

K-025 the Spirit of Truth

by Art Katz

Art Katz emphasizes the critical importance of truth in the Christian life and the role of the Holy Spirit in guiding believers toward authenticity and reality.

Duration: 58:27

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Matthew 21:12-13, John 2:13-17, Acts 5:3-5, Acts 5:12, Acts 5:14, Ephesians 5:15-17

Topics: "Spirit of Truth"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker addresses the issue of religious ceremonies and rituals performed in the name of God. He criticizes the lack of passion and genuine connection to the message being delivered. The speaker emphasizes the importance of the spirit behind the words, stating that even if the content is scripturally correct, a contradictory spirit can render the message ineffective. He highlights the deceitfulness and emptiness of the world, urging listeners to recognize the true state of their lives and seek a genuine relationship with God.

Transcript

I am feeling sad tonight, children. And I don't think that my moods are accidental or haphazard. I think most frequently they're in keeping with what the heart of God happens to be on a particular occasion.

Maybe he's feeling sad tonight. But as I was looking toward this service and seeking the mind of the Lord for it, I had a long-distance phone call from a dear brother in a southern state who gave me the unhappy news that he had split from another dear brother whom I know and love over some question having to do with plurality of elders and leaders among men and other such nonsense. And I've been feeling sad since that call.

So I don't know what you're going to get tonight. Maybe you've already gotten it, that we need to be reminded that the God of all truth has called us to the spirit of truth. And part of the deception in which we every day allow ourselves to wallow is putting up a false front.

I know I've stunned many of God's people who learned that I have vowel movements just like everybody else. I remember I once considered taking a young man with me on an overseas trip and the elders of his fellowship were afraid to release him for fear that seeing me day in and day out for six weeks in every posture and situation and circumstance would utterly disillusion and dishevel this young believer. Better allow him to keep the illusion that men like myself give standing by platforms like this.

I'm going to ask you to pray with me that we might hear from God tonight. And if this is not his mood, to give him full authority to change it, I'm going to take this nasty fellow off the platform and bring someone with a more sparkling spirit on it. Ha ha ha.

Let's pray together, okay? So precious Lord, mighty God, thank you precious God that you are the way, the life, and the truth. And we would ask especially Lord that if it pleases you this night, you might give us a sense of what that last word means. Breathe upon us the very spirit of truth and speak to us the scriptures of truth and bring our lives into complete conformity to the truth.

We're willing to be courageous tonight, Lord, and ask you to reveal to us if there be in us any shabby thing, any spiritual cutting of corners, looking the other way, compromise, deceit. Lord that we might be a people in the earth that reflect your glory. Now altogether possess this piece of clay and speak to your own people out of your own heart by your own spirit.

Give us a thorough shaking, mighty God, and a reminder of what is the true foundation in the Messiah Jesus. Bless this night, Lord, and the speaking of these days perfectly. Thank you and praise you for it, in Yeshua's holy name.

And God's people said, Amen. I'm going to bumble tonight, you don't know what that means? I'm going to stumble and splutter my way along. I feel so deflated and limp.

I don't think I could raise my hands above my head. But there's been a cumulative attack on my sensibilities in recent days and weeks from which I have not fully recovered. All having to do with truth.

I guess I'm one of those Jews without guile of which Jesus spoke. And when I come to a situation of untruth, I'm still naively stunned. Can you imagine that? May God keep me in that kind of innocence.

As for example, it was not long ago that I ended up at a full gospel breakfast in Germany. I was supposed to have been in East Germany and somebody blew it. And I found myself with a free morning and as the Lord will, He gets you in places where you don't expect to be.

And gave me about 15 minutes worth, every second of it, choice, perfect, and from above. Think I'm bragging? Better believe it. On Him.

It was choice, children. It was resonant. It sounded from heaven.

And it pricked and penetrated about 300 pompous, somewhat arrogant, inflated, German Christians. It's what they needed. I wasn't the main speaker.

They just gave me 15 minutes. And sometimes fellows like me enjoy not being main speakers. Like tonight, for example, I went to God, it was someone else.

And so I leaned back to relax and to enjoy the main speaker. And when He took the microphone, after my 15 minutes and some interval of singing, and after He finished praying, He began by saying, This morning, God has given me some words for you. And brother, I just leaned forward on my seat, ready to receive that which was fresh and coming down from above.

But it wasn't 60 seconds into it when I leaned back in my seat in a dead slump and never did recover. My spirit slumped, my body slumped, because in 60 seconds it was quite evident that God had given him nothing. It was just a tired assemblage of full gospel clichés.

And you know what, children? The truth can be made into a cliché. You know that? And if God will not strike me dead on this platform, I would almost venture to say that the word of God in certain mouths can be made into a cliché also. It can be prated mechanically, invoked, trotted out, displayed, utterly dead, inert, and lifeless to serve purposes of men, and God is not in it.

And even the word of God can become a cliché. That's why I tremble about every speaking. Except God be in it.

Except this mood be his mood. Except this speaking be his speaking. It's going to be a tired thing.

Well, you say, what's the big deal about that? Breakfast. Only this. A man said something who was a speaker representing the Most High God and addressing God's people.

That was not true. That's all. Is that such an effrontery? Is that so great a calamity? I mean, isn't it kind of a convention? Isn't it a kind of charismatic style to make generous statements of that kind? God has given me something.

God said to me when God had not given and God had not said. And we've so often heard these phrases repeated that we no longer scruple to ask whether it be so or not. We just accept it as a certain kind of style or mode of speaking.

And I have a sneaky Jewish intuition and suspicion that something like that must have happened thousands of years ago in Israel. Day by day. Little subtle corrosions.

Little cuttings of corners. Little flippant remarks and statements by God's priests, God's servants, God's prophets. Until the day came that God says in Isaiah that truth has fallen in the streets.

I'm feeling a little nervous and apprehensive that it might happen to us if we continue in this kind of sloppy slapdash manner and our ears become dull to make the fine discernments of the things that are true and the things that are false. The world is certainly full of this. And I think perhaps God wanted me to be reminded of that.

On a recent trip to California, I was invited to have lunch with a Jewish composer whose wife is a spirit-filled believer who had been given my book and not read it. And he has about seven Academy Award Oscars on his mantle. I won't mention his name.

He's a brilliant composer. Jewish man, around 60. And we had lunch at the Beverly Hills Hotel.

I think our entire community of 30 souls could have lived a week or more for what it cost for that one lunch for three men. Mamma Mia. It was extravagant.

Men bowed and scraped. Man, you could barely stir before someone was at your elbow with this, that, or the other. And the name dropping was fierce.

Mr. This, Mr. That. It was a placating, man-pleasing environment. And I just watched this man before me just kind of sopping it up and taking it in.

Listen, he had earned it. He had struggled, striven, sweated, exerted himself. He had played the game.

He had used his natural God-given endowments without any reference to God to promote his life and his career. And he had arrived at the top. And as my eyes surveyed that dining room, everyone else seemed to be out of the same mold.

It was just dripping with the unctuousness of men toward each other. But the man himself was a pitiable thing. I could barely keep myself from patting him on the head paternally, and I was young enough to be his son.

I somehow saw him in his little BVDs, not at all impressed with his \$300 suit, with his well-manicured nails and gorgeous cuff links, resplendent attire. I just saw a little boy who was never grown up, never found out what it's all about, still playing kid games. Oh, it's true, they're expensive games, and all the world applauds them, and they sweat buckets of sweat to get those Academy Awards.

But in the end, children, what is it? It's a filthy lie. It's deceit. It's man-pleasing nonsense.

It's men kept from the essential truth. It has to do with ego and being butted up. And men kept in complete ignorance all their life long about what are the real and the eternal questions.

In a word, it's a lie. The whole world lieth in the evil one who is the father of lies, and he has hypnotized and duped an entire mankind who have not the slightest consciousness that their lives are pathetic things, full of dishonesty and deceit, wondering why it is that they have ulcers and varicose veins, nervous breakdowns, premature deaths, suicides, for every day is a kind of suicide, an act of dying, not realizing that they're committing suicide by smoking, by drinking, by living excessively, full of phony noise. I don't know why it is the Lord has had me speak twice now in recent weeks, one at a Kiwanis luncheon, at a Lions Club luncheon.

They'll never be the same. I came into that Kiwanis Club luncheon and sat down, sheepish looking, and I'll tell you, children, that I had a greater sense of trembling and fear than in some of the fiercest encounters that it's pleased God to bring me among atheists and radicals and university crowds. And these were nothing more than American, middle class, successful businessmen having their customary Kiwanis lunch.

But you never heard more noise. It was so shrill, so raucous, so giddy, men yelling across the room, acting like kids. And something was working in my spirit, and when I got up, God pulled out the cork.

Well, I'll tell you how bad it was. There was a Methodist minister at the guest table, and when it was all over and the smoke had cleared, he said, Jeremiah came to the Kiwanis Club today. There's a lot of unreality in the world, children.

A lot of deception, a lot of deceit, a lot of false values, a lot of sound and fury signifying nothing. And however painful it is in the world, to find even some semblance of it among God's people is mortifying. You know what I think? I think that God wants to raise up an alternative society for the one that is dying.

I think He's concerned for the establishing of a kingdom, not in some airy, distant, ephemeral place and time, but right here and now in River City. A real kingdom, real lives, real relationships, a real economic system, real social system, a whole thing values, amusements, as an alternative to a dying world. It far eclipses mere church.

I think that the heart of it is that it's real. You know how many times I repeated that? Real this, real that, real the other. It's real.

God is the God of reality. That's what truth is. Well, in my same days in Los Angeles, at the end of a weary night's meeting, I was invited to be interviewed at a Christian television station.

And I've had some juicy interviews over the years, which God has really blessed. And so I went through my crumpled, tired conditions thinking this might be another. When I got there, my heart sank.

There was the host and hostess, also the managers of the station. She had on her artificial eyelashes about two inches long, silver wig, makeup half inch thick, and he also looked like a porcelain doll. They were cute.

And I'll tell you that their style and manner and personality matched. They were full of brittle, giddy liftings of voices and trillings and excitement. Oh, a report has just come in.

You know, that kind of stuff. But the moment that the camera was off them, they slumped. And I saw what was happening.

They were inviting me to play Patsy. They were promoting tours to Israel. Somehow they heard that I had been saved in Jerusalem and had some experience there, and after all, I was Jewish.

And wouldn't you say a few words about the exciting things that are happening there? Isn't it exciting? Well, I just didn't feel excited. It was painful. It was embarrassing.

I was wholly out of place. It was promotional. It was feigned.

It was forced. It was synthetic. It was unreal.

It was untrue. I went home so sick in my gut that I could not sleep through the night. And I had one concluding meeting the following day at the church where I'd been speaking, and they'd been hearing some heavy things out of me.

Oh, that's another adventure. And I said, I don't know if you have seen me last night on that familiar TV interview program, and a few hands went up. I said, Did you ever see a more uncomfortable-looking man? They didn't remember seeing a more uncomfortable-looking man.

And then I told them why I was uncomfortable. And then despite myself, a kind of cry broke forth out of my heart and mouth. It had something to do with my Jewish people, quite a number of them in the Los Angeles area.

And I said, I cringed to think that any one of them would haphazardly turn to that channel and see these little Dresden dolls shrieking and carrying on in a giddy way and just as quickly turn it off. Why do we think that we're compelled to slap artificial eyelashes on our puss and giggle and squeak with our voices and put on some brave show about the excitement and all the activity of what God is doing. Why can't we just be real, honest, true? Why can't we compel the attention of men without wigs, physically or spiritually? Why do we have to affect something and posture something? Isn't there sufficient glory breaking through without this kind of aid? It's deceit.

It's false. It's untrue. It's a lie.

Well, you can't believe the subtleties of this, children. In the same span of time, I had a Sunday morning off, which is a rare privilege for me, and I was taken by a Jewish brother to hear his pastor, a

denominational man who had received the baptism of the Holy Spirit and of whom he was quite proud. It was a great denominational church in a great city and I enjoy hearing other men preach.

And I went upstairs in the balcony with him and as my custom is, I looked at the people around me. I am a notorious people-watcher. I can't understand the excitement about birds.

And was it my peculiar Jewish perception or was I seeing with the eyes of the Lord as I studied some of the husbands and wives all around me? They seem so listless and one and gray. Their marriages seem some kind of truce or unspoken agreement. You don't bother me, I don't bother you.

And there were their kids in the back row of the church wearing the latest and the modest clothes with their shirts open to their belly buttons. And they were completely out of it, wholly unrelated to what was going on below as this minister was banging his gums and bringing forth a sermon. They were tittering and giggling and poking each other and looking at the ceiling and passing things down the aisle.

It was a pitiful mess. It was a picture altogether of some kind of mock show, some kind of travesty against God performed in His name called religion. Where some man down below is banging his gums, speaking things out of a book and people are listlessly looking at their fingernails, watching the clock.

Their kids hanging in there, putting in their time. Husbands and wives sitting together like wooden sticks. And when the hour is finished and they fulfill their requirement, they'll all go home.

Hey, when is someone going to get up and shriek? When is someone going to get up and knock over the pulpit? When is someone going to get up and cry out and bring such travesty to an end? You want to have idolatry? You want to have some substitute for the true call of God? Have it for God's sake, but don't perform it in His name. You say, what was wrong with the sermon? Nothing. It was perfect in that it was scriptural, doctrinally correct, and it was on praise and worship.

You could not fault that message. And I was trying to understand what was wrong. And I finally understood what was wrong.

I finally understood why the audience was listless. I finally understood why they were wholly unrelated to what was going on below. I finally understood why the whole thing was ceremonial, a mock, a travesty, something feigned and put on.

Because however true this man's speaking, scripturally and doctrinally, however true the content of his words, his spirit contradicted his speaking. You know what I'm talking about, children? Where a man could say something that's true, but you know what his spirit was saying? Take it easy. Don't get offended.

Hey, I don't really mean this. This is just a sermon. This is just a message.

This is just church. Don't get rattled. Don't get upset.

I don't mean this in any way to be taken earnestly or seriously, that somehow your life is going to be affected or altered by it. Cool it. That's what his spirit was saying.

This is just a ceremonial obligation which we both understand without speaking. That made it a lie, children. It was technically true, but in fact, it was a lie.

And I want to stand on record tonight to say that God is the God of truth. That God is the God of reality. Now there's a world dying for the want of it.

There are men and women going berserk that cannot define or articulate their anguish of soul and their condition. Can't put their finger on it, but they sense that there's something amiss and amuck which all the world does not seem to notice and everyone is involved in the game. And that was the fury of my own condition 13 years ago up to my 35th year like a man out of joint, out of time, and out of season wondering why it is that I couldn't be one of the boys.

Why it is I couldn't concern myself with split-level success. Why it is I didn't want to be graduated that I might go on to college. Why it is I couldn't just get the grades.

Why I couldn't get fired up and enthusiastic for the values that men in the world celebrate. Why it is that I had a freaky sense and an intuition that if you turned the whole world upside down and inside out and controverted everything that men celebrate and esteem that they consider to be logical and real and true and you took the things that are offensive and alien to the thinking and doing of men you would have the truth. And guess what? That's exactly the case.

There's a little book that's in my hand called *The Spirit of Truth* by a precious woman named Jessie Penn Lewis. I picked it up in England on a recent trip and she reminds us that the comforter that Jesus said that he would send is called the Spirit of Truth. And everything that God does must be in keeping with his character which is truth.

The Spirit of Truth. It may help us tonight just to spend a few moments going through some of the references to the word truth in the Gospel of John. Why don't you turn with me to John the 14th chapter.

I'm reading from the amplified edition and I will ask the Father in the 16th verse and he will give you another comforter a counselor, helper, intercessor, advocate, strengthener and standby that he may remain with you forever the Spirit of Truth whom the world cannot receive. And in the 26th verse, but the comforter the counselor, the helper, the intercessor, the advocate the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in my name to represent me and act on my behalf he will teach you all things. John 15, 26, but when the comforter comes whom I will send to you from the Father the Spirit of Truth who comes and proceeds from the Father he himself will testify regarding me.

John 16, 13, but when he the Spirit of Truth, the truth-giving Spirit comes he will guide you into all the truth the whole and the full truth. I don't know about you children but the word truth has always made me drool. Even as an atheist, when I heard the word truth I began to salivate in my mouth.

If you can picture a Jewish kid in New York City going to school on a subway and spending an hour in those dark subterranean tunnels carrying heavy tomes of Nietzsche and Schopenhauer philosophers of which he did not understand one word out of ten and yet drooled just to hold the book because it was called philosophy which means the love of wisdom and truth. You'll have a picture of a Jewish boy who drools still. I want to ask you tonight do you drool when you hear the word truth? Do you love the truth? And do you hate therefore with the same passion anything that is false? Anything that is unreal? Anything that is feigned? Do you kind of look the other way when certain liberties are taken? Or what would you do if you were in my shoes and hear yourself being introduced on full gospel platforms as a former professor from Berkeley University? Or the University of California, Berkeley and I go and I say, hey but brother I was not a professor I just merely graduated there.

Oh what, what does a student, professor, you know what? You know, you know. You want to know something children? The spirit of God is the spirit of truth. And there's a spirit that came down when the heavens opened upon a son of whom a father said this is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased.

And you want to know something? When he said that Jesus had not yet done a cotton picking thing. It was a father who was pleased with a son because the son had lived in the characteristic spirit of the father which is the spirit of truth. And the heavens opened and a dove came and descended and abided upon him.

I don't understand too much about doves but someone has told me that they are very skittish spirits. Very easily offended and grieved. You just blink your eyelash the wrong way and man they're gone.

And there's something about the structure I was told of the head of the dove that it has a single vision. Unlike other birds that can see out of the sides of their heads that way it sees only that thing which is directly ahead. It's single eyed.

Remember it tells us in the scriptures to keep our eyes single that our whole body be full of light. For if our eye is not single the whole body is full of darkness. Hey you know it doesn't take much leaven to leaven the entire lump.

How'd you like God to give you a truth detector test tonight? Boy I'll bet you that the wires would burn out and the fuses would blow the lights would dim there'd be shrieks and howls and little things that we hadn't thought were great issues. And I'll tell you what God is saying to me. Little things are great issues.

How you doing in the little things children? God is building a kingdom. It's an alternative to a dying world that is phony and it's based on the spirit of truth. John 17, 17 Sanctify them purify, consecrate, separate them for yourself.

Jesus prayed for his disciples. Make them holy by the truth. Your word is truth.

Just as you sent me into the world I have also sent them into the world and for their sake and on their behalf I sanctify dedicate, consecrate myself that they also may be sanctified made holy in the truth. No way to obtain it without the truth. John 18, 37 A sophisticated Roman educated in the wisdom of the world looked upon a Jew with matted hair who had already been hauled from Pontius to Herod He was abused, spat upon the dribble and the spit probably still was on his beard and upon his clothing he was a man who had no sleep through the night his own disciples had forsaken him he was quite a beggarly looking character and that Roman must have been quite imperious stately, well dressed, self confident in every human way and he said to Jesus in the 37th verse are you a king? and Jesus answered you say it, you speak correctly for I am a king, certainly I am a king.

Man his appearance, you're contradictative what an uncomely looking king have you ever heard of a king with spittle running down his beard and the buffetings of other men registered on his face and hair matted and uncomely and disarrayed and sleepless, weak some king that can't be true certainly I'm a king and this is why I was born and for this I have come into the world to bear witness to the truth everyone who is of the truth who is a friend of truth who belongs to the truth hears and listens to my voice I can say amen to that children because 12 years ago aboard the deck of a tramp steamer more a Greek than I was a Jew more in love with Plato and Socrates and the wisdom of men and wholly ignorant of the God of my fathers a little book came into my hands which I thought to be a Gentile

book called the New Testament but I was so utterly desperate so whacked out of my skull so long a victim of a world of deceit and falsehood I was willing to read there and I couldn't believe the things that I was reading man the statements that came out of the mouth of this Jesus the only picture that I had ever been given of him was some kind of sappy looking character with blonde wispy hair milky blue eyes and a receding chin and a black velvet pillow with sequins from Niagara Falls but the Jesus who came off the pages of that book had to be only one of two things an unspeakable blasphemer and a lunatic of the first magnitude of whom we Jews ought to shriek and cry out from the rooftops to save you unsuspecting Gentiles from giving your life to and following and having eternal

confidence in such a one or else he was the son of the living God one or the other certainly no Jew ever spoke as he spoke he angered men by the kinds of unequivocal statements that he made he left no question as to whom he thought he was oh when the Messiah comes he will teach us all things Jesus answered her I who speak unto thee am he hey that's either a lunatic that's either man playing God that's either man exercising the prerogatives of God that's blasphemy he ought to be stoned or it's very God made flesh and I'll tell you that when I heard his words and I sensed the character from which they were spoken you know what I realized in the depths of my inmost heart this is the truth I didn't like it it wasn't comfortable I knew what the consequence was going to be there's no way I was

going to persuade mama but what are you going to do when the truth is the truth the same John writes in the end of the book of 1 John the 20th verse of the 5th chapter of 1 John and we have seen and know positively that the son of God has actually come to this world and has given us understanding and insight progressively to perceive and recognize and come to know better and more clearly him who is true and we are in him who is true in his son Jesus Christ the Messiah this is the true God and life eternal true true true well with the washing of the water of that word I want to just briefly turn to what I think my text is tonight are you still with me still tolerating a drooping messenger who isn't giving you the rah rah rah business and isn't all victory and overcoming delights who can be

saddened something faintly familiar of what was spoken about one called a man of sorrows hey wouldn't we be stunned to learn that he's a man of sorrows still and that he has more occasion to be sorrowful now perhaps than he had in his earthly career to see the many millions who are called by his name cutting corners cheating acting deceitfully putting on false faces putting on a show affecting certain things taking liberties and saying God has given me certain words which he had not given I bet that would make him very sorrowful because he died and he poured out his life that we might be entered into the kingdom of truth well in the fifth chapter of the book of Acts is a little episode very little episode which seems so totally out of keeping with the spirit of modern Christendom today

about a certain man named Ananias and his wife Sapphira who sold a piece of property and it says with his wife's knowledge and connivance connivance he kept back and wrongfully appropriated some of the proceeds putting apart only and putting it at the feet of the apostles but Peter said Ananias why has Satan filled your heart that you should lie and attempt to deceive the Holy Spirit and should in violation of your promise secretly withdraw and appropriate to your own use part of the price of the sale of the land as long as it remained unsold wasn't it not your own and even after it was sold wasn't the money at your disposal and under your control why then is it that you have proposed and purposed in your heart to do this thing how could you have the heart to do such a deed you have not

simply lied to men playing false and showing yourself utterly deceitful but to God and upon hearing these words Ananias fell down and died and great dread and terror took possession of all who heard of it let me

ask you a question children how would you love to return to the apostolic standards that we've just read I think there'd be wholesale casualties but I'll tell you what God may not be doing it in a single night but I'll tell you with all my heart he's doing it progressively day by day a God who is full of mercy and knows our frame and knows that we are the products in the world of the most deceitful civilization in the history of mankind full of compromise, full of lies full of advertising on TV full of inflated nonsense and statements about products that are not true queasy kinds

of things is bringing us back to this place and I'll tell you children that the church shall end in the same glory in the same splendor, in the same brilliance in the same purity, in the same power with which it began and I think in my heart that there's a correlation between truth and power because the spirit of power is also the spirit of truth there's only one spirit and it comes from above and it abides where only the dove can abide where the conditions are clean, pure honest and true well Art if that's the case what has been the power that attends so many of the ministries we're seeing in this day demonstrations slain in the spirit and all other kinds of things and yet we have that queasy uncomfortable feeling about the personality of some of these ministers through whom this kind of

ministry seems to be coming forth well it's either God's still winking or we are nervously and quickly moving in to those things described in the scriptures that should characterize the end days lying wonders and signs in an age of deception that if it were possible even the very elect would be deceived I'll tell you children will you look for this where the true ministries of God is, there also is the character of God and where the spirit of power is there is also the spirit of truth because it's the same dove coming down and descending on a son wholly approved of the father for he only does that which comes from the father, he's not seeking his own kingdom, he's not building his own ministry, he's not some flamboyant show off who delights and exalts in the responses of crowds he's

fearless and he's indifferent to both the applause and the reproach even of God's people I'll tell you that in my own experience I'm speaking fewer and fewer messages but there are more and more acts of God he's not winking longer and he's beginning to take his people in hand and I'll tell you what happened in those same days of recent ministry I found myself on a Sunday morning at a Pentecostal church in the way the Lord does nobody warned me what I was getting into but I wasn't there five minutes when my whole alarm system was going off wildly I was distinctly uncomfortable there was phony baloney going on all over there were Sunday school classes unreal there were things that were merely doctrinal without a biting edge there were people smiling and back-slapping and bear-hugging where

there was not true love there was compromise and concession that went unnoticed and unheralded it was a man-pleasing thing in a city choked with churches of every kind and they didn't need one more and it was a new work to give the spiritual butterflies yet another place to flit who didn't like the personality of the last pastor it had hardly begun when the pastor made mention of the financial needs of the new congregation after all they had gotten themselves a building and a building program and they had needs and there was a note due at the bank and he said, where's Brother Katz? and he looked for me in a platform where I was not to be found and he says, I feel that Brother Katz ought to pray for this financial need to be met my heart went clunk I simply cannot pray for something which

I'm not persuaded is of the kingdom of God and I dragged myself up to the platform I said, Lord, how do I get into this? and I tried to do something get out of it, the pastor had that beam on from ear to ear, the whole stage was set the whole format, you were sucked into it you had to respond in kind and be one of the boys and just as I got to the microphone a certain impulse came to my heart and I turned and I said I'm

willing to pray on one condition only oh yes, sure what is it? that if this church is not an expression of the kingdom of God on earth far from not receiving your financial need God shall bring it to naught what were they going to say then? laughter but if it is the expression of God's kingdom on earth and not just the ambition of men, adding yet one more church to a city

choked with churches on every street then God shall not only meet this need but go far beyond in blessing that you cannot now anticipate are you willing? and they said yes and I prayed and it was anointed and I'll tell you what children you can call me a liar if that church shall continue to exist 3, 4, 5 or the latest 6 months from now they call judgment upon themselves my God is not in the hokey promotional business he hasn't given his son in the agonizing shedding of blood to promote the ambitions of men this is an earnest Allah and is a God of truth whose spirit is brooding over the earth who winches when he sees even among his people the standards beginning to fall lest again truth should lie in the streets oh children will you raise up a standard will you attend to it in the

meticulous things will you not cut corners in what you think are small issues will you be honest and courageous and speak the truth in love will you not put it on if you don't feel it will you not fabricate and feign and make something synthetic which is not a certain man brought a portion of the proceeds and laid it at the feet of the apostles and the fishermen without much academic background or any other qualification immediately discerned by the spirit of the truth that what this Ananias and Sapphira had done was a lie you say what do you mean it was a lie they gave a portion of what they sold to the apostles isn't that good and as a matter of fact that portion is probably greater than the sum total of the givings of many people in this congregation tonight but God isn't interested in

the sum total he's interested in the purity and the honesty and the truth of our acts before God and before men to give something partially children is a lie a partial truth is a lie it's either the whole truth or it's not the truth and that's why of all my people I tremble for those Jews not who outrightly deny Christ but who compliment him oh Jesus they say yeah pretty nice fella great teacher and some will even go so far as to acknowledge that he was a prophet isn't that true yes it is it's true he was a teacher true he was a prophet but if you'll stop there and not acknowledge the full truth your partial truth is a compromise and a lie I don't think that it's any accident that that man died in the hearing of Peter's words and a great dread and terror took possession of all who heard

it you know what children you may think me perverse but I wouldn't mind just a little bit of the dread and terror that the early church of God knew that certain kind of awe and fear and reverence for a holy God who is righteous altogether I think it wouldn't hurt us to recapture a little bit of that sense of the awe and reverence of a God of righteousness and judgment no accident that in the same chapter in the twelfth verse we read now by the hands of the apostles numerous and startling signs and wonders were being performed among the people in the fourteenth verse more and more were being added to the Lord who believed, who acknowledged Jesus as their savior crowds both of men and of women I don't think that it's any accident or a conjunction that in the same chapter in which the spirit

of truth revealed to Peter the lying deception of a man and woman who thought that God was not seeing that that same generation of God's people who had an awe and a reverence for the holiness of God was also the generation by whose hands numerous and startling signs and wonders were performed it was also the church that more were added to by the Lord daily crowds both of men and of women you know what I think the alternative for this kind of truth is where men are concerned for crowds both of men and women I would say it's man pleasing things I would say it's the spirit of manipulation I would say it would

have to do with techniques and promotion with publicity with the devices which the world knows to add numbers I think we're going to see two things growing up at the end of the age one

is going to have the stamp of the world upon it they'll both be called Christian one inherently dishonest not scrupulous about the word of truth looking the other way and cutting corners placating men speaking perhaps two things by an untruthful spirit and alongside it perhaps not as numerical except God add to it daily are those who like this first generation cleave to the God who is the way, the life and the truth I don't think that the power of God is going to be made manifest on earth until God's people again return to the standard of truth which the apostolic generation knew Jesse Penn Lewis writes that the spirit of truth is the first proof of the purity and power of the spirit and this is the power of Pentecost it's not by manipulation it's not by technique it's not by new

methodologies it's by returning to the power of truth, to the spirit of truth which is also the power of God same dove very skittish, very sensitive will not descend will not abide, will not remain where he's grieved.

God is wanting to look down again children on another son no longer a singular son at a certain point of time and place but a corporate son a son that traverses the face of the earth made up of Jewish and Gentile believers of black and white and every color shape and size, every nationality and every tongue however different their cultures they have this in common, that they are moved by, motivated, animated directed, living in the spirit of truth separated from a world that's deceitful and phony by a Jordan of separation and death, that the heavens might open again, the heavens of revelation the heavens of the understanding of the deep and hidden things of God and a dove coming down dwelling and abiding the spirit of truth, the spirit of power on a son walking in the character of God in

whom he is well pleased it begins with us in the small things I'm going to ask you to bow your head tonight sorry for this kind of message sorry for my mood I just have no choice in the matter but just to bring a mouth, a bible, a spirit and what it is that I believe that God has stirred my heart to express and I think we've only touched the surface he's taking it easy on us he knows our frame that we are his dust and that we have not seen as he sees and I tell you children that if you want a definition of truth here it is it's everything as God sees it everything how's your bathroom tonight? is it truthful? clean? a glory? ordered? hidden, corrupt, removed? or is it something like the expression of our lives slipshod, casual, indifferent listlessly thrown together given a once over

functional utilitarian get by may the spirit of truth show forth even in our chrome forces in the hidden places may we be true through and through true in our speaking, true in our dealing true in our relationships true with God true with men may we despise compromise may we have the courage to open our hearts before God and say Lord show us where the crud is show us where we've cut the corners show us the liberties we've taken bring us into harmony with things as you see them great spirit of truth hallelujah precious God Lord almighty God who is holy, holy, holy no wonder rejected and despised of men simply not one of the boys couldn't play the game gracious God of all truth who broods over the earth sorrowful grieving over those that have been made in your image daily being marred daily

being caricatured their deceit and dishonesty written in their faces in their speech, in their ulcers in their broken bodies and minds and lives wholly out of keeping with the way which we were called to live which is the way of health which is also truthful Lord speak first to us who are your people help us to be a standard that will shame the world and we invite you tonight by the spirit of truth to reveal to us in the small things where we've taken liberties precious God bring us day by day to your holy standard that the power

of God to shake cities to heal bodies to perform the true signs and wonders of God can again be made manifest from the hands of men who also love and live in the truth all the truth and nothing but the truth feel the words of this speaking and prepare our hearts

for the night hours and continue as it shall please you in these brief days to bring to our attention Lord the themes which are dear in your own heart may we be a people who reveal your glory perfect as you are perfect holy as you are holy may there be an emptying out tonight may we turn our pockets inside out and remove things that should have been discarded long ago may there be a kind of spring cleaning in our houses, our lives may we tidy up our speech may we go through the attic of our minds and dispel the queasy thoughts mighty God may you have a temple in which you can dwell in full bless these children Lord and myself with them and enable us to be your people a glory in the earth an alternative for a world that's dying and we'll thank you and praise you for it in Jesus holy name

and God's people said Amen

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