





# Reflections

When we study God's Word, we often find the Holy Spirit working on some aspect of our life that challenges us to be more obedient, or to fully accept, and live, the truth of the Word when our lives fall short. Being convicted in our hearts, we frequently are tempted to find a point of argument as to why it doesn't mean what it says, or even why it really doesn't apply to us because it disagrees with a long held point of view that is contrary to what is written. Many so-called theologians spend their academic lives engaging in such argumentation. If the Word shines the spotlight of judgment on our long held, but wrong, beliefs we must come under its authority but our flesh rebels against such thoughts and we then listen to someone who will speak to our point of view. Paul warned Timothy about such things when he explained... *For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers;*<sup>4</sup> *and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables. (2 Timothy 4:3-4 NKJ)* When we stop and honestly think about these practices, we will come to the correct conclusion that we, and others, are guilty of filtering God's Truth through the filters of our prideful and even heretical positions and that we are more interested in the Word accommodating our flesh than in responding to the work of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus confronted this entire way of thinking when He asked those who were following Him...<sup>46</sup> *"But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do the things which I say? (Luke 6:46 NKJ)* He further clarified the reality of who He is and what that means to us when He said... *"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. (John 14:6 NKJ)* By stating the fact that He is the very embodiment of truth and was and is truth itself, Jesus made clear that beside Him there is no other. He was and is God. That being the case, where does man find that he can take or leave what the Scripture says based on his own flawed reasoning about the things of eternal significance? How is it that man has asserted that he is the arbiter of truth? On what basis do men decide what of the Word they can discard as not applying to themselves simply because they refuse to accept its authority?

To understand the thinking processes related to such arrogant refusal to accept and live according to the Scripture we need only listen to Paul as he speaks to the church at Rome.<sup>18</sup> *For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,*<sup>19</sup> *because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them.*<sup>20</sup> *For since the creation of the world His invisible*

*attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse,*<sup>21</sup> *because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened.*<sup>22</sup> *Professing to be wise, they became fools, ... (Romans 1:18-22 NKJ)*

Here we come to the heart of the matter. When man looks to his own thoughts to explain things of spiritual life he falls into the trap that while professing wisdom, he instead becomes a fool. He then replaces God's truth with his own speculations and finally becomes a man who is released by God to a reprobate mind. He has, by his own sinful devices, abandoned the truth and has accepted the ancient lie that was first heard in the Garden of Eden as Adam accepted Eve's offer of the fruit and, in doing so, broke the relationship with God and suffered the curse for such treachery. That lie, no different than today, states that God lies and cannot be trusted as the final arbiter of faith and truth. In simplest terms the lie of an unreliable God encourages men to treat His Word with disdain and disrespect and has resulted in "filtered" truth which is heresy.

Now then, let's review our own behaviors regarding how we handle the Truth of God's Word. Are we guilty of saying: "I just don't like what it says in this passage so I can't accept it as authoritative?" Have we chosen to ignore and disobey portions of Scripture because we just can't accept what it says? Have we decided that a portion of the Word just isn't relevant today because our own personal views differ? Have we allowed heretical thinking to create doubts about the truth of the Word? What is our world view? Do we believe the creation account in the Bible or have we adopted some variation of evolution? The Bible is declared to be the Word of God and Paul reiterates its power when he tells his protégé Timothy...<sup>16</sup> *All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,*<sup>17</sup> *that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:16-17 NKJ)* The author of Hebrews tells us that...<sup>12</sup> *For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. (Hebrews 4:12 NKJ)*

With the validation of the Scripture by Jesus and His Apostles it then falls to us to be faithful to be obedient to His Word. Let's not be guilty of filtering the Word to meet with our own ideas and beliefs. Rather let's let the Word be the foundation for those ideas and beliefs. We need to approach the Word with humility and accept it as the truth. If we see a conflict between the Word and our ideas, then our ideas must conform to the Word only then can we live the admonition...<sup>15</sup> *Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. (2 Timothy 2:15 NKJ)* **Pastor Doug**