

Do Christians
Have to Grow
in Knowledge?

Do Christians Have to Grow in Knowledge?

By Robert G. Theophilus

THIS BOOKLET IS NOT TO BE SOLD. The information provided is for the benefit of former members of the congregations of the Worldwide Church of God (WCG), and of current and prospective members of God's Church.

Does there come a time when a Christian can say that he knows it all? Many say that God does not want them to know everything. However, God commands Christians to grow in knowledge and understanding. Could He have made that command if there comes a time when there is nothing left for a Christian to learn? Let's see what the Bible, our only sure standard of truth, says.

Preamble

Please Note: All comments in brackets [] or in parentheses () as well as highlighted text (bolded and/or in blue) are from the author of this study. Bible quotations are in maroon.

I think it is essential to clarify the question of the “Holy Spirit” before we begin this study. If we say that who or what is the “Holy Spirit” is the question that needs to be answered, we are starting from the assumption that there exists such a being as the Holy Spirit and that it is a separate and distinct being from God and the Word. The question which should be asked is who are the beings the Bible tell us are holy, whose composition is spirit and who have existed eternally? Either the Bible plainly tells us who are the separate and distinct beings that existed from all eternity who created all things (spirit beings and the material universe) or we have no way of getting an answer to our question.

The Holy Spirits of the God Family

The Bible tells us in Gen 1:1 that:

Gen 1:1 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

The Hebrew word translated “God” is “Eloheem” which is the plural form of “Eloah which means “God”. The word “Eloheem” refers to “gods.” It is a uniplural noun like family, group, team, etc. In the beginning, there was therefore more than one God being in existence but how many were there?

Joh 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

Joh 1:2 The same was in the beginning with God.

Joh 1:3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

In the beginning when God created the heaven and the earth there was God and there was another being with God who was also God, the Word. How can these two beings both be God; isn't that impossible?

The word God indicates the kind of existence of these 2 beings: their nature is to be God in the same way that all human beings have the same human nature. However, having the same nature does not mean that all human beings constitute a single being; indeed, they are all separate and distinct beings with their own personalities. God and the Word have in common the same nature or, level and type of existence, but they are separate and distinct beings just like all human beings who have the same human nature are separate and distinct beings.

God the Father

We read in the Bible that God became a father when the Word became flesh (Php 2:5-8) by being born of woman after having been conceived in the virgin Mary by the holy spirit being called God (Luke 1:35). God from that point on became God the Father and the Word, who was born as the flesh-and-blood Jesus of Nazareth became God's Son or the Son of God. He was both fully God (his father was God and fully human (his mother was the virgin Mary).

Jesus was God the Father's only begotten son at the time when He was conceived in Mary's womb but He was not to be the only one begotten of the Father. God the Father is the holy spirit being in the Godhead that calls men to salvation.

Joh 6:44 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.

Joh 6:65 And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.

Joh 18:9 That the saying might be fulfilled, which he spake, Of them which thou [God the Father] gavest me have I lost none.

1Pe 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

God the Word and Spokesman

The Bible term for being called is to be spiritually begotten by God the Father (1Pe 1:3). When we are begotten, we become a spiritual embryo that can be born again as a glorified spirit being with eternal life. Those begotten of the holy spirit God the Father who follow their calling are then able to come to the holy spirit being called the Word and Spokesman (John 6:44; 65; 18:9) who then teaches them. The glorified Jesus-Christ as God the Father's Word and Spokesman is the holy spirit being that works in the minds of God the Father's called and chosen ones.

Joh 7:39 (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

Jesus had to first be glorified for it to be possible for Christians to have access to the holy spirit called the Word and Spokesman because the glorified Christ is the holy spirit being who works in the minds of God's saints (John 14:17) in the same way that Satan is the evil spirit that works in the minds of the children of disobedience (Eph2:2).

Joh 14:17 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he [Christ] dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. [On the day of Pentecost, it would be in them and in all true Christians.]

Eph 2:2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, [Satan] the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:

The holy spirit God the Father calls men and those who follow their calling are then taught by the holy spirit called the Word and God the Father's Spokesman.

Joh 14:26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

The Holy Ghost

The expression "Holy Ghost" used in the Bible is in error as there are no ghosts in the Godhead but rather 2 beings that are holy (John 17:11; Isa 6:3) and spirit (John 4:24).

Joh 17:11 And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.

Isa 6:3 And one cried unto another, and said, **Holy, holy, holy**, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.

Joh 4:24 **God is a Spirit**: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

These 2 God beings who are holy and spirit are the holy spirit beings of the God family who existed in the beginning at the creation of all things.

Joh 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

Joh 1:2 The same was in the beginning with God.

Joh 1:3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

And, the Word who was with God is before all things i.e., *nothing* existed before He created them whether made of spirit or matter.

Col 1:15 **[Christ]** Who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature:

Col 1:16 For by him [the Word who became Jesus-Christ] were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:

Col 1:17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

In the beginning before anything either physical or spiritual was created, there was God and the Word who existed before all things and no other being is mentioned as having existed with them. There is no bib-

lical evidence that there ever existed a third, separate and distinct personage in the Godhead called the “Holy Spirit” who dwelt in eternity with God and the Word.

God is a Family

Throughout the Bible we can find many verses which clearly indicates the existence of family relations between God and the Word and God’s called, chosen and faithful.

Mat 11:27 All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.

Mat 12:50 For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.

Joh 20:17 Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but o to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.

God is clearly a family in which many can be ultimately born again by a resurrection from the dead to eternal, glorified spirit life in God’s Kingdom.

Rom 8:29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he [\[God’s Son\]](#) might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Col 1:18 And he [\[the glorified Christ\]](#) is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.

Christ was the first to be born again by a resurrection from the dead to be followed by many brethren.

Bible Writing Convention

The practice in the Bible has been to simply use the expression “the Holy Spirit” without indicating which God personage in the Godhead the expression represents. Over time, because of this practice, just about everybody has come to believe that the Holy Spirit is a separate and distinct God being in the Godhead but, there is no single verse or group of verses in the Bible that prove the existence of such a third being in the Godhead. The words “holy” and “spirit” are adjectives that describe the nature of

God the Father and of God the Word i.e., they are holy beings made of spirit.

Whenever we encounter the expressions the “Holy Spirit” or simply the “Holy Spirit” in the Bible we must look at the context to determine of which holy spirit being of the Godhead the Bible is talking about: the holy spirit, God the Father or the holy spirit, the Word and Spokesman.

The Word is the holy spirit being in the Godhead who carries out the instructions and wishes of the holy spirit, God. He is the faithful son who seeks to do his father’s will in all things. He is the member of the God family that did the work of creating the heaven and the earth, who ruled over ancient Israel through Moses and his human successors, He is the one who became a man who suffered and died to be God the Father’s perfect sacrifice for sin and make the salvation of mankind possible, etc. and He came to reveal the Father to those who follow the Father’s calling.

Making Things Clearer

In this study, when referring to God’s spirit who, depending on the circumstances can be the holy spirit personage called God the Father or the holy spirit personage called God the Word and Spokesman, I will not capitalize either of the adjectives “holy” and “spirit”. This is in order to not perpetuate the false impression in the minds of readers that there is a 3rd being in the Godhead called the “Holy Spirit.” Instead, I will refer to either of the holy spirits in the God family as being God’s spirit without capitalizing the word “spirit” to make it plain that we are not referring to a third God being in the God family called the “Holy Spirit” but to one of the 2 God beings in the Godhead.

God’s family is presently made up of 2 holy spirit beings to which are to be added thousands and possibly millions of other holy spirit beings when God’s plan of salvation for mankind has reached its end. The saints that endure in the faith until the end of their natural human life, will be resurrected as individual holy spirit beings in God’s Kingdom when it is established.

There are two studies which you can read regarding what is the “Holy Spirit” and decide for yourself in light of the Bible-based evidence offered if such a being exists in the Godhead. These studies are: [What is the Holy Spirit? Cliff Notes Version](#) and [Who or What is the Holy Spirit?](#)

NOTE: All comments in brackets [] or in parentheses () as well as highlighted text (**bolded** and/or in [blue](#)) are from the author of this study. Bible quotations are in maroon

Mr. Armstrong (HWA) always said, even shouted out, that we are to check everything he taught the Church against the Bible to see if it was true; that we are not to rely on men but on the Bible which is the word of God. Does that sound like that all that Christians have to do is attend services, listen attentively to the sermon, go home or stop off at a restaurant with friends and have a good meal and that's it?

Or is it that individual Christians are solely to rely on what men teach them, then turn out the light and go to sleep, and that individual Christians have no personal responsibility for studying the Bible to ensure that what is being taught them is true or not?

The individual Christian is responsible for his own salvation; not HWA, not the ministry; no, you. You cannot rely on men or even the ministry. You need to check out against the Bible everything that is taught you; even the foundational truth of the Church which God gave the first era church through Christ and which were partially restored through HWA to His Philadelphia Era Church. Men are notoriously unreliable and cannot be trusted to be always truthful; the Bible is the sure word of God which never changes.

This study will elaborate on the command given all true Christians by God in the book of 2nd Peter, chapter 3 and verse 18.

2nd Pet. 3:18 But **grow** in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.

This is said in the context of Peter telling the faithful not to be concerned that it seems to be taking a long time for Christ's 2nd Coming to occur and that there will be many scoffers saying He is not coming back as He said He would. They are told not to pay any attention to them or to worry about when Christ's 2nd Coming will occur nor to be taken up with the cares of this material world which will be dissolved by fire and be replaced with a new universe in which dwells righteousness and for which true Christians long.

2Pe 3:10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, **the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.**

2Pe 3:11 Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation **[conduct]** and godliness,

2Pe 3:12 Looking for and **hasting** unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?

This is the time of that follows the Great White Throne Judgment at the end of the Last Great Day when God's saints are resurrected to immortal holy spirit life and the wicked who were not transformed into spirit beings are consumed in the Lake of Fire which is the second death from which no resurrection is possible. Christians are looking forward to this time as it is when they will be rewarded for their faithfulness.

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

Basically, Peter is telling them to focus on growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus-Christ which should be our first goal as members of God's church.

But here is where many of God's people would find themselves saying: "But, isn't it the ministry's job to teach us and aren't we to rely on them for a correct understanding of what the Bible says on different topics?"

And they would also say: “Isn’t it dangerous for us to go off on personal Bible studies that may lead us into error and cause us to lose our salvation? Isn’t it far better and wiser to simply listen to the ministry and learn from them?”

These are all very valid concerns that will be addressed in the course of this study.

Let’s start at the beginning and examine the state of the newly-converted Christian.

Babes in Christ

When first coming to the knowledge of the truth, it is not easy to study the Bible and correctly extract the truth that it contains. It is easier if there is someone who can help but whether there is such a person, it is still possible for God to reveal truth to the new convert. There is an example in the Bible where God sent help to someone who was trying to understand the Bible. He sent the apostle Philip to a eunuch from the court of Candice that was reading Isaiah and couldn’t understand what he was reading.

Act 8:26 And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert.

Act 8:27 And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship,

Act 8:28 Was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet.

Act 8:29 Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot.

Act 8:30 And Philip ran thither to *him*, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest?

Act 8:31 And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him.

Act 8:32 The place of the scripture which he read was this, He

was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth:

Act 8:33 In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth.

Act 8:34 And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man?

Act 8:35 Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus.

But whether there is or not someone to assist newcomers to the faith, God is quite able to show him truth from the pages of the Bible. The knowledge of God's spiritual truth is by revelation; it is not the doing of men. At the very beginning of God's Church, GOD, NOT A MAN, sent Philip to the eunuch but this was an exceptional occurrence. A similar occurrence is to be found nowhere else in the Bible.

This is because the way God teaches all true Christians is by His son, Jesus-Christ who is the holy spirit God the Word.

Joh14:26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

The Comforter would teach all things to the apostles and to all true Christians throughout the ages. In NT times God is speaking, revealing and teaching truth to true Christians by His Son.

Heb 1:2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

Mat 11:25 At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. [Newcomers to the truth; not actual flesh-and-blood babies.]

Luk 10:21 In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou

hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast **revealed** them unto **babes**: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.

The First Century Church

God's New Testament (NT) church began on the day of Pentecost when for the first time since Adam and Eve were driven from the Garden of Eden, certain specially-chosen men would be called by God the Father.

These are men who were predestined (predestinated we would say today) to be called before the foundation of the world.

Rom 8:29 For whom he **[God the Father]** did foreknow, **[knew before]** he also did **predestinate** to be conformed to the image of his Son, **[to be glorified by a resurrection from the dead]** that he **[Christ]** might be the firstborn **[by a resurrection from the dead]** among many brethren. **[Other human beings that are also to be born by a resurrection from the dead as Christ was.]**

Rom 8:30 Moreover whom he did **predestinate**, them he **[God the Father]** also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: **[their sins were forgiven]** and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

Eph 1:4 According as he hath chosen us **[the men who were to be called]** in him **before** the **foundation of the world**, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:

Those whom God the Father has been calling since the day of Pentecost, including us today, were predestined to be called for the purpose of learning God's truth and demonstrating to God their desire to obey Him applying it to the best of their abilities in their lives.

It should be noted that being predestined to be called doesn't mean that salvation is a sure thing. Those called must remain true to their calling until the end of their lives and there are many who don't.

The holy spirit God the Father calls men to salvation and the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman teaches them all things.

Joh 6:44 **No man can come to me, [Christ] except the Father [God the Father] which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.**

Joh 14:26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, [spirit it should read] whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

Joh 14:17 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye [the disciples] know him; for he [I, Christ am that spirit of truth] dwelleth with you, and [I, Christ] shall be in you. [As the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman.]

Joh 14:18 I will not leave you comfortless: [Christ is the Comforter who was with them] I will come to you.

Christ is the Comforter and Spirit of truth who dwelt with the disciples and who after His death, resurrection, glorification and ascension to His Father would be in the disciples and in all true Christians, teaching them all things. Christ after His return to His Father became the holy spirit of the God family responsible for teaching all things to God the Father's called and chosen ones.

Christ's disciples who became apostles on the day of Pentecost were taught by Christ a number of truths which are the foundational truths of God's Church. These are the truths they taught to the early church and to those they trained to be evangelists, preachers, teachers, and elders. However, from the very beginning, persecutions came upon God's Church, first by the Jews (combined tribes of Benjamin, Levi and Judah) and then by a new great false religion claiming to be Christian that arose after the coming into being of God's Church.

This new religion persecuted all other religious groups calling them heretics and having them put to death by the civil authorities. After the death of the apostles and those they had trained, and the scattering of true Christians, the truth given the early church gradually became lost.

God's New Testament Church After its Scattering in the Wilderness

Truly converted Christians fled and scattered into the countryside to be able to continue practicing the truth they were given without fear of persecution.

They were isolated from one another with some of them possibly being in small, dispersed groups. They held on as best they could to the truth

they had been given but in those days, there were no books except manuscripts which were costly and out of reach of the common people; there were no quick and easy means of communications as exist today; and oftentimes, the common people couldn't read or write. The Bible was written in Hebrew and in Greek and was only translated into English over 1,000 years after the foundation of God's Church.

Given these circumstances, for hundreds of years, information was generally transmitted by word-of-mouth and this is what caused much of the original truths received by the First Century Church to become lost as it went from person to person. Ultimately, there remained only certain bits of information that didn't change such as having to keep the Sabbath and observe the 10 commandments.

After the death of the apostles and of those trained by them, and the scattering of God's Church in the wilderness, God's Church ceased having apostles, evangelists, pastors, teachers, elders and deacons.

The foundational truths needed for these offices to be possible no longer existed. No man can honestly claim to have "the" truth and set himself up as a great infallible teacher whose teachings cannot be questioned by anyone. No one today was directly taught by Christ nor has anyone had Christ come to them in dreams and visions to teach them.

Heb 1:1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners
spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

God spoke to the fathers of the physical nation of Israel (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob) by the prophets but since the foundation of His New Testament spiritual nation of Israel on the day of Pentecost, God is speaking to His spiritual nation by his Son, not men.

Heb 1:2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us [\[Christians in the days of the apostles and us today\]](#) by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

In the early days of God's Church, there could be apostles, evangelists teachers, etc. as the truth Christ gave them was fresh in their minds. But some 2,000 years after Christ's First Coming and following the persecutions and scattering of God's Church, there are no men today who can claim to have absolute truth. Today, all God's called and chosen can only be students. All have to be studying God's holy Bible to grow in knowledge and understanding of its many truths. This is the work that Christians have to do to be approved of God.

2Ti 2:15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a work-man [a student] that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly [correctly] dividing [understanding] the word of truth.

Christ said that God would be the teachers of all those He calls.

Joh 6:45 It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.

This Scriptures makes it very clear that those called by the holy spirit God the Father will be taught by God. They will be taught by the holy spirit God the Father while being called and by the holy spirit God the Word, if they accept their calling, both God beings. Those called and chosen by God the Father and taught by God the Word are and can only be New Testament Christians constituting God's spiritual nation of Israel.

God's Church is being taught by the holy spirits of the Godhead, not men.

1Jn 2:27 But the anointing [the holy spirit God the Word] which ye have received of him [God the Father] abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.

1Th 4:9 But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.

After the scattering of the First Century Church, all Christians are being taught by the holy spirits of the Godhead. They are largely unknown to each other, are often by themselves and sometimes in small groups. They are invisible to the world and to each other because conversion occurs in the mind which is something that is not outwardly visible to others. The truly converted dwell unseen among the unconverted. This is why there are no large, visible-to-the-world congregations of God's Church.

Truly converted Christians are the salt of the earth scattered a little bit here and there all over this planet which makes this present evil world bearable to God.

The time for apostles, evangelists, pastors, teachers and deacons ended with the scattering of the First Century Church of God.

Warning to the Church

In 1st John we read of John telling the faithful to be careful and make sure that those who were seeking to teach them were not false teachers because THERE WERE MANY, NOT A FEW, FALSE PROPHETS gone out into the world seeking to use religion as a way of making money.

1Jn 4:1 Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

And, we also have John telling the faithful that there were some in the Church who wanted to have the preeminence i.e., they took over congregations and refused to allow John and his fellow teachers to come among them. And, they put out of their congregations any of its members who wanted to meet with John and those who were with him.

3Jn 1:9 I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not.

3Jn 1:10 Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth them out of the church.

Doesn't that sound like a perfect description of what occurred after HWA's death where different men in the Church wanted the preeminence and sought to create their own group of followers and excluded everybody else who refused to follow them. They started their own "churches of God" and called Laodicean all other "churches of God" started by other men who also wanted to be thought of as great religious leaders.

And, in the book of Acts we see Paul's warning to the members of the true Church that right from within the Church, there would arise false teachers who would attempt to draw them away from Christ and get them to follow their false teachings instead. Here Paul was talking to the elders of the Church whose task was to safeguard the truth.

Act 20:30 Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.

The church was under attack from within in addition to being persecuted from without. Peter is most eloquent and very clear in telling the Church what was the goal of these false teachers who sought to take over the congregations of the first era church of God or to create their own "Church of God."

2Pe 2:1 But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, [God's Church] who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

2Pe 2:2 And many [of the members of God's Church] shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.

This Scripture should serve as a very strong warning to truly converted Christians. God says that false prophets will come in among the congregations of the true Church, and that when they do so, it is the "many" that will follow them out of God's Church into false "Churches of God's." They will of course say they represent God's one true Church and they will be sure to include the words "Church of God" somewhere in the title of their organizations to reassure all those who followed them that they have not left God's Church but are still very much a part of it.

And, as we have been demonstrating, in NT times after the scattering of the First Century Church, there are no visible organizations of men who are God's Church because truly converted Christians are invisible to each other and to the world making it impossible for large groups to come into existence.

Why will these false prophets want to create their own "Churches of God."

2Pe 2:3 And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.

They would be doing so as a means of making a living for themselves from the money they can extract from their followers to supposedly support a work they say they are doing, preaching the Gospel to the world. However, the Bible is clear that this task was given to the apostles and no one else. Men have no ability to preach the Gospel which is spiritual truth knowable only by revelation from God.

And, there has been no lack of men using religion since the death of

HWA to enrich themselves. The Restored Church of God and the Philadelphia Church of God come to mind here but there are many others all pursuing the same goal of making merchandise out of those that follow them and living luxuriously off the back of the sheep. The verses of 2nd Peter we have just been reading make it clear and is a grave warning to all of us that there would be men who would use religion to make money. Religion would always be “big business” and so it is to this day whether among the many religious groups in the world or the many so-called “churches of God.”

Paul instructs Titus who would carry on after his death to ordain elders (men who are holding fast the faithful word of God as he (Titus) had been taught) in the Cretian congregations of the church of God that they may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers (those preaching falsehoods to get a following from which they can make a living; preaching for gain, as a means of making money).

Tit 1:5 For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee:

Tit 1:6 If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly.

Tit 1:7 For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, [not given to filthy lucre](#);

Tit 1:8 But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate;

Tit 1:9 Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.

Tit 1:10 For there are [many](#) unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: [[the Jews](#)]

Tit 1:11 Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for [filthy lucre's](#) sake. [[As a means of making money; a living](#)]

In the book of Jude, the faithful are exhorted to earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints as their congregations were under attack from within as false teachers had come in among them seek-

ing to spread false doctrine among the congregations to get a following for themselves.

Jud 1:3 Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort *you* that ye should earnestly contend for the faith [truth] which was once delivered unto the saints.

Jud 1:4 For there are certain men crept in unawares, [who have infiltrated their congregations] who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, [teaching salvation by grace without works of obedience to God] and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. [denying the Father and His son, Jesus Christ which is the spirit of anti-Christ].

1Jn 2:22 Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son.

And finally, in the book of Revelation, God commends the faithful for having tested the teachings of those who were presenting themselves as apostles and had found them to be liars or false prophets.

Rev 2:1 Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks;

Rev 2:2 I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars:

Rev 2:3 And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted.

What About Today?

As we have seen, from the very beginning, God's church came under attack from false teachers who sneakily made their way into the congregations of the true church and tried to turn the faithful from the truth they had been given to have them follow them instead of the truth and become the means for them to make a living.

We also saw that the true believers were cast out of the congregations of the true church as they came to be dominated by false teachers. The true

believers did not compromise their beliefs to remain with these congregations. They simply left of their own accord or were expelled for not wanting to compromise.

We have also seen that false teachers arose from within the church itself in addition to those that came in pretending to agree with the truth but which once part of the congregation began to spread false teachings among its members.

Peter, Paul and John all gave out strong warnings to the congregations of the true church to be wary of false teachers and their efforts to draw them away from the truth.

Finally, in Jude the saints are told to contend for the truth they had been given as false teachers were coming into their congregations and were spreading false teachings among them.

Since the death of HWA, some are assembling with others whom they judge to be holding on faithfully to the truth and listen to voice recordings from HWA and in some cases, from ministers who were part of the church in the days of HWA. It should be noted that of those ministers, almost none of them have remained with the faith so one should be careful about all their teachings and ensure that they are not being misled.

No matter what circumstances true Christians find themselves in, God says that they are to grow in knowledge and understanding. In order to have growth they must be hungering and thirsting for truth; an active process requiring action on their part.

There are many verses in the Bible where the elect are told to grow in knowledge and understanding of the truth of God given them by the prophets (OT Scriptures) and the apostles (NT Scriptures).

2Pe 3:18 But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever.
Amen.

But, and here is the big "BUT," even though some of the foundational truths have been restored to the Church, God's command through Peter given to the faithful of all Church eras means there will always be room for growth in the grace and in knowledge or in the truth we have received. The foundational truths we have can be used as a launch point from which we can come to discover other truths which build on and do not in any way undo, any of the truth of the Bible.

Growth will require that we put forth time and effort in careful, attentive, detailed and in-depth studies of the Bible.

1Co 3:9 For we [the apostles and evangelists of the first era church] are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.

1Co 3:10 According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I [Paul] have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.

Truly converted Christians are the "other men" who are to build on the foundation of truth given to the Church by Paul who received it directly from Christ.

1Co 3:11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

1Co 3:12 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;

1Co 3:13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

1Co 3:14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

1Co 3:15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

If a true Christian in an honest and sincere attempt to grow in knowledge and understanding as commanded by God is not carefully building on the foundation of truth then those things which he has built (new knowledge and understanding that do not fully integrate with the whole truth given the church) will be destroyed at the time of Christ's 2nd Coming. There will then be a revealing of the full truth of God as contained in the Bible and this will destroy or burn up the new understanding and knowledge that had been developed by the individual but which was erroneous. The individual though suffering loss (the false truth he had erroneously devised will be destroyed by the truth of God i.e., it will be made clear that they were false) will be saved because he had not and was not willfully trying to destroy God's truth.

Of course, one must first and foremost have acquired a full and complete

mastery of ALL the truth God taught His Church through Mr. Armstrong. We must know and understand all the truth God gave His church; not simply think we know it but having studied over and over all of the literature personally-authored by HWA and listened over and over to all of his voice recordings until we are sure we have fully understood all he taught. And, of course, as HWA always said we have to be sure to prove all his teachings and not follow any that cannot be proven with the Bible.

Sadly, many who say they have all of HWA's literature and voice recordings have not been doing the quality, in-depth personal studies they should have been doing all along and their minds are still filled with an incomplete knowledge of just what it was HWA taught and they are not making any real effort to change that situation. Their thinking remains confused on many key church doctrines and Bible passages.

HWA gave us the big picture by putting all the pieces of the puzzle in the right place. He could do so because God gave him to see the big picture so he could correctly figure out how the individual pieces fitted together. It's like when one is doing a puzzle and is provided with a picture of what the pieces will look like when correctly put together as a guide to putting the pieces in their right places. Basically, God, through a great miracle made it possible for HWA to see the whole picture from the start so he could put many of the pieces together in their right places as he began his study of the Bible after his calling.

So, how we can make sure that we are not going off into error in our studies?

NONE OF OUR FINDINGS CONTRADICT ANY OTHER SCRIPTURES OF THE BIBLE.

Regarding HWA's teachings, remember that he often told us to always make sure all he taught was provable with our Bible. Over his long ministry, he has changed some of his earlier teachings as with greater spiritual maturity, he came to understand he had made a mistake. There possibly are other errors that he made that he didn't have a chance to correct before his death.

Christians are individually responsible for their own salvation; not HWA, not the ministry, YOU, the individual member. You have to keep growing if you are to be a live spiritual embryo who can be born again at the time of Christ's 2nd Coming.

But many are those who remain spoon-fed Christians like children sitting in their high chairs, not having grown to the point where they can feed

themselves and where there can be any assurance that they would not be making themselves sick by eating the wrong food or even poisoning themselves. They still have their training wheels on their Bibles and are comfortable with the situation. They are happy to do the minimum and to watch time go by all the while eagerly watching for the beginning of end-time events. Many are long time members of God's church who should be mature enough in knowledge and understanding of the truth that they should be able to feed themselves but no, they can't and sadly, will never be able to do so unless and until there is a radical change in their attitude of simply doing the minimum and thinking that that is good enough.

In Hebrews we read:

Heb 5:11 Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing. [\[not taking to heart or seriously what we are teaching you\]](#)

Heb 5:12 For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which *be* the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.

Heb 5:13 For every one that useth milk *is* unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.

Heb 5:14 But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, *even* those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

After many years in the church do we still need to be taught the basics, the milk of the word. After having been in the church for such a long time and having had the truth of God taught to us over and over again; so much so, that by this time we should be able to be teachers are we still using milk and are thus unskilled in the word of righteousness as Paul says it.

Is this your spiritual condition as long time members of God's church?

Knock Seek Hunger Thirst

Christians in the Bible are told in many different ways and in many different places to be seeking after knowledge, truth, and wisdom and that if they will do that, God says that He will give it to them. Also, as shown in the Scriptures below, knowledge acquisition is not a static process of one sitting in a hall somewhere and being instructed; rather, true Christians

are told to seek, knock, ask, find, get, study, etc. to acquire knowledge, wisdom. It is a dynamic, active, laborious process requiring sustained effort on your part.

Hereafter are several Scriptures which bear this out.

Mat 7:7 Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:

Luk 11:9 And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.

Mat 5:6 Blessed *are* they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

Pro 3:13 Happy *is* the man *that* findeth wisdom, and the man *that* getteth understanding

Pro 3:14 For the merchandise of it *is* better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold.

Pro 4:5 Get wisdom, get understanding: forget *it* not; neither decline from the words of my mouth.

Pro 4:7 Wisdom *is* the principal thing; *therefore* get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding.

Pro 16:16 How much better *is it* to get wisdom than gold! and to get understanding rather to be chosen than silver!

Pro 19:8 He that getteth wisdom loveth his own soul: he that keepeth understanding shall find good.

Pro 24:14 So *shall* the knowledge of wisdom *be* unto thy soul: when thou hast found *it*, then there shall be a reward, and thy expectation shall not be cut off.

Ecc 2:13 Then I saw that wisdom excelleth folly, as far as light excelleth darkness.

Psa 19:10 More to be desired *are they* than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.

2Ti 2:15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

God and Christ will Manifest Themselves to Christians

Joh 14:21 He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.

Joh 14:22 Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?

Joh 14:23 Jesus answered and said unto him, **If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.**

Now these are interesting Scriptures. God the Father and Christ say they will manifest themselves to us. How will that occur if God's word is true which it is? Will God appear to us in a vision or will He appear to us in a non-scary, non-glorified, flesh-and-blood body and have a coffee with us every now and then and give us a pep talk?

God is spirit and so is Christ and they dwell in us through the spirit in man which gives our animal brains mind power. His truth is given us as we study the Scriptures using the latest dictionaries, commentaries, different Bible translations and electronic aids available today.

Right?

No, this is the scholastic approach that Mr. Armstrong explained was not the way God's truth can be known. Commentaries, dictionaries, lexicons, etc. are the work of intelligent but uninspired individuals. If God's truth could be uncovered in the Bible using these tools then God's spiritual truth would not be by revelation but through the works of carnal-minded men.

God's truth is given us by revelation as it was given to all other Christians throughout the ages. Peter did not know who Jesus was until it was revealed to him by God the Father.

Mat 16:13 When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philip-pi, he asked his disciples, saying, **Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?**

Mat 16:14 And they said, Some *say that thou art* John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets.

Mat 16:15 He saith unto them, **But whom say ye that I am?**

Mat 16:16 And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

Mat 16:17 And Jesus answered and said unto him, **Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed *it* unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.**

How will God manifest Himself to true Christians? Would it be by giving them more knowledge and understanding of the truth? Mr. Armstrong used to say that when he prayed he talked to God and when he studied the Bible God talked to him and gave him understanding of the truth contained in the Bible AND that he came to love this wonderful conversation he was having with God.

Paul says that God now speaks to us through Christ in these last days in which we are living.

Heb 1:1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

Heb 1:2 Hath in these **last days spoken unto us by *his Son***, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

The Bible is the Logos, the Spokesman, the Word or Christ in writing. God spoke to the apostles and to Paul, through Christ in person; but today, He speaks to us through Christ as the written Word which we have in the Bible.

If he is speaking to us, are we not learning anything from His talking with us? Are we involved in a conversation with Him?

A conversation is a two-way process which requires the participation of both the speaker and the listener. Can we be in conversation with Christ day after days turning into weeks and years and still we don't have any growth in knowledge and understanding of the Scriptures? And, do we continue to be satisfied with this situation thinking that everything is fine.

Paul instructs the brethren in his letter to the Philippians to do the following:

Php 2:12 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but **now much more** in my absence, **work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.**

Paul was warning them that he would not always be there and that they would have to keep on being obedient to God if they are to be saved. What are the faithful to do in the absence of a true ministry to teach them as has been the case since the scattering of God's First Century Church?

We are to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling.

We are individually responsible for our salvation as we are the only one who can choose to follow or not the truth given us.

HWA often explained that God has made man a free moral agent and that there is no power on earth or in heaven that can force a man to choose something contrary to his will.

Deu 30:19 I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, *that* I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore **choose** life, that both thou and thy seed may live:

And, as we have seen, individual members are responsible for testing the spirits by ensuring they know the truth well enough to be able to tell the true from the false teachers and then, to have the strength and courage to walk away from them no matter how tempting it might be to stay with a group where we may have a lot of our friends, family and acquaintances.

The Scriptures do not teach blind reliance on men, converted or not.

When There is No Ministry

What are true Christians to do when there is no true ministry of God to teach them? Are they then not required to follow God's command to grow in knowledge and understanding of the truth and can they just sit quietly watching world news to try to determine when end-time events will start to occur?

Does Paul says that in the absence of teachers like himself and others which would no longer be available to congregations that the faithful should sit idly by and wait for end time events to begin?

Php 2:12 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, **work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.**

Php 2:13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of *his* good pleasure.

Christians when there are no true teachers to teach them are to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling. They are not to idly bide their time waiting for Christ's 2nd Coming to occur. As Peter also says to those who were worrying that Christ's 2nd Coming was taking a long time:

2Pe3:18 But **grow** in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord

and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever.
Amen.

And Paul to Titus:

2Ti 2:15 **Study** to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

We are to grow in knowledge.

Col 1:10 That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and **increasing in the knowledge of God**;

BUT, and this is a big **BUT**; an all-important one; we must be careful how we build on what we have been taught by making sure to have proven everything with our Bible before accepting them. In 1st Cor's, as we have seen previously, Paul gives out a warning to other teachers in the congregations of his days as well as to every man, then and now; today.

1Co 3:9 For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, *ye are* God's building.

1Co 3:10 According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, **I have laid the foundation**, and another buildeth thereon. But let **every** man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.

1Co 3:11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

1Co 3:12 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; **[vastly different quality building material]**

1Co 3:13 **Every man's** work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

The foundation will not be harmed by the fire as it is spiritual truth; the works of men built on the foundation will be destroyed or remain depending on whether they are a continuation of the spiritual truth of the foundation and if not, they will be like stubble, hay or wood which will be consumed by the fire. The precious stones, the silver and the gold will endure.

1Co 3:14 If any man's work abide which he hath built there-upon, he shall receive a reward.

If a man's effort to build on the foundation are precious stones, silver and gold in spiritual quality, he will receive a reward. He will be rewarded according to the quality of his works i.e., he will be given a higher office of responsibility in God's Kingdom.

1Co 3:15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

However, 1st Cor's 3:15 makes it clear that if any man's work is in spiritual quality stubble, hay or wood, he will suffer loss. In the resurrection it will become clear to him that some of the things he thought were true are not but he will not lose his salvation. He will be like a man who escaped from fire having been burnt here and there but not having lost his life.

Personal Bible Studies

This clearly means that true Christians are not prohibited from studying the Scriptures on their own and even that it is a requirement for them to do so as they are primarily responsible for their own salvation and for not being misled by false teachers, some of which will even arise right from within the Church. [They are not to remain babes or children in the truth](#) have to get more knowledge and understanding by personally studying their Bible.

Church history reveals that the Church for much of its existence has not had ministers available to teach the faithful and that it has typically existed in isolated individuals and in geographically scattered little groups most of the time not knowing each other, and invisible to the world.

This is the case for us today and we must do what Christians did after the scattering of the First Century Church of God. We must work out our own salvation with fear and trembling.

A Word of Caution and Some Perspective

Mr. Armstrong all throughout his long ministry continually studied the Bible which was the means by which God revealed to him several truths that had been lost.

However, as Mr. Armstrong himself told the Church that as he grew in knowledge and understanding of the Scriptures, he had to change some of the things he taught to the Church as doctrine. The most notable change was Pentecost which the Church used to celebrate on Monday and which

was changed to being celebrated on Sunday. Mr. Armstrong said that the true Church, contrary to the churches of this world, whenever it became clear, as greater understanding was obtained of the Bible, that certain teachings or doctrines were in error, the Church would make the required changes.

HWA readily admitted that he at times made errors in understanding the teachings of the Bible. Yet, before these errors were discovered, they were considered to be part of the truths that God in the end-time restored through HWA. In the days of the apostles, the understanding the Jews had of the Scriptures was considered to be the whole truth of God which no one should or could ever question or attempt to change. But here came an outsider, Paul, a former devout believer of Jewish doctrines, preaching that what they, the Jews, believed needed to be changed because major new understanding of the Scriptures had been received from Christ.

The Jews saw Paul as an heretic preaching lies about God's truth and they sought to discourage him from doing so following him around and persecuting him to the best of their abilities. Yet, Paul's teachings could be fully proven from the very Scriptures which they said they held on to faithfully and believed. Yet, they would not listen for the most part and after a while Paul ceased trying to teach them and turned to the Gentiles.

Christ Himself as a man came to them with irrefutable proof that He knew the Scriptures better than they did but they would not listen to Him.

Joh 5:38 And ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not.

Joh 5:39 Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.

Joh 5:40 And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.

Interestingly enough, the same process has been going on since the foundation of the First Century Church.

The apostles could not teach the Jews who thought they knew it all and that nothing could be added to their understanding of the Scriptures. The religious establishment of their time would have none of it. New truth, if any, can only come from them.

Paul eventually had to turn to an entirely different group of people who had no knowledge at all of the truth, the Gentiles.

Mr. Armstrong came to the Church of Sardis and like Paul, he was completely rejected and also had to turn to other people who knew nothing about God's truth. The Sardis Church was sure it knew it all and that no one, especially someone who was not one of their own, could add to their understanding of the Scriptures.

Since the death of Mr. Armstrong, Church members are fully like the Jews of Paul's days and the members of the Church of Sardis. They believe they have all of God's truth and that no one can ever add anything to it except possibly the ministers they are following; they have it all.

But the Bible clearly shows that even truly converted Christians, God's Church, have periodically needed to have their knowledge and understanding of the truth updated by God through inspired men as the time comes for different parts of His plan of salvation to be implemented. God sent them prophets and apostles that most of the time were ignored and fought against by the established civic and religious rulers of the time including God's own Church (Sardis).

Is there a lesson to be learned here about how God does things?

Major new points of understanding came from God through truly converted men. None of the books of the Bible were written by angels or other spirit beings. They were all written by men who often times were not in any way religious individuals whom God called straight out of the world. These writings — from formerly non-religious men who were not part of an existing religious establishment and which God called — form the basis of our faith.

Paul says that true believers are to build on the foundation of truth they have been given (1 Cor 3:10-12) by the apostles and the prophets.

Building on the foundation means to grow in our understanding of the Bible; this new understanding becomes new knowledge for us.

Pro 9:10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the [knowledge of the holy is understanding](#).

Conclusion

Since the scattering of God's First Century Church, truly converted Christians have had to work out their salvation with fear and trembling being alone or sometimes in small groups. God the Father called them and God the Word is teaching them all things as they patiently study God's holy Bible.

In doing so, God the Father and Christ will come to them and manifest themselves by giving them understanding of Bible truths which were always there but which they had not before noticed. In called and chosen Christians this is done by the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman who dwells in every truly converted Christian and teaches them all things.

A Christian's standard of truth is not any man or group of men but God's holy Bible. Christians must grow in knowledge and understanding so as to remain live spiritual embryos who can be born again at the time of Christ's Second Coming.

Growth in knowledge and understanding is required for salvation.

Mat 25:14 For the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods.

Mat 25:15 And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey.

Mat 25:24 Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed:

Mat 25:25 And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine.

Mat 25:26 His lord answered and said unto him, **Thou wicked and slothful servant**, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed:

Mat 25:28 Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents.

Mat 25:29 For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.

Every one that is growing in knowledge and understanding will continue to have more of it and those who are not so doing will lose even the knowledge and understanding given them at the time of their calling i.e., the talents given them whether it be one or many.

Mat 25:30 And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Those having no growth lose their salvation.

God will not force you to have growth; the decision to do so or not is left entirely up to you.

Deu 30:19 I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live: