

KNOW THE TRUTH

PULSE OF SPIRIT
OCTOBER 30, 2024



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And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

John 8:32

This is one of the well-known statements reported as words spoken by Jesus. This has perplexed me in my life as I couldn't figure out how I could come to know "the truth." The line that proceeds this quote says "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed" and "ye shall know the Truth..." What does it mean to continue in His word?

Jesus' invitation was to love. Love Him, love the Father, love one another. When one continues in the way of love one knows the truth and the freedom it provides. When we are surrounded by superstitions, beliefs without knowledge, or information disconnected from the facts, we can get confused about what is true. Often a

superstition stays around because it is repeated so often. "See a penny, pick it up, all day long you'll have good luck." I remember being excited when I found one. I'm probably one of the few people left who stops to pick up a penny! To be more specific the penny had to be face up.

That seems like a silly one. There is a long list of familiar superstitions: avoid black cats as they are bad luck, don't walk under a ladder, if you break a mirror you'll have bad luck for seven years, four leaf clovers are lucky, wearing lucky clothing (socks, hats, shirts underwear), and there's a pot of gold at the end of a rainbow. Some of them are more serious. If you catch a chill by going outside with wet hair, you'll get sick; you'll ruin your eyes if you sit too close to the TV; and an apple a day keeps the doctor away.

More serious superstitions come into play when people with power and the capacity to

spread the word take advantage of others who are vulnerable. “Trust me, this will be good for you,” and “I will take care of you.” Or, “Don’t trust them, they are bad people.” The more these are repeated the more they seem true.

In the Catholic church where I grew up, some prayers were said multiple times a day that influenced the yielded heart. “Oh Lord, I am not worthy” and “pray for us sinners.” I was raised by parents who were devoted to the church—they never questioned these things. It seemed inappropriate to even ask, *Why am I a sinner and unworthy? Says who?* The power of superstition grows because it is not challenged by a loving mind.

As a girl, I learned of a supposed promise made by God during a visitation to Margaret Mary Alacoque in 1688 where she received this message. It was shared with me and I tried really hard to accomplish the task.

I promise you in the excessive mercy of My Heart that Its all-powerful love will grant to all those who receive Holy Communion on nine first Fridays of consecutive months the grace of final repentance; they will not die under My displeasure or without receiving their sacraments, My divine Heart making Itself their assured refuge at the last moment.

Did anyone ever ask, do they have calendars in heaven? And who’s counting?

The experience of oneness with a loving God seemed so inconceivable. Some prayers were confirming my fallen state and other prayers were promising if I just did things right I could be lucky enough to be loved or saved. No one was pointing to a loving God. No one

said, “You are loved” or asked, “Are you breathing? Is your heart beating?”

You are loved. Know that! Feel that. From that place listen and you will know the Truth. Ignorance perpetuates superstition. There are two ways that works. First, you may feel ignorant or foolish because you don’t know and it appears others do: and second, you don’t want to look ignorant by inquiring. In the story *The Emperor’s New Clothes* con artists offer to supply the emperor with magnificent clothes that are supposedly invisible to those who are incompetent or stupid. The gullible emperor hires them, and they set up looms and pretend to go to work. A succession of officials, starting with the emperor’s wise and competent minister, and then ending with the emperor himself, visit them to check their progress. Each sees that the looms are empty but pretends otherwise to avoid being thought of as a fool. They believed the story. Nobody but an innocent child was willing to speak the truth and say he was naked.

Our world has changed a lot with electronic media and the Internet being able to influence people’s beliefs. There are people anxious to be “influencers.” They establish an audience and are financially supported because of their power. We need to develop a strong sense of knowing the truth to be able to navigate this world.

What do you “know” of a person’s character? What do you “know” about how life works? What and who do you trust to hold a line of integrity and strength with you?

If we continue in the invitation to love and to know each other, the truth will set us free. We will not be fooled or buy into beliefs without knowledge.

We start our lives as children influenced by our family, our school, and our community. We are like sponges. All those who care for us represent authority and usually have our best interests at heart. And they too have been influenced by the superstitions and manipulations of the world. As we grow up we can ask the “loving” questions like, “Sez who? Is that true? How do you know?” We may also just center ourselves in the highest love we know and check within, “Does that ring true?”

I am not suggesting we wander through our lives questioning everything. Life has a way of bringing to us things as needed. But I recommend love first, then ponder. Ignorance is not the answer or a good excuse for perpetuating superstition or disconnection.

We are designed to love one another. And when we do we become wiser and stronger. When we love the source of our Being we increasingly know the Truth of that love. As we love one another we know each other and have the great opportunity to let the Truth set us free.

If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

John 8:31-32

Continue in His word. Love one another.

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