

Relationships: The Integrity Factor (Balancing love and truth)

When we prepare for a lesson of study we are taught to use our dictionary so as to get the proper meaning of words when we chart an outline of study. You see, we have been taught that by using our dictionary we can communicate intelligently and clearly.

So in preparing for this lesson I decided to use my dictionary to get a better understanding of some of the key words in this lesson. The first word I am interested in is the word “integrity.”

The American Heritage Dictionary defines integrity as: Rigid adherence to a code of behavior. But it doesn't say who's code; I guess it's man's code. Already I have a question about this code thing they're talking about, why didn't they just give me a straight forward definition?

Before we start our lesson I would like to look over the introduction pages of The American Heritage Dictionary to get a feel for how a dictionary is assembled. Here it says that a dictionary ought to be a treasury of information about every aspect of words, our most essential tools of communication. It should be an agreeable companion. By the knowledgeable use of the dictionary we can learn where a word has come from, precisely what its various shades of meaning are today, and it's social status. It says that in the five years of preparation of this work, many of the leading scholars and scientists have collaborated with our permanent editorial staff for the purpose of accuracy and authority.

Hold it!!! What is a scientist doing here?

Let me look up the word scientist, maybe I will get a better understanding why a scientist has influence in the writing of this dictionary. Scientist: A person having expert knowledge of one or more sciences.

Hold it!!! What is science? Science: Experimental investigation and theoretical explanation of natural phenomena.

Hold it!!! Seems I'm being led down a path here. What is theoretical doing here? I want concrete definitions for my lesson of study. OK then, let me look up the meaning of theoretical.

Theoretical: Pertaining to and based on theory. Restricted to theory. Theory: Lacking verification or practical application. Broadly, hypothetical or speculative; unproved or uncertain.

WOW!!! This has turned my happy lesson upside down.

You know I just thought of a person I had a conversation with some time ago. He said I was narrow minded and I shouldn't just believe in what the Bible says. He was telling me that the Bible isn't literal and that it has different meanings for different people. He reminds me of one of these science guys that this dictionary hired to help assemble this dictionary.

Before I go any farther I am curious as to how The American Heritage Dictionary defines the word's truth, right, righteous and integrity.

Truth: Conformity to knowledge, fact, actuality, or logic.

Right: In accordance with or conformable to justice, law, morality or another standard.

Righteous: Meeting the standards of what is right and just.

Integrity: Ridgid adherence to a code of behavior. (Actually explained as "uprightness.")

In this detour we have seen that man has a theory about things. Man is still searching for answers.

- Scripture is the Only Perfect Guide to Right and Wrong -

God's Word tells us that He is the creator of all things and that the answer's man is searching for can be found when man put's his trust in Jesus Christ. When man receives God's free gift of His Son Jesus Christ then man receives the Holy Spirit which will be man's guide to the truth.

The reason we have gone through this detour is to better understand where the Apostle Paul was coming from when he addressed the Corinthian Church in his letters. Paul knew the Corinthian Church members were getting information from outside sources and by drifting away from the teachings of Jesus Christ the church was no longer in unity because they were not seeing or hearing the "truth."

We as church members must understand the importance of seeking sound doctrine in our church and our personal lives. God's Word should be our first line of defense as we live in this world. For those who have received Jesus Christ we should know that the Holy Spirit will guide us in God's Truth to make the right decisions in our church and our personal lives (John 16:13.)

Our confidence is in God and not man. This is the very point that Paul was pointing out to the Corinthians. Remember Paul got nowhere at Mars Hill the year before while debating the "intellectuals."

In the study of 2 Corinthians 1-2 attention is drawn to the way the apostle Paul chose to relate to the Corinthian believers after they had bitterly disappointed him. He did so with Christian integrity.

Christian "integrity": Firm and consistent adherence to moral and spiritual principles.

Christian Righteousness: Confidence before God that we have right standing before Him by our faith in His Son Jesus Christ.