

## Vital Supplement for Spiritual Vitality

### ARE YOU A LOVER OF TRUTH?

When you fall in love with someone, you pursue, rearrange your schedule, change your priorities, and ever so delight in that particular person. As your relationship deepens, moving from a superficial level to a relational level, your heart develops deep-seated affections for that person. The more you fall in love, the more you want to know that person. Your will is bent on finding on opportunities to be with him or her. Likewise, if you are a lover of truth you will seek truth out because your heart is in love with it. Once you find truth, your disposition, i.e., your mind, heart, and will is bent towards intimately knowing it because it has become your delight. See, a lover of truth is one who submits to truth.

However, if your mind comes to know truth without being a lover of it first, then you are in danger of not submitting, conforming, re-orienting your life to the truth. For example, you may come to understand certain truths about God, but if you are not a lover of truth, then you will not adjust your life to these facts. In fact, you will likely take the truths you have learned and make them *relative* to your own selfish desires. Rather than submitting your heart to truth, you will submit truth to your own desires, plans, & purposes. Thus, I'm convinced that one reason why so many Christians do not consistently exemplify Jesus Christ in the way they live their lives is because they *only* want to learn what is "*helpful*" or "*useful*" to them or/and seek to be "*entertained*" by knowledge.

The risk is that your mind will know the truth, but your heart will not love it. If your heart does not love the truth, you will not seek to take ownership or conformity to it. Moreover, if you only know the truth, but do not submit your life to the truth, you will perhaps even forget the knowledge you learned. But if you pro-actively cultivate & possess a disposition that habitually loves truth, then you will "*convert*" your life to it. If the heart precedes the mind, then the heart will reinforce what the mind has come to know. In fact, you will less likely forget because you have submitted your life to the truth.

What are indicators that you are a lover of truth? Let's consider them both negatively and positively. Negatively, you are not a lover of truth if (a) you lack an earnest desire to know truth, (b) trivialize the importance of learning truth, (c) pursue only what is "*useful*" or "*entertaining*" or (d) complain or even mock that you even have to know the truth. (e) You look at difficult aspects of our studies (e.g., learning curve; reading books) as an obstacle

rather than an opportunity. On the other hand, if you are a lover of truth, you then positively look at learning (a) as an opportunity to know & submit to truth, (b) you find pleasure in knowing and conforming to truth, & you (c) ever strive to be a student of truth; your desire for truth & your behavior harmonizes together into a way of life that distinctly models truth-no matter where you are or what you are doing.

Wherever you find truth such as in the nature, design, & purposes of God's creation (e.g., the way people actually are and function), the facts & applications of Scripture, the proclamation & application of God's truth, to you, truth is not merely knowledge, but illuminating. Truth awakens & informs us of new potentialities & promotes further inquiry; it promotes a teachable mindset. Truth is not merely illuminating, but pleasurable. Truth is not merely pleasurable, but convicting. Truth is convicting because truth exposes persons, places, ideas, preferences, & objects as they actually are; it removes deception & fraud, confronts our arrogance, does not discriminate, & challenges us to conform to truth while esteeming proponents of truth. Truth is not merely convicting, but equipping. Truth is not merely equipping, but directive since it ultimately points us back to the God of the Bible, the ultimate Author of all truth. At the core of being a committed disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ is submitting your heart to truth, to God, to what God is: The sum-total of His infinite perfections. In fact, it is only through Jesus Christ that we truly understand the meaning of everything else. Like Pascal once wrote:

*Not only do we only know God through Jesus Christ, but we only know life and death through Jesus Christ. Apart from Jesus Christ we cannot know the meaning of our life or our death, of God or of ourselves.*

In conclusion, one reason why Jesus Christ may be part of, but not supreme, in the lives of believers is because they "*relativize*" truth to their desires rather than "*conform*" their lives to it. But if you are a lover of truth, then you will seek & submit yourself to it even though it may be challenging, convicting, & costly-for truth is your character & your character is clearly revealed by what you love the most.

***Truth is not merely knowledge, but illumination; not merely illumination, but pleasurable; Not merely pleasurable, but convicting; Not merely convicting, but equipping; Not merely equipping, but ultimately directive.***