

*In search of...*

# Truth & Right

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## Pursuing Peace

In 2 Tim. 2:22-25, the apostle Paul, inspired by the Holy Spirit, wrote to Timothy saying, "So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart. Have nothing to do with foolish, ignorant controversies; you know that they breed quarrels. And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, correcting his opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth,"

There is a lot for us to take in from this passage. Usually we will reference these verses when describing how we are to take the gospel message out into the world, going off of where it says to correct our opponents with gentleness, and

while that is a good lesson for us to remember, if that is all we ever get out of them, we are missing the greater point that is being made. Examine the passage again: Along with exhorting Timothy to flee lusts and pursue righteousness, faith, and love, Paul stresses peace. I single peace out because so much of what Paul says in the following verses expounds upon pursuing peace.

In telling Timothy to avoid controversies, he reminds him that a servant of the Lord must not be quarrelsome. Quarrelsome is defined as, "given to or characterized by quarreling; argumentative, confrontational, contentious, belligerent." The number of scriptures dealing with such attitudes and their consequences is quite high. Here are just a few:

"If anyone is inclined to be contentious, we have no such practice, nor do the churches of God." (1 Cor. 11:16)

"Let us walk properly as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires." (Rom. 13:13-14)

We see in the qualities that elders must possess: "Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money." (1 Tim. 3:2-3)

"Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work, to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle, and to show perfect courtesy toward all people." (Titus 3:1-2)

I do not need to tell you that there is a huge difference between being at peace and pursuing peace. Anyone can be at peace, at any given time, until someone or something provokes them; but for someone to pursue peace speaks to their overall mindset. It means that they desire

peace and actively take steps to ensure that there will be no arguing or fighting. Of course, even those who do pursue peace can only do so much, and God's word reflects that; "If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all." (Rom. 12:18) We cannot control the thoughts or actions of others; at the end of the day, we can only decide for ourselves how we are going to live.

None of that downplays the importance of choosing to pursue peace, though; just because we cannot control what others will do does not mean that we cannot influence them. Again, the scriptures are quite clear: "A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger." (Prov. 15:1) When you decide to look for solutions and not just argue over the problem, it has a great impact on those around you. Others take notice when someone rises above contention and infighting. Even if you are the only one to keep a level head and not sink to the level of saying hurtful things, it makes a difference.

Jesus Himself said in the Beatitudes, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God." (Matt. 5:9) So if you are a Christian, and consider yourself a child of God, think about that: are you a peacemaker? When someone comes to you with a

problem, do you listen? Do you think about what would help? Or do you disregard them, say "Well that's their problem," and go about your business, not even trying to make anything better? Or, worst of all, do you get defensive, argumentative, and blow up the issue? It is not hard to see which of the above responses is pleasing to the Lord. He expects us all to seek peace and pursue it at all times! Whether we are trying to explain the gospel message to a lost soul or trying to help our brothers and sisters in Christ makes no difference.

Understand that we are not going to agree on everything with everyone all the time, and, listen carefully, **that's okay!** We will have different opinions and ways of doing things. As long as we can agree on God and His word (and we can), that is all that matters. But when we disagree, and when problems arise, how we handle them speaks volumes about us. Pursue peace. Do what you can to be gentle and look for solutions. Do not just get angry, blame the other person, and walk away. This is especially true regarding our brethren; if we cannot get along now, what makes us think that we will be together in Heaven for eternity?

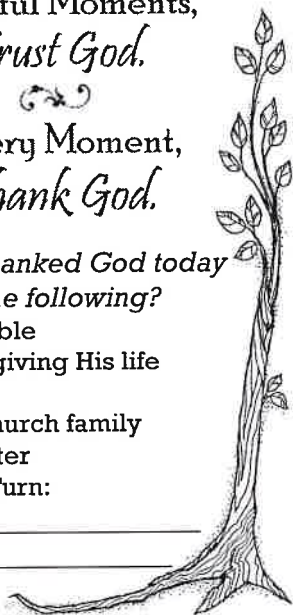
Jarred Currence

Happy Moments,  
*Praise God.*  
Difficult Moments,  
*Seek God.*  
Quiet Moments,  
*Worship God.*  
Painful Moments,  
*Trust God.*  
Every Moment,  
*Thank God.*

*Have you thanked God today for any of the following?*

- The Bible
- Jesus giving His life for us
- Our church family
- Laughter
- Your Turn:

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# BIBLE Trivia!

**DIRECTIONS:** After searching through your Bible, circle which answer is correct.

1. What epistle warns against people sent in to “spy out our liberty”?

- a) 1 Timothy
- b) Galatians
- c) 1 Peter
- d) Colossians

2. What grandson of Noah was cursed for his father's sins?

- a) Cush
- b) Magog
- c) Canaan
- d) Aram

3. Where was Jesus when the divine voice said, “This is my beloved Son... he ye Him”?

- a) The Mount of Transfiguration
- b) The Jordan river
- c) The cross of Calvary
- d) The garden of Gethsemane

4. Who heard God speaking out of a whirlwind?

- a) Moses
- b) Elijah
- c) Balaam
- d) Job

5. What king of Tyre sent cedar logs and craftsmen to King David?

- a) Cyrus
- b) Sihon
- c) Hiram
- d) Og

6. At the dedication of Solomon's temple, 120 priests played what instruments?

- a) Harps
- b) Trumpets
- c) Lyres
- d) Cymbals

7. What coppersmith had, according to Paul, done him great harm?

- a) Alexander
- b) Phillip
- c) Demetrius
- d) Lucius

8. Who made a wedding feast before giving the wrong bride to Jacob?

- a) Rebekah
- b) Isaac
- c) Leah
- d) Laban

9. According to Revelation, what afflicts those who have the mark of the beast?

- a) Blindness
- b) Painful sores
- c) Crippled feet
- d) Headaches

10. What apostle had his chains removed by an angel?

- a) Matthias
- b) Paul
- c) Peter
- d) James

## LAST MONTH'S ANSWERS & VERSES:

- 1) C, Reference: Jeremiah 26:20-23
- 2) A, Reference: Acts 25:13
- 3) D, Reference: Hosea
- 4) B, Reference: Numbers 7:89
- 5) A, Reference: Revelation 2:13

- 6) D, Reference: Matthew 28:11-15
- 7) C, Reference: Genesis 14:18
- 8) B, Reference: Luke 1:38
- 9) C, Reference: Ecclesiastes
- 10) A, Reference: 1 Peter 2:25