



August 2, 2009

The Real Thing

On Friday, July 24th, at the Knollwood congregation, Keith Greer presented the first in a series of lessons intended to introduce the underlying themes of the Bible for those who had failed to see the “big picture” of the scriptures. Keith stated that a failure to see the big picture was to miss the true meaning of the Bible and become confused about spiritual things. This is the state of the religious world as people grope for meaning and turn to splintered interpretations of the Bible that miss the true meaning. One of the examples that was used in the presentation which I found to be very interesting, was of an individual who had spent a year studying to be an agent for the treasury department and thus learned to identify counterfeit bills and coins. The individual, when asked how many counterfeit pieces of money they examined over the course of their study responded, none. This was interesting and Keith went on to explain that the person learned to identify every aspect of a real bill or coin to the extent that when a counterfeit was presented they would know it right away. Several years ago I was approached by someone who had been visiting with us for some time and had been a regular in our Bible studies. One Wednesday evening this individual approached me after services concerning our discussion that evening of another false religion. The statement was made that if I had not attended the services or been trained in this particular denomination then I was not qualified to speak about their doctrine. I explained that I had discussed doctrinal matters with members of the group in question but had not attended their services. That was not met with a great deal of acceptance as I was told that in order to understand others we needed first hand knowledge of what they teach and practice. From a worldly perspective this might seem like a good idea but considering that there are hundreds, or thousands, of religious persuasions in our country and the world, it is not practical that we have intimate acquaintance with each and every one of them, nor is it realistic to think that we could do so. So, the example of the treasury agent’s training is very significant. From a precise, yet worldly perspective it is not practical to

study every variation of a counterfeiting. It is more important that we study and recognize the real thing. From that vantage point we are able to spot that which is not true, or real, as it will distinguish itself quickly from that which is right. The fact that there are so many counterfeit religious ideas in the world have so confused and misled people to the point that there is no concept of what is right, or truthful, or if such a thing even exists. This is the result of allowing wrong ideas to flourish without question or to accept anything that is presented to us as long as it sounds good. As Christ spoke to the Jews that believed on him, he stated, “***And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.***” (John 8.32). The freedom that God offers is from the deception of the world (2 Cor 4.4). The remedy for this is to go to the source. We cannot stress this enough. God’s word is the place to go for answers and direction. By knowing what is in God’s book we can spot that which is false. It is not possible or realistic to understand or study every religious persuasion or variation, there is only one that we need be concerned with. The unfortunate fact is that not everyone knows how to spot the false religions. In stores and banks, employees have a special pen that will turn colors when it comes into contact with a bill that is counterfeit. That is an easy test and takes very little time. In a similar fashion, it takes very little time to spot ideas that are not contained in the scriptures. We do not have a pen, but we do have a standard, the Bible, which is the litmus test for that which is real. How much do you know of the real thing. Have you been confused by all the error and claims made in the religious world? Isn’t time to get to know the real thing and learn to spot the fakes?

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