



"Information is not knowledge."
—Albert Einstein

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Deception by Silence

Just today, *The New York Times* broke the story that CNN kowtowed to Saddam Hussein's regime, agreeing to ignore stories of brutality so that the "news" network could keep its Baghdad bureau open. Eason Jordan, CNN's chief news executive, justifies the network's decision by saying that it was made to protect its employees there, and now that the Iraqi regime has fallen, those buried stories can be told.

Here are a few paragraphs from his pathetic mea culpa:

Over the last dozen years I made 13 trips to Baghdad to lobby the government to keep CNN's Baghdad bureau open and to arrange interviews with Iraqi leaders. Each time I visited, I became more distressed by what I saw and heard—awful things that could not be reported because doing so would have jeopardized the lives of Iraqis, particularly those on our Baghdad staff. . . .

The secret police terrorized Iraqis working for international press services who were courageous enough to try to provide accurate

reporting. Some vanished, never to be heard from again. Others disappeared and then surfaced later with whispered tales of being hauled off and tortured in unimaginable ways. . . .

I felt awful having these stories bottled up inside me. Now that Saddam Hussein's regime is gone, I suspect we will hear many, many more gut-wrenching tales from Iraqis about the decades of torment. At last, these stories can be told freely.

This is a new low for the already least-trusted profession in America (along with politicians and used-car salesmen). Is there no integrity left in the fourth estate? It is no coincidence that a witness called to testify in a trial must swear or affirm "to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth," because telling the truth without telling the whole truth can be quite deceptive. This is what has happened at CNN.

Obviously, only [God](#) knows the whole truth about any matter, but a high-profile organization like CNN should be able to ferret out a complete story. However, it seems ideology and cutthroat business practices got in the way of its journalistic objectivity and mandate to report the truth. Because CNN opposed the Bush administration's foreign policy regarding Iraq, the network chose to ignore Hussein's reign of terror on his own citizens, effectively propping him up. Did anyone on CNN's staff object to this policy or lose any sleep over the countless number of lives ruined or snuffed out because Saddam remained in power?

Unfortunately, this is nothing new. This is just the latest case of slanted journalism masquerading as truthful reporting. Newspapers have historically backed one party over another, cheering or jeering them from their editorial pages. Just about everyone knows that most of the television network newsrooms have a liberal bias, while FOX News tilts somewhat to the right. Internet news portals also have their angles, and most are upfront about them. What makes CNN's admission so abhorrent is that it claims to be the most-trusted news organization in [the world](#), and its reach is so vast that it is forming world opinion 24-hours a day in living color. It is doing this by withholding the truth from its viewers.

The lesson to those of us who are obeying Jesus Christ's command to "watch therefore, and [pray always](#)" ([Luke 21:36](#)) is that we should not be so naïve as to trust any one source for news of the world. The oft-repeated admonition from teachers to "read widely" is certainly applicable to gathering news. Do not think that a person can get the whole truth from thirty minutes with Dan Rather, Tom Brokaw, or Peter Jennings—or from three hours with Rush Limbaugh, Sean Hannity, or Neal Boortz. One may agree with one of these more than the others, but the whole truth on the great matters of the day must be gathered from several sources of various stripes and assembled like a jigsaw puzzle. It takes time, but it is invaluable in training one's perspective.

Of course, the most-trusted source of all is God's Word, which, it claims, is "purified seven times" ([Psalm 12:6](#)). It, along with the Holy Spirit, "will guide [us] into all truth" ([John 16:13](#)). In comparison, CNN cannot even come close.

- Richard T. Ritenbaugh

From the Archives: Featured Sermon

[Christ Our Passover](#)

by John W. Ritenbaugh

In addition to being flawless, God's works have a multiplicity of purposes, while man's works have limited utility and many flaws. Like air, having multiple uses, God's Word also has many uses; any one scripture can be used in dozens of different applications. The closer one looks at the multifaceted aspects of Christ's offices (Creator, King, Redeemer, High Priest, Savior, etc.) the more we realize the preciousness of His life and the high cost of the sacrifice for our sins. The focus of our self-examination should not be self-centered or comparing ourselves with others, but on the awesome significance of His sacrifice.

From the Archives: Featured Article

Passover, Obligation, and Love

by John W. Ritenbaugh

In the Model Prayer, Jesus mentions the forgiveness of sin in terms of paying off debt. Anyone with an unpayable debt that was redeemed by another would feel an immense sense of gratitude and obligation to his benefactor. John Ritenbaugh discusses how Christ's redemption of us from our massive debt of sin obligates us to obey and serve Him by doing good in acts of love and service to others.

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