**Learning Devoid of the Truth**

Paul made an interesting statement in 2 Timothy 3:7. He said that some were “always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.” The statement seems counterintuitive. You would think that the more a person learned, the closer to truth they would get. There are three questions we must answer to explain how a person could continue to “learn”, yet never achieve an understanding of “the truth”.

**What truths are they studying?** Despite prevailing opinions to the contrary, there are things that are true and things that are false, and people’s feelings are irrelevant in the matter. Beyond that, some truths are of a spiritual nature and others are secular. Students of physics, mathematics and history work to gain valuable knowledge that can be applied to solve problems and make things better. Secular knowledge is the basis for developing marketable skills and is wonderful. The problem arises when folks think they can study the physical world around them and determine spiritual truth.

Romans chapter 1 makes it clear that we can learn two things about our Creator from the creation: His eternal power and His divine nature. The sciences cannot answer the monumental questions of life: How did we get here, why are we here and where are we going? What does our Creator expect from us? How will He hold us accountable? We must look to His revelation to us for the answers to these questions. “The Truth” to which Paul alludes in 2 Timothy 3 is the same “Truth” of John 8:31-32: “You will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.” The word of Jesus is the only source of truth that can liberate from the slavery of sin. This is knowledge the secular scholar will never achieve.

**Whose philosophies are they following?** Regarding secular pursuits, human theories are great. Countless books have been written about business management, manufacturing, agriculture, education, government (and many other disciplines) that offer valuable insight into successful strategies. But philosophers who presume to define morality from a human perspective venture into a realm reserved only for the Divine. These folks are “always learning and never able to come to a knowledge of the truth.”

**What is the “learner” trying to accomplish?** Paul warned of men who were teaching false doctrine, not because they knew nothing at all, but because they were looking to myths and human doctrines as justification for their views (Titus 1:14). Peter said that others would reference Scripture, but twist it to teach what they wanted, not what God actually taught (2 Peter 3:16).

If we want a knowledge of the truth that will make us spiritually free, we must study God’s word with a sincere desire to understand His will, then gladly conform our lives to the principles He teaches us. That is the only continual learning that will pay eternal dividends.

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