



"Your faith holds onto Christ, but the greater truth is that Christ holds onto you."  
—Colin Smith

22-May-20

## Beware the Second Flood (Part Two)

Part One drew upon the imagery in [Revelation 12:15](#), in which a flood of words pours from the mouth of the serpent to sweep away God's people. A ready application arises in our present Information Age, as the overwhelming volume of words from an anti-[God](#) world can leave us spiritually sputtering.

One of Jesus' [parables](#) also uses the symbol of a local flood:

Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like: He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded on the rock. But he who heard and did nothing is like a man who built a house on the earth without a foundation, against which the stream beat vehemently; and immediately it fell. And the ruin of that house was great. ([Luke 6: 47-49](#))

The person who is secure against this flood—different from the one gushing from the serpent's mouth—hears Christ's sayings and acts on them. But the

serpent-inspired flood of information is still a danger because it reduces our ability to hear spiritually. If we are not listening, then we will not be doing the right things, and as this parable teaches, our foundation will prove insufficient.

Thus, floods pose two dangers. The flood in Jesus' parable represents the trials of life and the difficult circumstances that require proper anchoring and spiritual strength to weather. That flood is part of living—we cannot avoid it. But how we weather it depends on our hearing and doing. If a glut of information drowns out God's truth, our walk with Him will suffer. The onslaught of life in this age will overwhelm us.

Consider that salvation is by grace through [faith](#) ([Ephesians 2:8](#)), and faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the Word of Christ ([Romans 10:17](#)). [Satan](#) can disrupt this entire process by drowning out God's Word by what is often harmless noise.

The basic solution to both the floodwaters' prodigious volume and its intrinsic deceptions is to build a deep and abiding [love](#) of the truth. In the Bible, truth signifies the spiritual reality of the Most High God and His firstborn Son, including Their purpose, Their will, and Their governance of our lives. If we love that reality, we will pursue it, we will protect it, and we will make certain that the second, Satanic flood will not sweep away our unique standing before God.

In a later chapter, [Jesus](#) poses a piercing question:

And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them? I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth? ([Luke 18:7-8](#))

We can answer Christ's question positively because He promises that the gates of the grave will not prevail against the church ([Matthew 16:18](#))—there will always be some who have *the* faith. As Head of His church, Jesus ensures that His purpose moves forward in every age. But His question in

Luke 18 is rhetorical, suggesting that He has a different objective than receiving a mere "Yes" or "No" answer. His actual question is, will He will find faith *in us*?

This excerpt from the booklet, "What is Faith?" by Herbert Armstrong speaks to this question:

Peter, Stephen, Philip, Paul—all common, humble, ordinary men of themselves—all had that power, the same identical power Jesus had, because they lived and walked close to God, and were filled with the Holy Spirit! And we seem to lack that power today, not because God denies us that power, but because we are so close to a modern, materialistic world—our minds so filled with the material interests of this life; our minds and our hearts are so far from God; we are so out of touch with Him, through lack of enough time spent in the study of His Word and lack of enough of the right kind of surrendered, submissive, and earnest and heartrending prayer—and consequently, because we are not filled with the Holy Spirit!

He wrote this paragraph on the antagonism between materialism and faith in 1972, long before the development of the technology surrounding us now. As technology increases, our minds become filled with the things, the works, and the thoughts of man, and the reality of God gets pushed away. Our minds naturally adapt to what we focus on, and so, despite having the gift of faith, we can damage or even destroy it through abuse or neglect. Our faith is an *active* belief in what God says, yet without being refreshed in what He says, our faith weakens.

Peter instructs in [I Peter 2:1-3](#):

Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby, if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.

The apostle is not at all suggesting that we return to spiritual immaturity. He is pointing out that, just as a baby becomes desperate when it goes too long without milk, so we must also recognize how much we need the Word of

God to live and grow spiritually. Once it sinks in that these are "the words of eternal life" ([John 6:68](#)), we can hardly wait for God to help us understand the next thing from His Word. When we have tasted that spiritual gift, we, too, will feel cranky when we go too long without spiritual food.

God requires us to [live by faith](#) ([II Corinthians 5:7](#)), and part of faith is living by His every Word. He gives servants to help us learn and understand it, but they cannot live it out for us. His undiluted Word must form the foundation of what we believe and practice so that when the Head of the church returns, He will find faith in us.

- David C. Grabbe

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## **From the Archives: Featured Sermon**

### **[Truth \(Part 1\)](#)**

by John W. Ritenbaugh

Nothing is more important than the truth or the seeking after the truth. If we are going to be searching for truth, we should not be seeking it in the philosophies of men (a syncretic system of beliefs having its source in Babylon, a combination of human reason aided by demonic spirits and astrological prognostication - the weak and beggarly elements referred to by the apostle Paul in Galatians 4:9) but rather in the fullness of truth found in Christ with God's revelation as the final arbiter. There must be a continuous searching for more truth with the seeking of the kingdom of God as the highest priority to the end that we grow to full spiritual maturity.

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## **From the Archives: Featured Article**

### **[Truth or Unity?](#)**

by Staff

We all want to be known as seekers of the truth. None of us would want to follow a lie! Yet oftentimes, searching for the truth brings us into conflict

with others' beliefs, causing separations between brethren in the church of God. How do we tell truth from lie?

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