

How to walk in the truth?

By

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Living according to God's will › Living with God

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The Bible speaks a lot about truth. Jesus says He is the truth (John 14:6), Isaiah calls the Lord “ the God of truth ” (Isaiah 65:16), and the apostle John rejoices to find Christians “walking in the truth, just as we were commanded by the Father” (2 John 1:4).

In a separate article, we discuss what truth is , according to the Bible. In this article, we'll focus on the concept of “walking in the truth”. In short, walking in the truth means to bring our lives into conformity with God's revealed truth.

Remain in the truth

Christians are richly blessed with the knowledge of God's truth as revealed in the Bible and especially by Jesus Christ. To remain in the truth, we must obey the doctrinal and moral biblical truths and not replace or obscure these by interpreting them in a way to fit our own insights and

preferences. If we want to walk with God, we cannot compromise the truth.

Jesus says the truth can set us free (John 8:32). Therefore, it is crucial to not believe everything we hear, but to test whether a doctrine or teaching is in line with Scripture (1 John 4:1-3). We should not be “tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes” (Ephesians 4:14), but stand firm in the truth (2 Timothy 3:14-15; 2 Thessalonians 2:15; 2 Peter 1:12).

Be on your guard against deception

God's enemy Satan always tries to lure people away from the truth. He did so with Adam and Eve, when he told them lies about God's character and intentions and so tempted them into disobedience (Genesis 3:4-6). And he is still trying to deceive people. The Bible is full of warnings of so-called teachers who are actually serving Satan instead of God (see e.g. Acts 20:30; 2 Peter 2:1-3; 2 John 1:7).

Moreover, since we don't live in a bubble, we'll be influenced by the opinions, world views and discourses of people around us. These are not always in accordance with God's Word. Therefore, it's important to fill our head and our heart with "whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable" (Philippians 4:8).

Be truthful

Truth is not just about keeping the right doctrines. It has a moral component as well. In the Bible, truth is closely connected to faithfulness and trustworthiness. It is the opposite of deception and wickedness. That's why the Lord is called "a God of truth" (Isaiah 65:16, see also Deuteronomy 32:4 and Psalm 31:5). He is utterly trustworthy . His people should be trustworthy, too. We must speak the truth and our words must be righteous, not twisted or deceitful. (Psalm 51:6; Proverbs 8:8; James 5:12; Psalm 15; Colossians 3:8-9; Ephesians 4:25). We can't bend the truth to our own advantage, or bear false

witness against others. God hates a lying tongue (Proverbs 6:16-17).

Speaking the truth is sometimes hard

Speaking the truth may harm our reputation or career. There are occasions on which we should lovingly speak the truth even when others don't appreciate it or might be hurt by it. An example is given in Galatians 4:16 and in 2 Corinthians 7:8-9.

The apostle Paul saw how some Christians were being deceived by false teachers, and told them the plain truth about their theological mistakes. He knew they would be grieved by his words, but concludes: “ I rejoice, not because you were grieved, but because you were grieved into repenting ”. People's eternal well-being was at stake, and therefore Paul used harsh words to correct their false and deceptive teachings.

A solid foundation for morality

The Bible provides some universal facts and moral laws that apply to all people at all times. It does not spell out

every little detail. There is room for personal choice and cultural diversity in many areas. But the outlines are clearly phrased, for example in the so-called ‘ten commandments’ , in the golden rule “Whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them” (Matthew 7:12) and in Jesus’ statement: “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself.” (Luke 10:27).

Summary: to walk in truth

We should stand firm in the truth of God’s Word, teach the truth plainly, and take it as the starting point for our moral decisions. Moreover, we should reflect God’s trustworthiness and faithfulness in our daily lives.

“Do not let kindness and truth leave you; Bind them around your neck, Write them on the tablet of your heart.”
(Proverbs 3:3 NASB)

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