

THEREFORE: Cast not away your confidence -- in the Truth

John 18: 37,38 : Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.

Pilate saith unto him, What is truth?

What is truth. The whole world has longed to know the answer to this question. We call ourselves "Truth people". Are we so presumptuous as to claim that we have truths which no others have? **Yes**, that **IS** our claim. And on what do we base this? And from what source did we get this Truth?

The obvious answer is that we obtain our truth from the Scriptures. And we do. But so do thousands of other Christians with whom we do not agree. What makes us different?

Turn with me to Luke 12:42 through 44. *And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season? (Luke 12:42 KJV) Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. (Luke 12:43 KJV) Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath. (Luke 12:44 KJV)*

Is this the same steward, the same servant, who we find called the seventh angel in Rev. 10:7 *But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets. (Revelation 10:7 KJV) ?* Yes it is.

To establish the truth which makes us different, let us establish the one who was the **steward** of this truth spoken of in the Luke 12:42 scripture.

Perhaps the **steward** is **any** individual truth seeker. Many people believe just that. And many people study diligently to find truth -- they study far and wide. They study ancient writings, eastern religions, modern thought, writings of self-proclaimed prophets, scientific papers, they even study the Bible! And they have as much right to their self-learned truth as we do; and **they** didn't follow the teachings of some man. Yes, they may have

gained many truths -- and a lot of error, but they have not gained **THE TRUTH**. And what about our Luke 12 Scriptures. Would just any truth seeker fit the qualifications of what we just read? We could cover this, point by point, but it is not necessary, the answer is "no".

Is this **steward** the **CLERGY CLASS** as the nominal systems would have us believe? No. Why? We read of that "faithful and wise steward". Does this fit the clergy? Certainly not. Consider throughout the Gospel age the unfaithfulness of this clergy class, leading to the condition of the nominal church class being cast off. The clergy **class** is not even a Scripturally authorized class. This clergy class, and by extension, the nominal systems in general, are the Babylon, the Egypt, the great whore and her daughters which have been cast off. This is the class which lost their first love and, figuratively, wed the civil governments for their mutual benefit. This is the class which claimed Apostolic succession. This is the class which brought in the doctrines of a burning hell, a trinity, an immortal soul, the mass; and ignored the ransom and restitution.

What are the clergy a steward of now? I recently got in the mail, from a new local church, the results of a survey in our area. This is what the survey told me that I wanted, and I quote from the letter from the Lakewood New Heights Center For Worship: "You wanted a church where you could come as you are and not worry about a formal atmosphere. (At Lakewood New Heights, the dress is casual and people are laid-back). You wanted a church where the style of worship is contemporary. (At Lakewood New Heights, we have a professional worship band playing rock, reggae, jazz, blues, world beat; with guests playing bluegrass, classical, etc. We will use drama, creative arts, multimedia and more to help make church an experience, not just an event.) The letter goes on with an additional 5 points of what I want. There was no reference at all to the Bible; it spoke once of using God's word, and told that **it** is doing what God wants; it teaches Christian morals and values; and it is "Helping people scale new heights with Christ. There were no Scripture references, but it brought to my mind a Scripture: *For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.* (2 Timothy 4:3,4 KJV)

Maybe this **steward** is a **CLASS** encompassing all the consecrated. But no, we see a contrast of the Luke 12:42 through 44 scriptures and the

preceding verses 37 and 38 which talks of many servants. *Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them. And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants.* A steward is one who is in charge of many servants, but not of his own authority but of the householder. Throughout the Scriptures, there are examples of God choosing AN INDIVIDUAL to do a work (Abraham, Moses and Joseph being prominent ones). And with these chosen individuals, there were always those who did not accept **God's** decision of a chosen ONE and wanted to be part of a chosen GROUP. Note in the account found in the 16th and 17th chapters of Numbers in which Korah, Dathan, and Abiram revolted against Moses, and note especially the reason for this revolt found in Numbers 16:3 -- *And they gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron, and said unto them, **Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the LORD is among them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the LORD?*** This is the account which led to the rod that budded for everlasting proof of Moses' individual choosing. Another example is that of Jacob, about whom the Lord said: *But thou, Israel, art my servant, Jacob **whom I have chosen**, the seed of Abraham my friend. (Isaiah 41:8 KJV) Thou whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, and called thee from the chief men thereof, and said unto thee, **Thou art my servant; I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away.** (Isaiah 41:9 KJV)*

But perhaps that steward is really an individual ORGANIZATION, as some would have us believe. Let us consider again the angels of Revelations -- were the other six angels organizations? No, So why would God suddenly change and make the seventh angel an organization? And what of the dispensed "Meat in due season"? Has not much of this meat dispensed by those organizations been adulterated with other doctrines until it is now mostly bologna? (Is 65.13-15) Some organizations which have strayed from the truth, once given unto the saints, call themselves "Spiritual Israel". Would they not, then, by their own profession, share in the consequences of Natural Israel? *Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, **my servants shall eat, but ye shall be hungry: behold, my servants shall drink, but ye shall be thirsty: behold, my servants shall rejoice, but ye shall be ashamed:***

*Behold, **my servants** shall sing for joy of heart, but **ye** shall cry for sorrow of heart, and shall howl for vexation of spirit. And ye shall leave your name for a curse unto my chosen: for the Lord GOD shall slay thee, and call his servants by another name: (Isaiah 65:13-15 KJV)*

Therefore, it must be concluded that **THAT STEWARD** in one individual person. So, what **one individual person** would fit the description of THAT STEWARD? What individual was on the scene when the Lord "cometh"? What individual was placed over "all his goods"? What individual dispensed "meat in due season": -- the doctrines of the Ransom, restitution, the sin offering, our Lord's presence, the permission of evil? What servant was so faithful, so wise, so humble, so sacrificial? What steward was given charge over "all that he hath"? Can there be any doubt that the only one individual who fits this description is the one described in Ezekiel 9:11: *And, behold, the man clothed with linen, which had the inkhorn by his side, reported the matter, saying, **I have done as thou hast commanded me.*** The only one who would historically fit this composite of Scriptures is our Pastor Charles Taze Russell. And by word of explanation, we do not worship the man although we honor his being the one chosen by the Heavenly Father. The words of Pastor Russell are not infallible, but they are directed of the Holy Spirit. We quote from Volume 6, page 219 the following concerning the Apostles, but which we feel also applies to the Pastor's words:

"The apostolic epistles consist of such logical arguments based upon the inspired writings of the Old Testament and upon the words of the Lord; and all who, throughout this Gospel age, have partaken of the same spirit by following the lines of argument which the Lord through his mouthpieces has set before us, are guided to the same truthful conclusions; so that our faith does not stand in the wisdom of men but in the power of God. (1 Cor. 2:4,5) Nevertheless, in these teachings, as well as in their historical presentations, we have no evidence of a word-for-word dictation-- no evidence that they were merely amanuenses of the Lord, speaking and writing in a mechanical manner as did the prophets of olden times. (2 Pet. 1:21) Rather, the apostles' clear-sighted view was an illumination of the mind which enabled them to see and appreciate the divine purposes and thus to state them clearly; just as all of the Lord's people since, following their leading, have been enabled to grow in grace and in knowledge and in love, and so have been enabled to "comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, page

220:: and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth [all human] knowledge." `Eph 3:18,19`"

If this, then, is **that steward**, then that which was dispensed through that steward must be **the truth**. Now, some say that the truth changes with new light. And it does. But note that when it changes, it does not become false, but it becomes more true. Just for one example: Look at the truth about the nation of Israel which Pastor Russell spoke of in his day and compare **that truth** to the nation of Israel today.

And who has the right to pick and choose within this truth what he will hold and what he will discard? Who has a right to discard any of the Volumes and hold to other Volumes; or hold on to the "principles" of the "truth", but study any and all things except that which was given? Yes, Pastor Russell changed or modified some of his teachings, but he informed us when he did, plus we have the latest forewords to the volumes, as well as Reprints of the original Towers wherein he expanded and clarified many points of the Truth. It is **God's** truth. And as God said to Samuel *Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: **for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them.*** (1 Samuel 8:7 KJV)

That, brethren, is **our** Truth.

: Cast not away your confidence -- in the Truth

Let us now look at the 10th chapter of Hebrews to get the context of this Scripture concerning our confidence. Verses 1 through 19 are a comparison and contrast of the Old Law sacrifices and the sacrifices of our Lord Jesus. Let us now read together the 19th through the 23rd verses: *Having therefore, brethren, **boldness** to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,* (Hebrews 10:19 KJV)

By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; (Hebrews 10:20 KJV)

And having an high priest over the house of God; (Hebrews 10:21 KJV)

*Let us draw near with a true heart in **full assurance of faith**, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. (Hebrews 10:22 KJV)*

*Let us **hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering**; (for he is faithful that promised;) (Hebrews 10:23 KJV)*

And then the 35th verse:

***Cast not away therefore your confidence**, which hath great recompense of reward. (Hebrews 10:35 KJV)*

These are strong statements, powerful statements. But what is the basis for this confidence? How do we develop this confidence? And what is the end result of this confidence?

The basis for this confidence is a **belief system** -- the belief system which we have just been talking about -- the Truth. But it is much more than this. There are those who believe the truth -- and that is all. They just believe it. They do not act on it, they do not let it develop their characters; they have put the knowledge in their minds and there it stays.

What did the 22nd and 23rd verses tell us? *Let us draw near with a true heart in **full assurance of faith**, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. (Hebrews 10:22 KJV)*

*Let us **hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering**; (for he is faithful that promised;) (Hebrews 10:23 KJV)* We must develop our faith. Oh, yes, we can believe something without having faith in it. Look at the history of the Bible Students -- many had a **belief** in the chronology, but did not have **faith** in it; and when things did not develop as **they** expected, the belief left them. We must develop the **full assurance of faith**.

But it goes beyond just the **belief** and the **faith**. again verse 23: *Let us **hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering**.* "The profession of our faith". What is the profession of our faith? It the **action** of our faith and belief. It is our witnessing, our aiding our brethren, our **sacrificing**. What picture do we see in our minds when we hear the word sacrifice? Do we not see the brazen altar? The incense altar? The burning of the hide, etc. outside the camp? Is this not a **willing sacrifice**? Is this not the profession of

our faith **without wavering**? Is this not such a **confidence** of the truth that it is written in our hearts?

I have a question for us, brethren. What are **we** doing to **profess our faith**? Do our co-workers know what we believe? Do our friends and neighbors know what we believe? Do our own family members, not in the truth, know what we believe? Are we there for them in their time of need so that *As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith. (Galatians 6:10 KJV)* ? Are we doing **kingdom** work as well as **Harvest** work? Remember what Jesus told us to do: **seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.** (Matthew 6:33 KJV)

Another question: What are **we** doing to **develop the full assurance of faith**? We don't just automatically have assurance of faith, we're not born with it, no one can just give it to us, we have to work at it, we have to **develop** it! But, we say, HOW? Well, how does a baby learn to walk? How does a child learn to write? How does anyone learn to drive a car? We have to have a goal. Then we must break this goal down into steps -- and practice, practice, practice. So, what is **this** goal? **full assurance of faith.** How do we develop it -- what are the steps needed? Our list of step may differ as we are different individuals with different needs. But here is one list.

(1) Know the truth whether it be of God. We've already covered that, haven't we.

(2) *Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together,* (Heb 10:25) The ecclesia serves more than just a study group, and far more than a social group. *For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.* (Matthew 18:20 KJV) These are our meetings with the creator of the universe.

(3) *But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit,* (Jude 1:20 KJV) building up ourselves - individually and collectively. Do we have our regular testimony meetings? These are where we share with each other, and with our Lord, the blessings which our Father has given us. And remember that our trials are truly blessings from the Lord.

(4) Witness. Are you comfortable with coming up to a stranger, or a friend, and telling them about God's Plan for mankind - or are we unsure and afraid

in our flesh. Oh, what a way to develop the full assurance of faith but to practice witnessing.

(5) Read, study, meditate. We must fill our own vessel first before we can dispense to others. *Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. (2 Timothy 2:15 KJV)*

(6) **Prove all things**; hold fast that which is good. (1 Thessalonians 5:21 KJV). remembering that you can prove things only to yourself. Others must prove things to themselves.

(7) *And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful. (Mark 4:19 KJV)* These things we must overcome. We are consecrated. These things should have no meaning to us - we have given them up - or have we? Which leads up to point number:

(8) ***Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates? (2 Corinthians 13:5 KJV)***

(9) ***Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. (Matthew 26:41 KJV)*** We do have this spirit in an earthen vessel. We cannot be perfect in the flesh. But we can watch and pray.

As with any list, or any set of goals, it is easier to make them than to keep them, but remembering that *I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. (Philippians 4:13 KJV)*

And to what result? Again, verse 35: *Cast not away therefore your confidence, **which hath great recompense of reward.** (Hebrews 10:35 KJV) and verse 36: *For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, **ye might receive the promise.** (Hebrews 10:36 KJV).**

What reward is this? What promise is this? *Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to **the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus,** (2 Timothy 1:1 KJV)*

*And this is **the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life.** (1 John 2:25 KJV)*

And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first

testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. (Hebrews 9:15 KJV)

Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. (2 Peter 3:13 KJV)

Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him. (James 1:12 KJV)

That, brethren, is our confidence.

: Cast not away THEREFORE your confidence -- in the Truth

Why does this Scripture have within it the word "therefore"? "Therefore" is a connecting word: it connects this thought with a previous thought. And what is it in this previous thought which could possibly make us cast away this confidence?

The connecting thought is in the thirty-second through the thirty-fourth verses. Let us read them together using the Revised Standard translation: *But recall the former days when, after you were enlightened, you endured a hard struggle with sufferings, (Hebrews 10:32 RSV)*

sometimes being publicly exposed to abuse and affliction, and sometimes being partners with those so treated. (Hebrews 10:33 RSV)

For you had compassion on the prisoners, and you joyfully accepted the plundering of your property, since you knew that you yourselves had a better possession and an abiding one. (Hebrews 10:34 RSV)

What's he talking about here? **Trials.** Trials could cause us to cast away our confidence in the truth. What trials? "Renounce your faith or off with your head?" Maybe, but I doubt it. What about a neighbor who says "I don't like your idea of religion -- your child can't play with mine anymore." Or the customer who confronts you with "Oh, you're with the group that had that public witness -- I'm taking my business somewhere else." How about the cousin who tells you "I prayed for your mother's restored health, but she died because **you** didn't have any faith". What about a brother in the flesh who says "You tell me about the Kingdom -- but have you read the paper lately? You live in a fantasy world -- there is no kingdom, only suffering."

What about in your own study, that little Scripture that doesn't quite seem to fit in? How about that secret fault which it seems you just can't get rid of?

What about these trials? Are they faith shattering -- or faith strengthening? Is there something, somewhere, which could cause you to cast aside your faith? Or is that even a possibility? Jesus tells us: *For false Christs and false prophets will arise and show great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect. (Matthew 24:24 RSV)* So, yes, it is possible. But remember also to be faithful, **for he who promised is faithful;** *(Hebrews 10:23 RSV)*

THEREFORE:, my brethren, **Cast not away your confidence -- in the Truth**

Be established in the Truth. Be Bold in the Truth. Be strengthened by your trials.