

# Buying the Truth

Prov. 23:23 - Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding.

Proverbs in general shows us that we should seek wisdom and understanding rather than silver and gold. Solomon is a prime example. He prayed for an understanding heart, rather than riches and victories. Prov. 8:10-19 - wisdom is crying in the streets to all who will hear. Ps. 119:72

## What does it mean to "buy the truth"?

1. When we buy, we put a higher value on the thing we are buying than what we are giving up. Therefore it means that we put a higher value on the things of God (truth, wisdom, mercy, justice, holiness, etc.), than we do on the things of this life (money, possessions, personal relationships, attainments, etc.).
2. It means we are "redeeming the time" - buying it back in the sense of using it for things that are of eternal consequence, not merely temporal. (Eph. 5:16)
3. It is to "lay up for ourselves treasures in heaven" rather than on earth (Mt. 6:20), and in general, to "seek first the kingdom of God" - Mt. 6.

## Can we "buy the truth" by buying and reading the Bible? by alms giving or philanthropy? by spending money on all the latest books and tapes at the Christian bookstore?

- All these may be evidence of a heart that is seeking after God, and buying the truth, but they can also be the fruit of an artificial heart - one that thinks it can please God merely in religious activity. Prov. 17:16 - Wherefore is there a price in the hand of a fool to get wisdom, seeing he hath no heart to it?
- It is much easier to buy the books than to read them and to take them to heart. In fact, many of them can really be substitutes for the truth.
- Are we seeking God and his kingdom through his Word, or are we merely seeking the latest "religious wise man" in print, or on TV or radio?
- Are we seeking God himself, or merely answers to our problems and life's dilemmas?
- Do we see the attainment of truth as a lifelong pursuit, or are we just looking for religious shortcuts ("I want wisdom, and I want it NOW!")

## God wants us (even commands us) to buy the truth.

Isa. 55:1-2

In other words,

1. God has something he wants us to have.
2. He doesn't want to just "lay it on us", but requires us to "buy" it. (We value something that we have sought after, saved up for, worked for, and purchased, more than something that is just dumped in our laps.)
3. If we object that it is too expensive, and we cannot afford it, he says no, he is not looking for money. His price is something that anyone can pay. It is the price of a willing and an obedient heart.
4. He is calling us away from the distractions of worldly pursuits, as things that do not really satisfy. Attainment of worldly goals (e.g., Olympic medal, NBA title, Super Bowl ring, million \$ by age 30, etc.) does not satisfy in the end. Why do we labor for the things of this life, that don't give any ultimate satisfaction? Things rot, and deteriorate. Men spend their whole lives attaining things, and it all gets dispersed in a public auction.

**God is calling us to a "holy dissatisfaction".**

Not the dissatisfaction of unfulfilled desires and dreams, or the emptiness of vain pursuits, but of our spiritual walk, of being "absent from the Lord". Jesus rebukes the Laodicean attitude of lukewarmness and religious satisfaction. Rev. 3:17-18

God wants us to be hungry and thirsty for Him - only then can he fill us with his righteousness.

**What does it mean to "sell the truth" (Prov. 23:23 – "Buy the truth, and sell it not" )?**

1. Selling means that we put a higher value on the things of this life (money, possessions, personal relationships, attainments, etc.) than we do on the things of God (truth, wisdom, mercy, justice, holiness, etc.).
2. It is to forsake the truth, in order to attain approval, avoid embarrassment, or to gain a temporal reward.

If a person is taught the truth (not just religious observance), but then becomes profane, profligate, and promiscuous, he has sold the truth for the pleasures of the flesh and social acceptance.

**Truth is something in which we all deal - but are we buying or selling?**