

Dear friends and family,

The Greek philosopher Democritus (460-370BC)

is credited with this thought provoking observation:

“Truth lies at the bottom of a well, the depth of which, alas! Gives but little hope of release.”

It was this philosophical musing that inspired French painter Jean-Leon Jerome to paint

Truth coming out of her well to shame mankind in 1896.

In the painting, a naked woman is emerging from a well screaming at something unseen in the direction of the viewer. This painting and the quote by Democritus brought about the following parable at the end of the 19th century:

The Truth and the Lie meet one day. The Lie says to the Truth: "It's a marvelous day today"! The Truth looks up to the skies and sighs, for the day was really beautiful. They spend a lot of time together, ultimately arriving beside a well. The Lie tells the Truth: "The water is very nice, let's take a bath together!" The Truth, once again suspicious, tests the water and discovers that it indeed is very nice. They undress and start bathing. Suddenly, the Lie comes out of the water, puts on the clothes of the Truth and runs away. The furious Truth comes out of the well and runs everywhere to find the Lie and to get her clothes back. The World, seeing the Truth naked, turns its gaze away, with contempt and rage. The poor Truth returns to the well and disappears forever, hiding therein, its shame. Since then, the Lie travels around the world, dressed as the Truth, satisfying the needs of society, because, the World, in any case, harbours no wish at all to meet the naked Truth.

Pastor's Point of View

The big question this week: **What does it mean for the church to be the “pillar and support of the truth”?**

Day 1 – READ 1 Timothy 3:15-16

Last week we looked at this beautiful statement of faith given by Paul to Timothy. Paul told Timothy that the purpose of his letter was to give instructions pertaining to conduct in the church. Then he issues this statement, explaining that the church is the pillar and support of the truth.

1. What is the purpose of a pillar or a support?
2. What happens when those supports do the job they were intended to do?
3. What happens when those supports fail?

Day 2 – READ 1 Timothy 4:1-5

1. In the last few months, some notable figures in the global Christian community have renounced their faith. This is not a new phenomenon; you can probably think of other examples from the past as well. Verse 1 speaks directly to this. How can one, who appears to be in the faith, fall away?
2. The answer is found in the word ‘fall away’. The Greek word used here is *aphistemi* and means to apostacize. Apostacize carries with it the idea of ‘leading away’ as included with ‘falling away’.
3. Like the lie dressed in the clothing of the truth, the most effective way of destroying the message of the church is to infiltrate the church with false teachers.
4. This scripture does not teach that a Christian can lose their salvation. It does teach that Christians need to be personally responsible for upholding the truth, not relying solely on the teachings of the pastor but on the Word of God.

Day 3 – READ 1 Timothy 4:1-5

1. Verses 2-3 spell out the means by which this apostasy will take place. List out the different tactics that will be used to lead people astray.
2. The end of verse 3 gives hope and hearkens back to 3:15; how does the church maintain that it is the pillar and support of truth? Its members must **believe** and **know** the truth.

Day 4 – READ 1 Timothy 4:1-5

1. Read Psalm 24:1-6 and compare it to 1 Tim. 4:4-5.
2. How are we to receive the things God gives us?
3. What does it mean to sanctify those things?

The focal point of these verses are not about falling away from or losing one’s salvation. Instead, it is that we are called, as individuals, to uphold the truth. We are the pillars of the church.

Phil Jackson, the famed basketball coach, is credited with saying,

“The strength of the team is each individual member. The strength of each member is the team.”

If the pillars of the church are working properly, if we all personally know and believe the truth, if we sanctify it by the Word of God and prayer, we will not be led astray by the false teachers who apostacize the truth. May you be discerning this week in your walk with the Lord, seeking truth and knowing the Gospel you boldly proclaim!

In faith and truth,

Pastor Matt

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*Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us **RUN** with endurance the race that is set before us -- Hebrews 12:1*

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