

# Unto You Who Once Knew the Truth.

by John Banks

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of standing fast in the truth and the consequences of turning back to the world, while also encouraging perseverance and rejoicing in suffering for the sake of eternal life.*

**Scripture:** Matthew 24:45, Galatians 3:9, 1 Timothy 6:2, 2 Timothy 2:13, Revelation 1:5

**Topics:** "Faithfulness", "Salvation"

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## Description

The preacher delves into the significance of being faithful, emphasizing the importance of trustworthiness and reliability in fulfilling duties and responsibilities. The sermon explores the dual meanings of 'pistos' in the New Testament, highlighting the active sense of trusting or believing in the Lord Jesus for salvation and the passive sense of being trustworthy and dependable. Various Bible verses are examined to illustrate God's faithfulness, the faith required for salvation, and the call for believers to be faithful stewards of God's Word and promises.

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## Transcript

UNTO YOU WHO ONCE KNEW THE TRUTH, THE LIGHT TO YOUR JUSTIFICATION; BUT BEING TURNED FROM IT INTO THE UNCLEAN WORLD, IT IS NOW YOUR CONDEMNATION;

That all in whom there yet remains any tenderness, or breathings towards the Lord and his truth, and whom the enemy of their souls' peacemay be tempting to forsake the truth, for the enjoyment of that which will perish in a moment, may take warning lest they also be given up to hardness of heart.

Did you once know the truth, to convince you of the evil customs, fashions, and vain traditions, together with all the dead worships and forms which are inthe world, and are you now like the dog turned to the vomit, and the sow that was washed, to the wallowing in the mire.

Oh! How doth my soul mourn and lament for you in secret, at the consideration of your state; who were once convinced by the light of the Lord Jesus, of the evil that is in those things, and knew his power to redeem you therefrom, in some measure. And as you yielded obedience to that which manifested evil and departed from it, how did your peace increase? So that you were brought near unto the Lord in spirit, and worshipped him in truth and righteousness, by which you felt acceptance with him, and he was well pleased. And are you now departed from this, and gone back again in6to Egypt's darkness, amongst the flesh-pots, which causeth you to have an ill savour?

Consider your ways, and look back from whence you are fallen; and return unto that which justified you, but now condemns you, or else you must perish eternally. Wherein stands your joy, peace, and comfort? Doth it stand in enjoyment of the deceitfulness of riches, or in that which will perish in a moment? "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee," and then whose shall all these things be, for which thou hast forsaken my precious truth, saith the Lord; which of my everlasting love I made manifest unto thee, for the salvation of thy soul. "For as I live," saith the Lord, "I will not the death of a sinner -- Oh foolish and unwise people, who hath bewitched you, that you should forsake the truth," which for ever will be your condemnation, except you repent. Repent then, consider your ways, and be wise, who are not wholly given up to hardness of heart, and past feeling that which is good: Repent, and return unto the Lord God with all your heart, and be ye separated from all idol worships, and come ye out from amongst all those people who resort thereto, whose course is evil, and whose way is not right. For if you do not, but go on in rebellion and hard-heartedness, (mark what I say) seven other spirits more wicked than that which bare rule in you before will enter you; so that you will become two-fold more the Children of hell, than you were before.

Oh! your state is sad, and your condition lamentable, who turned from the light, Christ Jesus, the way, the truth, and the life, into darkness, to be tempted and led away of the devil. Your state is miserable, who turn from worshipping the true and living God, in Spirit and Truth, which worship he accepts, and none else, to the worship set up by man's invention and tradition; and forsake the truth, the light, under what pretence, colour, or covering soever. If upon pretence of staying at home; and say, Why may you not serve God as well there, as in coming to our meetings; and that you will stay awhile at home, and not join to any people as yet. Oh! Believe not, neither hearken ye unto the enemy of your soul's peace, in this kind of reasoning by his lying spirit, by which he would counsel you; or under whatever pretence soever, for this is the craft and subtilty of the old serpent. He will proffer you all the glory and preferment of the worship if you will worship him, or that likeness which is now set up, under what name, or in what manner soever; whether by staying at home, or with whatever other trap he may take you; for he cares not whither the body goes or is, so that he in his subtilty can but get the rule of the heart, and the affections set on earthly things. If you lend an ear unto him, you will grow worse and worse as the wicked do; and then though you may enjoy all the pleasures the world can afford, you shall always beg, and still want; he that hath an ear to hear, let him hear what the spirit saith. This covering, or any other besides the Spirit of Truth, cannot hide you from the wrath of the Lord. For where is your example? They that feared the Lord, and worshipped him in spirit and Truth, met often together, though sometimes upon mountains and highways; and did salute the church at one another's houses. And they that forsake the assembling themselves with the people of God, under what colour or covering soever, I must declare it for the clearing of my conscience, whatever they pretend, they neither worship nor serve God, nor hath he pleasure in them, because they draw back; "for if any man draw back, my soul hath no pleasure in him," saith the Lord. All these coverings are but like those of fig leaves; for "woe unto them that are covered with a covering, but not of my spirit," saith the Lord; all other coverings shall be ripped off in the day of the Lord, and they that are under such coverings, shall be made naked and bare, and by his jealousy consumed.

Oh! how is the truth dishonoured by you who turn from it. Oh! how do vain people boast themselves against it, and plead to do wickedly. "Because of you offences come, but woe unto them by whom they come; it were better that a mill-stone were hanged about their necks, and they cast into the depth of the sea."

Therefore I say unto all you in whom there are any true breathings towards the Lord and his truth yet remaining, and do yet feel the spirit of the Lord striving with you; in whom the enemy of your soul's peace may be twisting and twining, to drive you therefrom, and to persuade you to forsake the truth, (but under another pretence,) for that which will perish in a moment, and will bring everlasting torment; I say unto you in true and tender love, take warning betimes, upon the consideration of what I have before said, concerning the state of them who are turned from the truth; lest you also be given up to hardness of heart.

Friends, do you know the truth in any measure to abound in your hearts, yea, though never so little? and do you feel the spirit of the Lord yet to strive with you, which will not always strive? and are you sensible for what it striveth? and do you know the truth and that there is not another way, nor truth that can bring people unto God? and do ye know that ye are in that, and if you turn from that, it must be to your own condemnation?

And doth the truth let you see that all worship and forms, and many ways and opinions in the world, are dead, dry and empty; and that all the vain customs and changeable fashions in the world, are corrupting, and will defile. And are you not sensible that the Lord out of his everlasting love, did reveal and make manifest these things unto you, that you should come out of them, and be separated from them, and wait upon him, and worship him in Spirit and in Truth, according to his own ordination. And if you turn back again from this his precious truth, which hath separated you from all these things, or at least made them manifest to be evil, into the world where all these things are, you shall be polluted by them.

I say, Friends, do you know, and hath the truth made you sensible of these things? Oh! then forever stand fast, faithful and obedient; and continue to the end, and you shall be saved. Let none faint in their minds, nor sit down by the way, but in the measure of light, which hath life in it, breathe unto the Lord, and continue unto the end, that in the end you may receive the crown of life, even the salvation of your souls. But they who are not willing to bear the cross, cannot obtain the crown; and they that will live godly in Christ Jesus, must suffer persecution. They that are not willing to suffer with him, must not reign with him; (mark that) and "he that loves father or mother, wife or children, house or lands more than me," saith Christ, "is not worthy of me." Dear Friends, as you value the salvation of your souls, which is of great weight, "choose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasure 'of sin' for a season;" and do not hearken unto that spirit in you, which would say you may go to the world's worship, and yet live honestly, and serve God well enough. Oh! dear Friends, let none hearken to that, for that is the seed of the evil one, the devil, who was a liar from the beginning. "You cannot serve God and mammon;" you cannot forsake the truth, and serve God; though the enemy of your soul's peace may tell you that departing from or not coming to meetings, in the way and manner that the people of God meet to worship him in Spirit and Truth, and going into the world, or to their worship, is not departing from the truth, and that you may serve God in another way, and live honestly in this world. Dear Friends, be not deceived through the subtlety of the enemy, for God will not be mocked: such as every one of you sows, such shall he reap; "they that sow to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but they that sow to the spirit, shall of the spirit reap life eternal."

But rejoice ye, my suffering Friends, who sow unto the spirit, of which you shall reap life everlasting; rejoice, I say, and be exceeding glad, even in the God of your salvation.

Let your rejoicing be in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which ye are crucified unto the world, and the world unto you; ye lambs of my Father's fold, with whom I lie down and am safe, even in the endless rest. Oh rejoice, ye who are freely given up to follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, in this the day of

trial; wherein he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather the wheat into his garner, and burn the chaff with unquenchable fire." In which day the wolf is seeking to worry you, and the ravenous beasts to make a prey of you; and wherein the spoiler may be suffered to take away that which you enjoy as to the outward; yet again I say unto you, rejoice; as one whom the Lord hath made sensible of your state, as being a member of the same body, for the stirring up of the pure mind in you, that you may be more sensible of his love in your trial, and that you may answer the same by pure obedience: Praise and magnify the God of your salvation, by walking in obedience to what he requires of you, or suffers to come upon you, for the trial of your faith, who are as those having nothing yet enjoying all things to the praise of the Lord. Yea, truly, my Friends, I this can I say to your comfort, that in whatever ye suffer freely and willingly, for holding the testimony of Jesus in righteousness, you shall receive an hundred fold in this world, I though it cannot be beheld with an outward eye, and in that which is to come, everlasting life.

Blessed are your eyes that see, and your ears that hear, and your hearts that understand the things of God aright, for you shall hear and receive the things that belong to your peace. Yea as you diligently hearken to that still small voice in you, which is the voice of the true Shepherd, who calleth the sheep of his pasture into his fold, who knowhis voice, and the voice of a stranger they will not follow. As you keep close unto this, which leadeth into the low valleys, where fat pasture is, you shall receive:strength, whereby you will be enabled to stand in and go through the greatest trials, and leap over the highest mountain that shall arise in your way. So shall you finish your your testimony for the Lord, and his pure way of truth and righteousness, in the faith of Jesus Christ, in which you did begin; which is to make a blessed and happy end and finishing; for such as continue and persevere unto the end, in all faithfulness, shall be saved. Unto which the Lord preserve you all, bold and valiant for the truth, while yet upon the earth.

In the breathing and travail of my soul, in tender love to the Seed of God in all.

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