

NEWS AND VIEWS
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*“Southern Baptists with the Full
Gospel for the Whole World”*

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I've heard it said that the first casualty of warfare is the truth. There's a whole lot of truth in that statement. A trusted news reporter has recently been exposed in his consistent, yet blatantly different, account of his wartime correspondence in Iraq. Time after time, year after year, he related details that were finally challenged by those who were in the position to know the difference. The reporter was usually in front of a TV camera doing an interview about his exploits when this happened and evidently seemed quite convincing to many in the television audience. But a lie will always stand as truth unless the truth is presented. When the reporter's account was finally challenged, it began to fall apart like a house without foundation. As I watched this unfold in the media, I was struck to see that a man will often tell a lie as though no one else knows the truth. There is something out of order about a man with a nature like that.

Not too long after that episode, a high ranking official with the Veteran's Administration was walking the streets of a major American city, working with a group taking a census count of homeless veterans sleeping on the streets. With a news crew of a major TV network tagging along, it was quite impressive to see a Veterans Affairs Secretary conversing with a homeless vet about both of their military service. It seems that both of them served in the Special Forces...or maybe not. I don't know about the homeless guy but it didn't take long to check out the Secretary's story. He not only lied, he did it on camera. You see, our lives, even high powered ones, are not lived out in a vacuum. Symptomatic of a degenerating culture is how well we treat the truth. And it seems as though we don't even know how to talk about the lies when we are confronted with the truth.

In the first case, the news reporter's defenders have said he just misremembered. The VA government leader said he misstated the facts. Misremembered...misstated...misrepresenting? Today we live in a land where truth is hard to find. Consider this exchange of truth with The Truth:

So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, "If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." They answered Him, "We are Abraham's descendants and have never yet been enslaved to anyone; how is it that You say, 'You will become free'?" (John 8:31-33)

Some of the people entrusted with the truth in that time period had failed miserably to deliver it effectively. God's people had been given the Word of God to give out. But many of them used it for their own self-promoting agendas. When the Word of God began to walk this planet among men, He began to demonstrate what a man under authority and in authority looks like. Some believed...and they trusted that the things He said were true. Today we can enjoy the same privilege. But we walk among men who pervert the truth for self-exaltation, or self-worship. You see, men can still be in bondage to false worship. And only the Truth can set us free. Truth has a name. Truth has a standard to meet...Jesus...the Word of the Living God.

Are you free today to truly worship the Lord? The people of God are not immune to believing and living out lies. Have you ever been caught in a web of deceit, ensnared and entangled, unable to free yourself from its strangling influence?

Here is why it is still possible for God's people to be trapped in idolatry: (living in lies)

We know that we are of God, and that the whole world lies in the power of the evil one. (1 John 5:19)

Little children, guard yourselves from idols. (1 John 5:21)

Here is what we can do about it: (Get real with your worship)

Watch over your heart with all diligence, for from it flow the springs of life.

Put away from you a deceitful mouth and put devious speech far from you. (Proverbs 4:23-24)

Jesus said our mouths will speak what is in our hearts...Renew our hearts, Oh Lord!

Blessings to you,
Pastor Sam