

Centuries ago, a Spanish explorer named Ponce de Leon left his home on the European continent and made a treacherous voyage across the northern Atlantic Ocean to the new world. As you think about that voyage, we might question what in the world would prompt someone to pick up their stakes and leave their home, family, and friends behind to make such a trip at a time when the science of navigation was primitive at best. There was so much unknown about the new world and maps were none existent. Yet a man such as Ponce de Leon was willing to do just that. If we were to ask the question why a man would be willing to do this, you might receive many answers. But in the case of Ponce de Leon, he was willing to travel over land and sea through jungle and desert for something that he had been told was in America. He forsook all in search of “the fountain of youth.” Supposedly there was a fountain in the new world where the water that came forth from that spring if ingested into the system of a person would make that person forever young. If people drank from that fountain, then they could live long and healthy lives.

Now we know that there was no such fountain in America. But just for a few minutes, let's suppose that Ponce de Leon had found that fountain. After finding this great discovery, he bottled up just as much as he could carry back to his homeland of Spain. After his return, the word spread quickly about the bottled water and within a week he had sold all that water at a very lucrative price. I image that other explorers would visit Ponce and say, “*Ponce, would you show me the way to the fountain of youth. Will you show me the way to this place where I can drink of this special water. I would have bought some from you, but you have already sold out. Will you show me the way to the fountain of youth?*” Then it would be up to Ponce whether or not he would do that.

It would be futile for us to begin looking for a fountain of youth. But I do read of a fountain in John 7 where Jesus spoke of ***living water that flowed forth from his belly (John 7:38)***. The living water we know to be the salvation and other spiritual blessings that are in Christ. Jesus said on another occasion in John 4 that ***He was the giver of that living water and if any man would drink of him that he would never thirst again (John 4:10-13)***. We're talking about the fountain of life eternal in heaven.

Now I or no one else here can give you that fountain of life, but I can respond to the question, “Show me the way?” We are living in a time where religious confusion abounds. To prove this point, you can ask any religious question to fifteen to twenty different people and you are likely to get fifteen to twenty different answers, some of which may contradict one another. Now you know in your heart and common sense tells you that they are not all right. There can be only one right answer to your one question. So you begin seeking for the right way.

So many today are crying out of their hearts, “*Show me the way of truth.*” How can I find truth? The words of Pilate echo through the palace halls when he asked in **John 18:38** **What is truth?** Back up to the previous verse. **John 18:37** Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice. They hear me; Jesus said to which Pilate said, “What is truth?” Show me the way of truth!

I hope you realize that the one truth is only revealed in God’s word. As we consider this matter, there are three things that we need to understand about finding the one truth.

FIRST, before anyone can ever show you the way to truth, **you must first want truth.** There is an ole country saying that says, “*You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him drink.*” This is proven to be so true with young people. You sit down in a Bible class with young people and you study with them the Bible. You present the information the very best of your ability.

- You lay out before them the gospel plan of salvation.
- You lay out before them the truth regarding the Lord’s church.
- You lay out before them the truth concerning what they need to do.

When you do that, you have led the horse to the water. While you have done everything within your power to teach them the truth, that doesn’t mean they have to drink. You can lead a horse to water, but that doesn’t mean you can make that horse drink.

If there is something that comes between your desire for the knowledge and understanding of truth, the wiles of Satan will find a way where he can put that something before truth. Rest assured that Satan is good at what he does. Eph 6:11 speaks of the “**wiles of the devil**” and the word “wiles” comes from the root word where we get out word “method.” Satan has a method and is very methodical in keeping people from the truth. He might put a sporting event before your quest for truth. He might put a social function with your friends or maybe just time on your phone that keeps you away from learning truth. One of the best tools of Satan to stop young people from studying and learning truth is sleep. “*I've been so busy with this or that activity that I'm too tired tonight to study. I'll get up in the morning and read God's word. The next morning you are drowsy and don't want to get up. I'll study my Bible tonight.*” What’s happen? Satan put something between you and your desire to learn God word of truth.

John 8:32 **And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.** This is a keynote passage that gives us the value of truth. This freedom is not speaking of political freedom – nor a hostage situation. It has reference to spiritual freedom. We’re talking about

freedom from sin. Just two verses later, **John 8:34 Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.** Reminds me of what Paul wrote about servants. **Rom 6:16 Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?** You will be a servant to something. The choices are but two – sin or righteousness. If you choose not to serve sin, what sets you free from sin; “the one truth.” **And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.**

There are three things you need to understand about obtaining this truth.

1. The one truth of God’s word will cost you something. **Prov 23:23 B U Y the truth, and sell it not;....** The wise man instructs us to pay the cost to purchase truth and do not let it go – don’t sell it. *Cowboy boots example.* All too often in the name of religion truth is compromised; but as the body of Christ, let us understand that God’s truth is not up for sale.

2. Long term vision is necessary to appreciate the one truth. Some people are short-sighted and limited in their spiritual vision and never really appreciate the value of truth. *To illustrate the short-sighted scenario, let’s say you may have an opportunity to compromise your sexual purity. The moment is right, the passions are hot, your partner is willing and it’s so easy to yield to the moment. After all, everyone is doing it and it seems so right. You are thinking only about the here and now. There is no long-term vision. No considerations are given to the adverse consequences like an unwanted pregnancy or some social disease. In the heat of the moment, what is it that stops you from going too far – it’s truth. You learn from God’s word that there is plenty of time to satisfy all your sexual appetite in the marriage relationship. You learn from God’s word that there are eternal consequence to sexual activity outside of marriage.*

Heb 13:4 Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge. “TRUTH” teaches us that sinful behavior is pleasurable. If it wasn’t pleasurable, then it would have no appeal nor would it be a temptation. **Heb 11:24-25 By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter; (25) Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;** Sin offers a pleasure but that pleasure is short-lived.

This man Moses had been rescued from the Nile River by Pharaoh’s daughter and raised up as the grandson of Pharaoh. He was in position to have anything he wanted in the land of Egypt. He could have lived it up in sinful living; but he chose instead affliction with the Israelites than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. He had enough insight to know

that sinful behavior is short lived. Mark it down, whatever pleasure sin brings, it is only seasonal. A look at the long term will help us better appreciate truth.

3. The Lord expects us to hunger and thirst after God's word as if it was food. **Job 23:12b** ... **I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food.** Job understood the value of food and he also understood the value of God's word and he placed the priority on the spiritual truth. Peter expressed the same idea. **1Pet 2:2 As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:** To grow spiritually, there has to be a craving for God's word. *Come to my house and watch little kid goats that are hungry as spot their mother. Their focus is only on one thing and that's satisfying that hunger with in their stomach.* Jesus put it this way. **Mat 5:6 Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.** If we hunger and thirst for God's word; God can fill that desire. When we crave knowledge of God's word like those baby goats crave their mamma's milk, we will grow.

No. 2 We must realize that truth is obtainable and absolute. A lot of people get discouraged in their search for truth because we live in a world with over some 30,000 different Christian denominations. People are in the midst of such religion confusion that discourages them. As they look at all the different teachings, they conclude that no one is right and truth can't be found. So they throw up their hands and give up. We can understand how people get discouraged in seeking truth and think it's no use in seeking truth. But there is. Truth can be found. It is obtainable and it is absolute.

Truth is more than just a pretty good guess or hunch. Our Lord said **John 8:32 And ye shall know the truth.** That's better than Ivory soap. *Most of you don't remember the Ivory soap commercials. Ivory's first slogan "It Floats!" was introduced in 1891. Soo after there was another slogan that became a well-known slogan, "99 $\frac{4}{100}$ % Pure" (in use by 1895).* While 99 $\frac{4}{100}$ % Pure is mighty good, it's not 100%. But the truth is 100% pure with no contaminates. People are wrong when they say you can't understand the truth. Paul wrote to the Ephesian church and said **Eph 5:17 Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.** Paul is reminding those brethren that it is certainly possible to understand the will of God; i.e. truth. Those that claim you cannot understand the Bible must know something that the apostle and our Lord didn't know.

How is this done? We have the key in **Eph 3:3-4 How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, (4) Whereby, when ye read, ye**

may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ). There it is. When we read we come to the understanding of truth.

Since understanding truth requires reading and studying, it will take time and effort. Now we get back again to that matter choice. God is not going to provide a means of salvation to sinful man and have it impossible for him to understand this plan. While there are difficult passages within the scriptures, the truth on what is needed to be saved is simple enough that a child can understand it. Yet some have charged that God has given us a book that we cannot understand. What it really boils down to is that people don't want to put forth the effort that it takes to learn the "one truth." **2 Tim 2:15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.** Truth is obtainable.

No. 3. In our quest for truth, we must realize that error does exist. Often the Bible identifies error as "false teaching." In seeking the "one truth" we will have to filter out error. Error exists when you accept what someone tells you without studying for yourself. Satan is the origin of all error and deception. Jesus said in **John 8:44 Satan is a liar, and the father of it.** Satan is the origin of error and error is a lie – a misrepresentation of truth.

While Satan is the source of error, he is not by himself. He has many workers and many of them are disguised as a Christian. What some people teach in the name of religion is as deadly as anything you can get out of a cabinet filled with poison. You need to be aware that just because someone says something is right does not in and of itself make it right. Don't be deceived. The only way we are going to know truth from error is to test it alongside the Bible. This also is true of you. Others know that you are a Christian by your behavior – your fruit. **John 8:32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.**

Jesus also said, **John 14:6 ... I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.** The one true way to salvation is the Lord's way. When you hear people say you can believe what you want to believe and I believe what I want to believe because we are all heading to the same place. We're simply taking different routes. This concept does not harmonize with John 14:6.

Show Me the Way! For people to discover the fountain of truth, they will have to have a hunger of truth, they will have to recognize that truth is obtainable and they will have to be aware that error does exist.

Invitation