

"Misinformation"

If you love the Lord, do you also love the truth? Hello, I'm Phil Sanders. And this is a Bible study, "In SEARCH of the Lord's Way." Stay with us today; and we're going to see the difference between the truth and a lie.

Welcome to In SEARCH of the Lord's Way. We're here to search the Scriptures, because we know that the Bible is inspired. God breathed out the words found in Scripture. And God willed every single word found there. Because God is all-knowing and utterly wise but never lies, we can trust what we read in Scripture. Humans, on the other hand, don't know everything and are often fooled. We can't always trust people, so we must measure what we hear by God's Word. Thanks for taking time with us today. We hope you'll study with us each week. And we'd love to hear from you.

This week's program marks our 43rd anniversary since In SEARCH of the Lord's Way first broadcasted in Ada, Oklahoma over KTEN. Mack Lyon began this program with the help of the Wewoka Church of Christ. It wasn't long before the program filled the state of Oklahoma and then many adjoining states. Today we broadcast throughout the United States and Canada and dozens of other nations. We broadcast to the world over the internet. And we're deeply grateful to God for Mack, all of the coworkers, volunteers, and supporters of this program. We're also grateful for every viewer. We're grateful to God for the opportunity to be a part of your life.

We live in a culture filled with misinformation, where people with agendas have spun lies and half-truths. This is not new; people in all ages have told falsehoods to gain control of others. The devil himself uses lying wonders and the deception of wickedness to lead people away from God. Many will "perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved" (2 Thessalonians 2 and verse 10). We need to believe the truth rather than take pleasure in what is wicked or what is false.

Perhaps you'd like to know more about truth and falsehood, we offer the information on this program free. If you'd like a printed copy of our study and live in the United States, mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to searchtv@searchtv.org. Or, call our toll-free telephone number. That number is 1-800-321-8633. We also stream this program on our website at www.searchtv.org.

The Edmond church will now worship in song, we'll read from 1 Kings 13:15 to 18, and consider the difference between truth and falsehood.

Our reading today comes from 1 Kings chapter 13 verses 15 to 18. Tells about a man, a religious man, but he believed a lie.

Then he said to him, "Come home with me and eat bread." He said, "I cannot return with you, nor go with you, nor will I eat bread or drink water with you in this place. For a command came to me by the word of the LORD, 'You shall eat no bread, nor drink water there; do not return by going the way which you came.'" He said to him, "I also am a prophet like you, and an angel spoke to me by the word of the LORD, saying, 'Bring him back with you to your house, that he may eat bread and drink water.'" But he lied to him.

You know what? Even today sometimes people who know the Lord, or think they know the Lord, will lie to you. Let's pray together. Oh Father help us to believe You and what we know You have said. And not be influenced by the things that people have dreamed up. And the lies that they tell. Help us Heavenly Father to hold fast to the truth. In Jesus name we pray, Amen.

After King Solomon died, his son Rehoboam took the throne. Because Rehoboam was immature and greedy for power, the people rejected him; and this brought about the division of Israel from Judah. Jereboam, who became the leader of these rebellious ten tribes, caused Israel to sin by making two golden calves and placing them in the cities of Bethel and Dan. Jereboam feared the people would go to Jerusalem and return to the Lord, so he told the people in 1 Kings 12 verse 28, "You have gone up to Jerusalem long enough. Behold your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt."

Jereboam claimed that his golden calves represented the God who led Israel out of Egypt. And he incited the people to offer sacrifices and burn incense to the golden calves, which he had made. These idols could never be God. The second of the Ten Commandments says, "You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments" (Exodus 20 verses 4 to 6).

Well, how could the people of Israel depart from God's teaching and believe such an outright lie? Well, they had to ignore almost everything they knew about God in order to follow Jereboam's false and man-made religion. I'm reminded of Paul's statement in Romans 1:25 about people who "exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator." How can something man-made create mankind?

God saw what Jereboam did and decided to send a man of God to the altar at Bethel, where Jereboam was, and he was to speak out against the king. Well, in 1 Kings 13 this man of God at God's direction predicted a sign or miracle: he said, "This is the sign that the LORD has spoken: 'Behold, the altar shall be torn down, and the ashes that are on it shall be poured out'" (1 Kings 13:3). Well, it happened just as God said that very day. The altar was split apart, and the ashes were poured out. The man of God left Bethel, going home by a different route and refusing to eat bread or drink water.

Well, 1 Kings 13 tells of an old prophet who chased down the man of God and said, "Come home with me and eat bread." The man of God replied, "I may not return with you, or go in with you, neither will I eat bread nor drink water with you in this place, for it was said to me by the word of the Lord, 'You shall neither eat bread nor drink water there, nor return by the way that you came.'"

Well, the old prophet, however, was not content. 1 Kings 13:18, 19 tells the sad story. The old prophet said, well "I also am a prophet as you are, and an angel spoke to me by the word of the Lord, saying, 'Bring him back with you into your house that he may eat bread and drink water.'" But he lied to him. So he (that is the man of God) went back with him and ate bread in his house and drank water. Now apparently the man of God placed his trust in what the lying prophet said rather than what God himself had told him.

Because of his disobedience, God punished the man of God. A lion met him on the way and killed him. Because he believed a lie, he suffered the wrath of God. Now some people say it doesn't matter what you believe if you love God. My friend, that isn't so! It matters what you believe. The man of God had to learn that truth the hard way. I hope you won't make that mistake. If you believe a lie, it could cost you your soul.

Paul wrote to the churches of Galatia, warning them not to follow a false gospel. Paul said in Galatians 1:6 to 9, "I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel— not that there is another one, but there are some who trouble you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. But even if we or an angel from heaven should

preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again: If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one (that) you received, let him be accursed.”

You know even if the source seems to be credible, such as an angel from heaven, we must not distort what God says, in His word that we know came from Him, and then turn to a lie. Many are deceived by distorted gospels today. They think they believe the truth, but they’ve placed their confidence in a distortion of the truth. There is but one gospel, and anything contrary to that one gospel is dangerous to the soul.

Christians must help people to distinguish truth from error. And that means, because we love people and want them to be saved, we must proclaim the truth and expose what is false. It’s not mean-spirited but loving to expose error and to help people learn the truth. James 5:19 to 20 says, “My brethren, if any among you strays from the truth and one turns him back, let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.”

Paul taught Timothy in 2 Timothy 2:24 to 26, that “The Lord’s bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged, with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth, and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will.” Our task as humble and gentle servants of God is to help people in error to find the truth, to help them to go to heaven. I would rather tell people the truth that hurts for a little while than tell people a lie that causes them to be lost eternally. My friend, it matters what we believe.

Adolf Hitler once boasted, “By the skillful and sustained use of propaganda, one can make a people see even heaven as hell or an extremely wretched life as paradise.” Hitler told many outrageous lies. He held that if you tell a big enough lie long enough and tell it frequently enough, it’ll be believed. He realized that people would fall for a big lie quicker than they would a little one. By telling lies, Hitler and the Nazis were able to slaughter eleven million people in his concentration camps. The more outrageous the lie, the more some become gullible. The old song says that if you are not willing to stand for something, then you’ll fall for anything. We have to stand with God. We stand with His Word, the Bible.

And the difference between the truth and a lie is as great as the difference between God and the devil. The Lord Jesus is the source of truth, but the devil has always been a liar. The Lord Jesus Himself described the devil this way in John 8:44, He said, “He (the devil) was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies.”

While the devil speaks lies, He pretends to be a follower of God. He wants everyone to think he’s moral and true, but he has no intention of being moral or speaking the truth. He’s out to fool people into following His error. 2 Corinthians 11:14 to 15 says, “No wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness, (then he says) whose end will be according to their deeds.” Being religious doesn’t make a person righteous, and calling oneself a preacher or prophet doesn’t guarantee what one says is true.

Many people like Pilate have, frankly, given up on trying to find the truth, when it’s staring them right in the face. They don’t really want the truth, and they have no love for the truth. Because of sin and pleasure, many would rather believe fantasy, a lie than take the steps necessary to believe the

truth. We don't like to call sin sinful, so we lie to ourselves about when life begins or whether marriage matters. We don't like to think of anyone as being wrong, so we decide that every doctrine must be right. We don't like to think of anybody being lost, so we consider everybody saved. Someone doesn't like the teaching of the necessity of baptism for salvation, so they decide baptism isn't necessary. We don't want to admit there is but one gospel, so we think any gospel is true. We don't like to admit there is one faith, so we believe every road takes you to heaven. Oh, those are all lies. But we're not the measure of truth, as human beings. God is the measure of truth and His Word, the bible, declares what is truth.

No matter how strongly we believe that something is right, it's false if it contradicts what the Lord says in His Bible. We need to know that the Lord Jesus takes His Word seriously, even if we don't. The Lord said in John 12:48 to 50, that "The one who rejects me and does not receive my words has a judge; the word that I have spoken will judge him on the last day. For I have not spoken on my own authority, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment—what to say and what to speak. And I know that his commandment is eternal life. What I say, therefore, I say as the Father has told me." Now Jesus knew His words were the measure of truth and would affect our eternal salvation. If we reject His words, we'll be lost; but if we abide by His words, we can know the truth and the truth will set us free and we can be saved.

When believing the truth is demanding but believing a lie is convenient and popular, unfortunately many choose to believe the lie. They believe what they want to believe and they find preachers and teachers who will tell them what they want to hear. Tickle their ears. They get complacent and will insist that their lie is really the truth. They will do nearly anything rather than listen to what God has actually said. Solomon urges us in Proverbs 23:23, "Buy truth, and do not sell it, Get wisdom and instruction and understanding." My friend, buying the truth comes at a high price. It means being honest enough to admit that what we have heard in the past may not be true.

Why are we speaking like this? Because many in our religious world no longer value the truth and has bought into lies. We need to be like the noble Bereans. Acts 17:11 says, "Now these Jews (that were in Berea) were more noble than those in Thessalonica; they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so." Have you searched the Scriptures to find out if what you believe is so? Or have you simply accepted what people have told you? Have you tested the truthfulness of what you believe by a serious study of God's Word? Have you paid the price to buy the truth? Have you searched God's Word.

Let's pray together. Heavenly Father we pray that You will put in our hearts a desire for the truth. That we will love what You have taught us in Your word the gospel. That we'll read it and study it and that we'll believe it and be obedient to it. This is our humble and our urgent and our fervent pray Father. This in Jesus name, Amen.

Many have faced the bitter reality that what they once believed was not biblical and true. We all get fooled, but we aren't left without hope. We can know the truth. Jesus promised we could in John 8:32, and God desires that all men be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth (1 Timothy 2 and verse 4). God reveals the truth in His Word, the Bible; but we must take the time to search it out, believe it, and obey it. It's not enough to know the Word. We must let it touch our hearts and shape our lives. Ignorance causes confusion, lies cause chaos, but knowledge of God leads to order and wisdom.

James 1:22 to 25 says, "But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in

a mirror. For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing.” If we do nothing with what we’ve learned from God, we’ve robbed ourselves of a blessing.

And if your soul isn’t right with God, don’t lie to yourself. You need to follow God’s truth! To become a Christian and free from sin, you must believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Repent of your sins, confess Jesus as the Christ and be baptized, immersed in water, for the forgiveness of your sins (Acts 2 and verse 38). Ah, do it today! Do it today.

We hope today’s study about truth has motivated to study God’s Word. If you want a free printed copy of this message and live in the United States, mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to searchtv@searchtv.org.

Or, you can call the Search office toll-free at 1-800-321-8633. There’s also a schedule of our programs and a map with the location of churches in your area at www.searchtv.org. now you can watch SEARCH anytime on YouTube! Subscribe to our channel, “SearchTVMinistry.” Like the programs and get the notifications; and that helps us to spread the program. We also offer free Bible Correspondence courses. Now if you get a hold of us don’t worry, we’re not here to exploit you and we don’t ask for money. We’re here to help you draw close to God.

Focus your heart on God by worshiping at church. Everybody needs a church family. And I realize some of you for health reasons can’t attend worship; but I’m speaking to those who can attend and haven’t been going. There’s probably a church of Christ near you. If you’re looking for a healthy, Biblical church home, we’ll gladly help you find one. We’ll be back next week, Lord willing. So keep searching God’s Word with us and tell a friend about this program. And as always God bless you and we love you from all of us at In Search of the Lord’s Way.