

## Truth

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Truth has a way with alienating its followers from the world. Throughout the first epistle of John, the writer makes a definite distinction between truth-seekers and world-seekers. *“Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in Him”* (1 John 2:15). He goes on to say in the following verses that the world and all its lusts are passing away, *“but the one who does the will of God abides forever”* (1 John 2:16-17). So while standing up for truth sometimes comes with a temporary cost, it holds the promise of eternal salvation!

### Truth Builds Confidence In Salvation

*“By this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments. The one who says, ‘I have come to know Him,’ and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him; but whoever keeps His word, in Him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him; the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked”* (1 John 2:3-6). It amazes me how so many Christians are tethered to their fear of condemnation. They fret over judgment as if there is simply no hope! But if “abiding in Him” involves keeping His commandments in a clear, obvious way (1 John 3:24) – if it is really as simple as obeying Christ, just as He said – then our confidence in salvation should reflect that. I do not have to guess where I will be for eternity. My expectation is not to barely make it to heaven. If I am abiding in Christ by obeying His teaching, then my salvation should be as certain as the sun coming up tomorrow (really, more certain). John writes, *“And now, little children, abide in Him, so that when He appears, we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming. If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone also who practices righteousness is born of Him”* (1 John 2:28-29). Righteousness is obedience to the revealed will of God, and unrighteousness is a rejection of that will (1 John 3:4-10). The writer of Hebrews also demands renewed confidence from his readers in Hebrews 10:35-39.

To a Christian, the judgment should not be associated with anxiety or fear. Rather, love is the central idea, at least how John describes judgment in 1 John 4:16-17. *“By this, love is perfected with us, that we may have confidence in the day of judgment.”*

### Truth Includes Incredible Promises

It is not mere sentimentality to say that righteous people have some incredible promises given to them. When I build my life around the Lord, Jesus Christ, I have something that worldly people will never understand (without a change of heart). I am not promised earthly wealth that fades, or influence in the world. I am not promised any of the temporary, passing pleasures of this life. The promises of God cannot be matched, even by the devil himself in all his fading brilliance. *“The whole world lies in the power of the evil one”* (1 John 5:19), but that means nothing to the Saint whose hope lies beyond this realm. While many in the world see truth as a chain, a burden to carry, God through the apostle portrays truth as the key to unlocking incredible blessings:

- We are promised total forgiveness (1 John 1:9-10) because we have an Advocate who vouches for us before the Father (1 John 2:1-2).
- We are promised a close, familial relationship with God (1 John 3:1-2, 1 John 4:7). We “know” God in a way that goes beyond any relationship we can fathom.
- We are promised commandments that are not burdensome (1 John 5:3).
- We are promised full assurance in something that is true, not a fairy tale or a myth. We believe in Jesus Christ because He is real, tangible (1 John 1:1-3). The false prophets of the first century missed the mark when it came to understanding Christ in such a meaningful way – He was nothing but a concept, a vague idea to be pondered, not lived and experienced. Perhaps this is why John emphatically states, *“Let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth”* (1 John 3:18).
- We are promised strength to overcome the world, which is under the power of the devil. *“For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world – our faith”* (1 John 5:4). *“He who was born of God keeps him and the evil one does not touch him”* (1 John 5:18). How confident are you that the evil one sees you as “untouchable”?