



The G.E.M.

Volume 2 Edition 6

The Grace Electronic Magazine

June 2008

TIME FOR TRUTH

We are living in an age where everything is relevant. People seem to have lost sight of the truths of the Gospel. Now more than ever we as Christians need to remind ourselves of the truth, live it, and stand firm in it. In this month's edition of *The G.E.M.* we address the issue of truth.

I pray that the words of this month's devotional and main article on page 3 challenge you to live a life dedicated to the truth.

Be sure to also get your hands on this month's recommended titles. Each one is sure to open your eyes to some truths of the Christian life, the life of Jesus and the Bible.

Staying in the 10/40 Window, our *Missions Spotlight* this month goes to the tiny country of Bhutan.

On our *Fun Page*, we have changed from the Word Sudoku to a crossword puzzle based on the theme of truth.

Be sure to check out our website. This month we have introduced a new feature called the *Events Calendar*. Now instead of having to read through a whole list of events, you can find out what is happening in a calendar, and then click on the event you want more information on. Visit us at www.gracemedia.co.za

Until next time, we pray for God's richest blessings in your life and to all the dads, have a great Father's Day. †



HAPPY FATHER'S DAY

BUY THE TRUTH

Buy the truth and do not sell it; get wisdom, discipline and understanding. - Proverbs 23:23

One thing as Christians that we need to understand is that the Truth that comes with knowing Christ does not come cheap. It costs us dearly. Sometimes more so than others. Just look at the lives of some of the people throughout history who have stood up for the Truth. It cost them all something. Sometimes it even cost them their lives.

Yes, salvation is a free gift given to us by God through Christ's death, but the Truth that comes with it has a cost. Sometimes it costs us time, sometimes money, pleasure, friends and even family.

However, it seems as though there are people who want to know the truth, but are not willing to pay for it. They hope to attain it for free, and sometimes they do, but does it really have any value? As with any possession in life, if it costs you nothing, how much value does it really have? How easy is it to dispose of when faced with something else that seems better?

Once we have found the Truth we need to stand up to our convictions and defend what we believe. This is the true cost of Truth. Even though there may not have been any initial cost, there eventually comes a time when we realise the cost.

In Proverbs 23:23 we are urged to "buy the truth." This is not a suggestion to say that if you can afford it, or if a bargain comes your way take advantage and buy it then. No. We need to buy it no matter what the cost. It is worth far more than anything we can give in exchange for it.

The Proverb then goes on to tell us "do not sell it." All too often we see people buying the truth only to give it up again for something else. For a short period of time they value the truth and maybe stand up for it, only later to sell out for something that seems more valuable. Perhaps the reason they bought the truth in the first place was for the wrong motive. Maybe it was for position, popularity, prosperity or some other temporary gain. Whatever the case may be, they only gave it some form of mental or moral assent, but it was never truly a conviction.

Note that again this is a command. We must not sell it. It is not a suggestion saying that we must keep hold of it until someone offers us the right price for it or to "upgrade" it for something "better." Do not sell it at any price. No matter what it costs us, there is no other idea or thought that is of more value than the Truth.

It seems that in this day and age, truth is valued so little. People have become weak in their faith, not really knowing what they believe and why. It seems as though people have opinions on anything and everything, but no convictions.

Jesus told us that when we hold on to His teachings, we will become His disciples and we will come to know the Truth. The Truth that will set us free.

What position does the truth of God's Word have in your life? Do you go about life steadfast in your convictions, not blown about by the winds of changing ideas? Or does the latest movement or trend make you think twice about what you believe. †



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SHOP TRADING HOURS:

Monday – Friday:

9am – 5pm

Saturday:

9am – 2pm

Closed Sundays and some Public Holidays

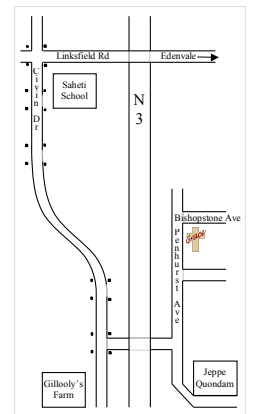
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Directions: From the N3, take the Linksfield Rd off ramp. Turn right up hill. Stay in left lane. Turn left into Civin Dr. At 4th set of lights, turn left under bridge. At t-junction turn left. Through the boom. We are ± 200m on the right hand side. Entrance is in Penhurst Ave.



MISSIONS SPOTLIGHT

Brug rGyal-Khab Dru Gäkhap Kingdom of Bhutan

Capital:
Thimphu

Official Languages:
Dzongkha

Currency:
Ngultrum/Indian Rupee

Population: 627,425

Government:
Democracy/Constitutional monarchy

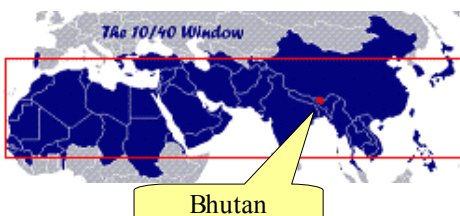
The Kingdom of Bhutan is a landlocked nation in South Asia. It is located amidst the eastern end of the Himalaya Mountains and is bordered to the south, east and west by India and to the north by China. Bhutan is separated from Nepal by the Indian state of Sikkim. The Bhutanese call their country Druk Yul (land of the thunder dragon).

Bhutan has a rich and unique cultural heritage that has largely remained intact due to its isolation from the rest of the world until the early 1960s. One of the main attractions for tourists is the country's culture and traditions. Bhutanese tradition is deeply steeped in its Buddhist heritage. Hinduism is the second dominant religion in Bhutan, being most prevalent in the southern regions. Both religions co-exist peacefully and receive support from the government, and enjoy royal patronage. The government is increasingly making efforts to preserve and sustain the current culture and traditions of the country. Due to its largely unspoilt natural environment and cultural heritage, Bhutan has aptly been referred to as The Last Shangri-la.

Muslim and non-religious communities account for less than 1% of the population. The current legal framework in principal guarantees freedom of religion. Proselytism however is forbidden by a Royal Government decision.

Bhutan has numerous public holidays, most of which centre around traditional seasonal, secular and religious festivals. They include the winter solstice (around January 1, depending on the lunar calendar), the lunar New Year (February or March), the King's birthday and the anniversary of his coronation, the official start of monsoon season (September 22), National Day (December 17), and various Buddhist and Hindu celebrations.

Extracted from Wikipedia.com.



Shop Window



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Alpha Course

Bedfordview Methodist Church will be starting their next Alpha Course on Thursday 24 July 2008.

Contact the church office on 011-455-2600 for more information.

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www.ChristianGames.co.za

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To advertise your church, ministry, business, event or product in the *Shop Window* or on the Grace Media website, contact Glyn Williams on 011-454-6045 or webmaster@gracemedia.co.za

DIARY OF EVENTS

Louie Giglio's Passion Tour

9 August 2008, Gallagher Estate

Tickets now on sale for R100 each. See our site for details.

PlanetShakers SA Tour

September 2008

Full details to follow when available.

Parachute Band SA Tour

October 2008

Full details to follow when available.

Christian Business Expo

October 2008

For more information visit: www.christianexpo.co.za

Top 25 Must Reads

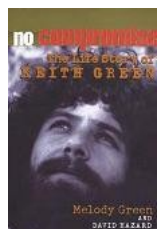
No Compromise by Melody Green

The Life Story of Keith Green

The late singer/songwriter Keith Green challenged believers to break out of their status quo Christianity and embrace a put-it-all-on-the-line life of faith and action. Never hesitating to speak his convictions, he often struggled to live up to his own strong declarations.

In this inspiring biography, Keith's wife, Melody, shares their years of spiritual searching, the events that led them to Jesus, and how their dedication to minister to others began.

R 150.00



BEWARE THE WOLVES

Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. - Matthew 7:15 (NIV)

This warning by Jesus to His disciples, was obviously important because later on he said to them: "I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves" (Matthew 10:16). The apostle Paul gave the church in Ephesus a similar warning: "I know that after I leave, savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock" (Acts 20:29).

Often in the history of the church it seems as though these warnings have not been taken seriously. But how can professing Christians and the church be deceived?

According to Webster's Dictionary, to deceive means "to lead astray or to cause to accept as true or valid what is false or invalid." In order for this to happen there needs to be a deceiver (in this case the wolves in sheep's clothing) and also an inability to discern. Could it be possible that the church has not only lost the ability to discern truth from error, but also the ability to discern wolves from sheep?

I am not going to mention any names, but consider for a moment the teachings that are coming out of some of the churches today. Many of them are so charming and charismatic in their approach that one cannot help but be drawn to them. They teach on how to overcome fear, guilt, psychological problems, alcoholism, on how to find purpose in ones life, and many other modern-day life issues. All promising more intimacy with God.

Take a look at Paul's prophetic words to Timothy: "For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great multitude of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths" (2 Timothy 4:3-4). I believe that we are seeing these very words coming to pass in the church today.

MODERN TRENDS

There are some scary trends emerging in the church today. Here are just a few of their teachings:

Righteousness Ignored

Many of these popular ear-tickling teachers overemphasise God's grace and love, with little or no consideration of God's other attributes of righteousness, justice and holiness. Some even teach that Jesus has redeemed all of mankind; that everyone is already saved and there is no need for us to go to Jesus in repentance. The result is that instead of people turning away from their sin and living a life pleasing God, sin increases. Not only in the world, but even in the church.

Jesus told Nicodemus in John 3:36 - "Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him." But according to many of today's teachers, all we need to do is to trust in the love of God because He loves us no matter what we do.

There is little or no call to sanctification or holiness. Instead sin is excused as human weakness that God will tolerate irrespective of a sinner being repentant or not. For example: a person living a sexual immoral life is today seen to have an illness, sex addiction.

In doing this, these teachers are turning the "grace of our God into a licence for immorality and deny Jesus Christ our only sovereign Lord." (Jude 4)

Non-Biblical Practices

If you listen properly to these teachers' messages or read their books, you will often hear them citing humanist philosophers, heretics, New Agers and medieval mystics. Some even go as far as to encourage mystical practices in our Christian life. Things such as: centering prayer, breath prayer, transcendental meditation and many other eastern religious practices are being blended into the Christian faith. None of these are Scriptural and some are even condemned in Scripture. But by employing these non-biblical practices into the church they are leading people into a state of confusion of what true Christianity is.

No Word of God

There is also an absence of the use of the Word of God. Instead of using stories to illustrate a point from Scripture, nice stories or anecdotes are told in place of the Bible. At times when the Bible is used, many of the references are used out of context or from unreliable translations.

THE SOLUTION

This is all in stark contrast to the way Paul described the first century teachers. He said: "Rather, we have renounced secret and shameful ways; we do not use deception, nor do we distort the word of God. On the contrary, by setting forth the truth plainly we commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God." (2 Corinthians 4:2).

What then should we be doing?

Firstly we need to make the Bible our absolute authority. We read in 2 Timothy 3:16-17 that "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." If we believe this to be true, then our attitude should be that of always referring to what the Bible tells us, and not turn to the minds of men for the answers.

This does not only apply to controversial issues or things that appear to be wrong, but

in everything, even the Sunday sermon. Take the Bereans as an example. We are told in Acts 17:11 that they daily examined the Scriptures and tested everything to see if what they were being told was true. Even the words of Paul that we take for granted today were tested.

We need to change our mindset and ask the question, what does the Bible say? Not what does my pastor say, or what did so and so write in his book? The Bible contains all we need to know about such things and

our beliefs and theology needs to start and end there.

We also need to learn how to separate the essentials from the non-essentials. So often we tend to think that most of what we believe is an essential. We argue over doctrines and practices that are not found in Scripture, defending those ideas tooth and nail, while at the same time ignoring the things that are essential. We need to go back to the Bible and agree on the essentials of Scripture, allow people the freedom to disagree on the non-essentials, but in all cases, show love.

We need to remove our feelings from the matter at hand, which we so often allow to get in the way of the truth. One such feeling is pride. Many times our arguments come out of a feeling of pride in ourselves, and even in the person who has taught us. We need to put it aside and learn to be humble, for as James tells us: "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble" (James 4:6)

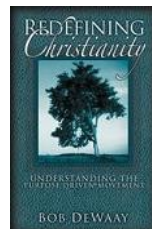
Finally, we need to contend for the truth. According to Webster's Dictionary, to contend means to "defend or preserve". This is what was happening in the early church (see 2 Corinthians 4:2) and we need to do the same. The truth is found in the Word of God, so whenever we come across people who are living in and teaching error, we need to show them the error of their ways. Remembering to always do it in love.

"See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ" (Colossians 2:8). †

Recommended Read

Redefining Christianity by Bob DeWaay

The true success of a church cannot be measured by simply reading the bottom line of buildings and programmes. There is however a bottom line with which to measure the church – it is doctrinal integrity. The church is the pillar and support of the truth. If the church fails in its God-given mission of upholding, defending and propagating the truth then it fails. Period!



R 140.00

"We need to ask the question, what does the Bible say?"

"We need to make the Bible our absolute authority"

10/40 RECIPE

KEWI DATSHI (Potatoes 'n Cheese)

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 medium sized potatoes
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1 1/2 cups water *
- 1/4 cup chopped red onions
- 1/3 cup shredded cheese
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon chilli powder
- 1/4 cup chopped tomatoes

TO PREPARE:

1. Cut potatoes into small pieces.
2. Put the potatoes, along with oil and salt, in a saucepan or pot. Add water.
3. When potatoes are almost cooked (about 10 minutes on boil or until they're soft with a fork), add cheese. You can add some chopped onions and tomatoes to taste. Don't forget the chilli powder.

* You do not want too much water in this dish but do not let it dry up completely either. Add a little water every time the water level gets low.

Recipe taken from the book *Recipes of the 10/40 Window*.



Inspirational DVD

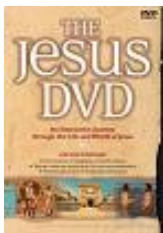
The Jesus DVD

Experience and learn about the life of Christ like never before.

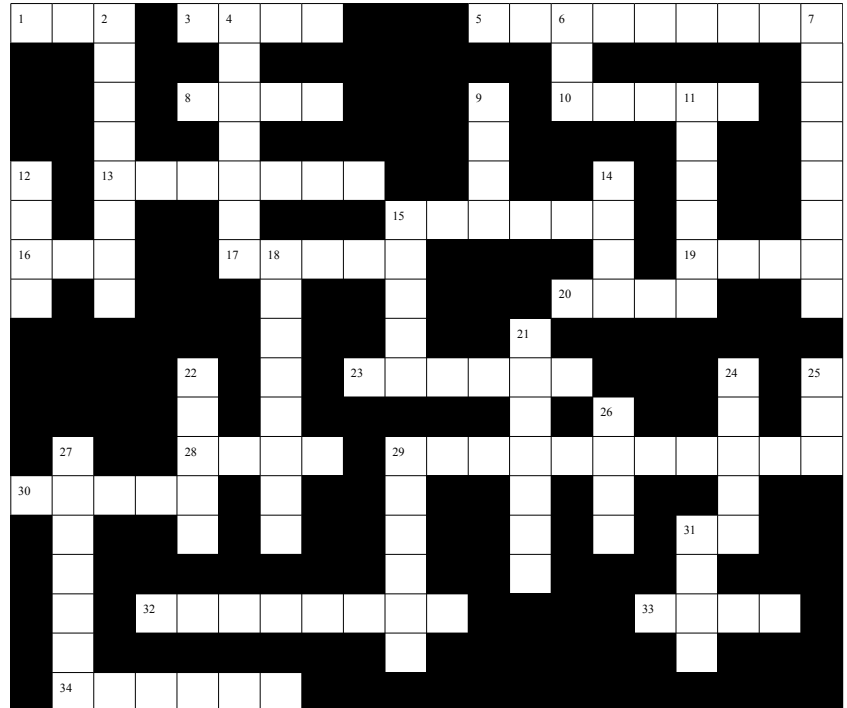
Take a tour through the Holy Land and learn about why Jesus said and did the things he did, and why he said them where he said them.

This is an excellent resource for small group or individual study.

R 130.00



WORDS OF TRUTH



ACROSS:

1. "redeem me, O Lord, the ___ of truth" (Ps 31:5)
3. "your ___ is truth." (Jn 17:17)
5. "you have in the law the embodiment of ___ and truth" (Ro 2:20)
8. "do not boast about it or ___ the truth." (Ja 3:14)
10. "but ___ the way of God in accordance with the truth." (Lk 20:21)
13. "let us not love with words or tongue but with ___ and in truth." (1 Jn 3:8)
15. "the ___ and foundation of the truth" (1 Tim 3:15)
16. "no ___ comes from the truth" (1 Jn 2:21)
17. "who came from the Father, full of ___ and truth" (Jn 1:14)
19. "I tell you the truth, no ___ will be given to it." (Mk 8:12)
20. "with the ___ of truth buckled around your waist" (Eph 6:14)
23. "surely you ___ truth in the inner parts" (Ps 51:6)
28. "I tell you the truth, it is hard for a ___ man to enter the kingdom of heaven" (Mat 19:23)
29. "for your love is ever before me, and I walk ___ in your truth." (Ps 26:3)
30. "whoever lives by the truth comes into the ___" (Jn 3:21)
31. "Jerusalem will ___ called the City of Truth" (Zech 8:3)
32. "truth has ___; it has vanished from their lips" (Jer 7:28)
33. "speaking the truth in ___" (Eph 4:15)
34. "God is spirit, and his worshippers must worship in ___ and in truth" (Jn 4:24)

DOWN:

2. "these men oppose the truth - men of ___ minds" (2 Tim 3:8)
4. "you have purified yourselves by ___ the truth" (1 Pet 1:22)
6. "the Spirit of truth who goes ___ from the Father, he will testify about me" (Jn 15:26)
7. "I tell you the truth, ___ who sins is a slave to sin" (Jn 8:34)
9. "Now then, I ___ you the truth" (Dan 11:2)
11. "I speak the truth in ___ - I am not lying" (Rom 9:1)
12. "The ___ Spirit spoke the truth to your forefathers" (Ac 28:25)
14. "Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you ___." (Jn 8:32)
15. "Therefore love truth and ___" (Zech 8:19)
18. Love "___ with the truth" (1 Cor 13:6)
21. "may your love and your truth always ___ me." (Ps 40:11)
22. "setting ___ the truth plainly" (2 Cor 4:2)
24. "they ___ a man who speaks the truth" (Prov 16:13)
25. "___ the truth and do not sell it" (Prov 23:23)
26. "all of you ___ the truth" (1 Jn 2:20)
27. "Everyone on the side of truth ___ to me" (Jn 18:37)
28. "I have ___ the way of truth" (Ps 119:30)
30. "but first I will tell you what is written in the ___ of Truth" (Dan 10:21)

Answers in next edition.

Last Month's Solution

W	O	S	E	M	A	L	U	T
M	T	U	W	L	O	A	S	E
A	L	E	T	S	U	W	M	O
E	U	M	O	W	L	S	T	A
T	W	O	S	A	M	U	E	L
S	A	L	U	E	T	M	O	W
U	M	W	A	T	E	O	L	S
O	E	A	L	U	S	T	W	M
L	S	T	M	O	W	E	A	U

NOTE: All verses taken from the New International Version.

In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust.
Let me never be put to confusion. Psalm 71:1