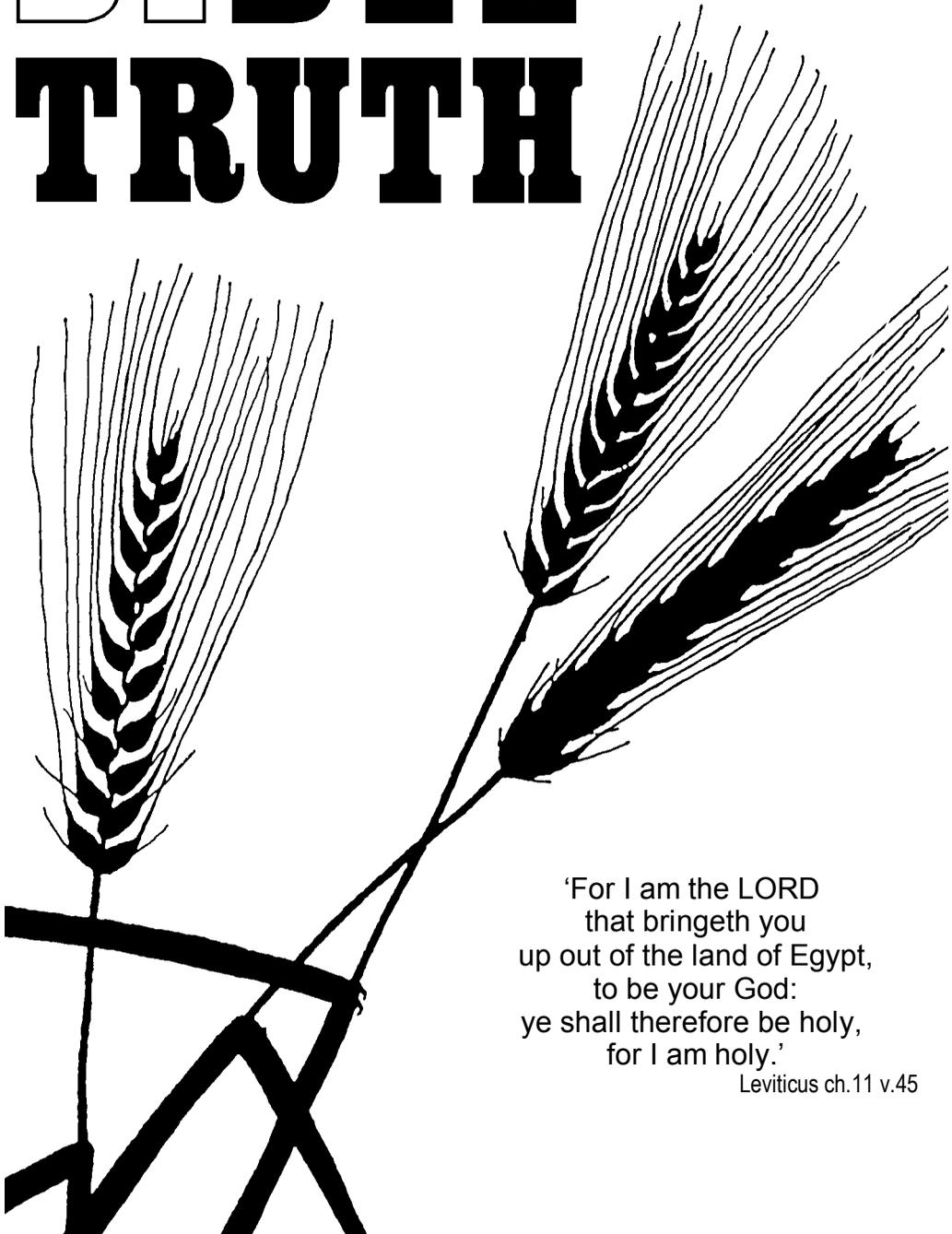


BIBLE TRUTH

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'For I am the LORD
that bringeth you
up out of the land of Egypt,
to be your God:
ye shall therefore be holy,
for I am holy.'

Leviticus ch.11 v.45

FACTS ABOUT WITNESSING FOR TRUTH

by Michael D. Bennett

Witnessing to Bible truths can be of two types. In the first instance it is possible to take Jesus Christ to the people who need to hear about Him. That is one can obey the injunction to:

‘... Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature’.

Mark ch.16 v.15

This is what missionaries do, and it is what every Christian can and should do as the Lord directs and enables them. The second type of witness has the same effect as the first in that it brings people into contact with the risen Lord. Nevertheless it is different in that instead of taking the Gospel of Christ to the people it consists of bringing people to the Christ of the Gospel.

The ability to do this is a special ministry and a gift of God. Many there are who can take the truth of God’s word and proclaim them to the masses, but there are very few who can bring someone as an individual to meet the risen person of Christ in the way one would take a sick person to meet the doctor or a ready pupil to meet the teacher.

Any witness to the truth of the Bible and the Gospel of Christ demands some self-sacrifice and often great patience and humility. After all, those who are called to the masses are not guaranteed that anyone will believe their message. ‘Who hath believed our report?’ asks the prophet Isaiah, and often the Christian asks himself the same question as he considers what impact his witnessing to truth has had in the lives of those that heard him speak. The Bible records that Noah was a preacher of righteousness (2 Peter ch.2 v.5), but it does not record that he made a single convert.

It would seem from reading the Bible that failure to convert the hearer is the normal experience of the preacher rather than the exception. What the preacher must realise, however, is that the Word of God is of equal effect in achieving its ends irrespective of whether people believe it or not. 'So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it' (Isaiah ch.55 v.11). We must believe that to be true. God's word is of equal effect whether it saves or damns since in either case God is shown to be totally just. What the preacher of truth does accomplish by proclaiming God's truth is to 'deliver his soul'. 'Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul.' (See Ezekiel ch.3 v.19).

So much for taking the Gospel to the people. What of the second type of service, that of bringing people to the Truth? It is a wonderful experience for a Christian to be used in this way. There is a wonderful precision in the way the Spirit of God leads in this ministry in which the results are inevitably blessing and joyful acceptance. The Bible records numerous examples to show us how it operates. Take for example the men who brought the man sick of the palsy to Jesus. The man knew he needed to meet Jesus, and his friends went to great lengths to make this possible. The result was that he was healed and left a new, complete man (Mark ch.2 vv.3-12). Then there is the example of Andrew in bringing his own brother ... the example of how Jesus recruited his twelve disciples is the prime example of this ministry in action. How little preaching the Master did in winning his disciples. 'Follow me' was enough for some. 'Come and see' sufficient for others. '... Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee', was enough for Nathaniel (John ch.1 v.48)! Read John ch.1 vv.35-51, and see how five disciples joined up.

We should always be willing to be used in whatever way God desires and realise that we are expendable in Christ's service like all soldiers fighting for a cause. Even the Lord Himself had to be expended in the fight and lay down His very life. God buries all His workers but His work goes on. Nevertheless it is a good thing to seek the Lord and ask Him for the blessing of being used in the ministry of bringing men to the Gospel as well as being prepared to take this to men. He gives us all this holy desire and blesses us in seeing its fulfilment in working for HIM.