church was a minority church (temporarily). **2PE 2:5; 1PE 3:20.**
 - D. God's man is sometimes called to stand alone because of His word. **JER 15:16-17.**
 - E. God's word is true if NOBODY acknowledges it. **ROM 3:3-4.**
 - F. Obedient followers of the truth tend to be rare. **MAT 7:13-14, 21-23; LUK 18:8.**
 - G. There may be many more followers of the faithful word than one is aware of. **ROM 11:2-4.**
- VII. Perfection comes gradually. God does not expect men to know everything before they will do anything. **HEB 11:8; PRO 4:18.**
 - A. In the absence of knowledge or opportunity, God sees the intents of the heart (**HEB 4:12**) and is merciful. **1KI 8:18; 15:14; 2CH 30:18-20.**
 - B. When knowledge and opportunity are gained, actions must be directed accordingly to avoid judgment. **JAM 4:17; LUK 12:47.**

- C. Continual learning that does not bring forth its fruit speaks of reprobation. **2TI 3:7-8.**
 - D. Ultimately, a person must make up their mind one way or another. **JOS 24:15; 1KI 18:21; MAT 12:30.**
- VIII. The question is oftentimes asked, “Why would God allow me to have believed a lie for all these years?”
- A. It may be because of unchallenged tradition that should have been tested. **1TH 5:21.**
 - B. It may be because of a love of sin and self more than truth. **2TH 2:10-12.**
 - C. Sometimes God tests His people by allowing them to be exposed to error. **DEU 13:1-3; 1CO 11:19.**
 - D. If a child of God is found to be in error, he should be instructed unto conversion. **ACT 10:1-6, 34-35; 18:24-28; LEV 19:15-18.**
- IX. But some ask, “Well, am I just supposed to cast away everything I have ever believed?” Ans. No, just the errors. **ROM 12:9.**
- X. Partiality is not to be shown in God's law. We have no right to only submit to the parts we like or overlook so-called “trivial” parts of the doctrine. **PSA 119:128; MAT 5:19; 23:23.**
- A. Disobedience in one point incurs judgment even though other points are faithfully observed. **1KI 13; 1CH 13:1-12; REV 2:2-5.**
 - B. God has little use for “strange fire” substitutes. **LEV 10:1-2.**
- XI. Full obedience is the goal. **COL 1:9-10; HEB 13:20-21.**
- A. Love demands obedience. **JOH 14:23-24; 1JO 5:3.**
 - B. Obedience is personal. **JOH 21:21-22.**
 - C. Do not be discouraged over past failures. **PHIL 3:12-14; PRO 19:20; 4:18.**
 - D. The prayer of the upright is for refinement. **PSA 139:23-24; PHIL 3:15.**