

Truth That Endures Forever

BIBLE STUDIES BY J.R. WALLER



A PUBLICATION OF

THE
Greater  Heritage
Sound Theology *Intellectual Rigor*

TRUTH THAT ENDURES FOREVER



Bible Studies by J.R. Waller

Truth That Endures Forever: Bible
Studies by J.R. Waller

by

J.R. Waller

Author of “Thoughts for Along the Journey” and “Something to
Write About”

A Publication of

THE
Greater  Heritage
Sound Theology *Intellectual Rigor*

Winter Springs, FL
2020

Truth That Endures Forever: Bible Studies by J.R. Waller
First Edition (November 2020)
© 2020 by Jeremy Waller

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced in any form without written permission from the publisher. Exceptions apply for brief quotations used for reviews and/or articles.

Unless otherwise noted, all scripture is taken from the Kings James Bible (KJV).

Published by
The Greater Heritage
1170 Tree Swallow Dr., Suite 309
Winter Springs, FL 32708
(407) 431-0587

Email: info@thegreaterheritage.com
Website: www.thegreaterheritage.com
Twitter: @TGH_Ministries

Cover Design: Raket Fairfull
Font(s): EB Garamond, MrsEavesPetiteCaps

ISBN (paperback): 978-1-953855-00-8
ISBN (PDF): 978-1-953855-01-5
ISBN (EPUB): 978-1-953855-02-2
ISBN (MOBI): 978-1-953855-03-9

Contents

Introduction	1
1 Acceptable to God, Approved of Men	3
2 Comings and Goings.....	12
3 The Comprehensiveness of God’s Care.....	16
4 Confidence in God’s Working in You	21
5 The Declaration of Righteousness	23
6 Giving up on Revenge.....	28
7 The God Who Restores	30
8 God’s Limitless Love	32
9 Greatest Expectations.....	37
10 In His Image	46
11 Is There Enough Time?	53
12 Matthew Follows Jesus.....	56
13 The Ministry of Reconciliation.....	63
14 More Than All the Books in the World.....	72
15 Now More Than Ever	81
16 Only Continue!	85
17 On the Geneva Bible	89
18 Person to Person Part I - Jethro and Moses	95
19 Person to Person Part II - Hannah and Eli.....	107
20 Preaching and Studying All of God’s Word	117
21 Pressing on Through Chaos	124
22 A Sound Mind in a Time of Crisis.....	129
23 Strength in Obscurity.....	137
24 Who Do You Say Jesus Is?	143
25 Why the Roman Empire Fell.....	150
26 Worlds Turned Upside Down.....	155
About The Greater Heritage	158

O praise the LORD, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people. For his merciful kindness is great toward us: and the truth of the LORD **endureth for ever**. Praise ye the LORD. (Psalm 117:1-2)

Introduction

One of the most comforting things about God is that He never changes. (Jas. 1:17) Jesus is the same “yesterday, and today, and forever.” (Heb. 13:8) What is more, not only do His nature and attributes remain the same, His words and truths are equally unchanging.

I cannot think of anything more reassuring than that. In a world where mankind runs rabid trying to devise his own answers to matters both lofty and small, we have the very Word of God at our fingertips. In it are all the answers to life.

At some point, this author needs to write a book with a single theme running through it (I’m working on that as we speak, so stay tuned). Yet, this collection of Bible studies, though each a bit different in scope and topic, share a single profound commonality. They each present us with truths from God’s Word that will never change.

You can pick up this book today, read it, glean from it and never fear that its words will become outdated, out of fashion or inapplicable to your life. Before you jump into the main text, I wanted to point out a few things.

For those who have read some of The Greater Heritage’s previously published works, you’ll notice that this volume is a little different.

First, it is better organized. We spent a lot of time and energy professionally typesetting and printing this volume, and it shows! We cannot thank the folks at E.O. Painter Printing Company (*Florida’s oldest continuously operating printing company*) enough.

Second, the studies (chapters) are listed alphabetically. Since each one

stands on its own, we thought this would be a nice approach.

I hope that the lessons herein are as great a blessing to you as they were to me when I wrote them. I find it a tremendous blessing and responsibility that God would have me communicate His everlasting truths to you through the written word.

It is not something I ever take lightly. In fact, I often question my worthiness for such a monumental task. However, I am just a vessel, God does the work and He is to receive the glory.

To conclude, I want to thank my Lord and savior Jesus Christ, my wonderful parents, friends and church community for helping me with this book. You know who you are, but you have no idea just how much you mean to this author.

Soli Deo gloria!

-J.R. Waller, September 2020

1 Acceptable to God, Approved of Men

Key point: Unity among believers is not an unattainable ideal but a reachable reality.

For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men. (Romans 14:17-18)

Christians have had differences of opinion since the early days of the church. Not long after Jesus ascended mankind began to re-interpret and misconstrue doctrines to satisfy agendas. In fact, Paul corrected practices and doctrines throughout many of his letters.

Our lesson today focuses not on differences over foundational doctrines but on preferential differences among Christians and how to maintain unity in the presence of them. These are also known as matters of conscience or personal conviction.

Life is gray, things such as Church structure, style of worship, and Christian behavior all have varying degrees of definition and application, not to mention differences across cultures.

Before we get into today's lesson though, we will look at differences concerning foundational doctrines. In so doing we will see how they are contrasted with differences of preference.

The primacy of doctrine

There are things Christians are not to compromise on. These are the core doctrines of the Bible. In fact, this is why at The Greater Heritage we have a Basic Statement of Faith on our site. Our statement outlines Christian doctrines that we (as well as most mainline denominations) deem to be not only vital but also essential and non-negotiable to

Biblical Christianity.

Denominations, churches and ministries adhere to similar statements of faith. Creeds, catechisms, mission statements, vision and value statements and statements of faith all set forth core doctrines that Christian ministries and churches will not compromise on.

If these doctrines were altered from what scripture clearly teaches, it would turn Christianity into something it is not. Most well-meaning mainline ministries and denominations share similar core beliefs and doctrines.

Core, foundational and essential doctrines are those that are clearly articulated in the Bible and central to the faith. For example, God created man, man is inherently sinful, Jesus is the only way to God, salvation is all of grace and not of works, scripture is inspired and final, etc.

These are some of the most common and essential Christian doctrines. Denominations differ in terms of secondary doctrines such as the timing of Jesus return, the use and gifts of the Holy Spirit, use and style of worship, and church structure for instance. Nevertheless, even though differences may exist on secondary doctrines they do not alter the core of what Christianity is.

Despite the differences those who hold to them are most usually sincere, well-meaning and true believers. Therefore, Christians need not break fellowship over differences of secondary importance.

Cults and the altering of core doctrines

However, we must respond very cautiously when a group or individual espouses clearly non-Biblical teachings related to core doctrines. There is a great problem when people alter core doctrines. This is especially true when done to fit someone's own interpretations or agenda. We are to "beware" such things:

Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. (Colossians 2:8)

Altering doctrine to fit man's own view creates nothing more than a lifeless and false religion. It is a religion devoid of Christ and His saving grace. Religions like these are after "the tradition of men" and the "rudiments of the world." Paul is quite clear that these belief systems are not "after Christ."

Many cults do this. A cult is any institution proclaiming to be Christian that also adds to or takes away from Biblical doctrines to the extent that they do not teach a Biblical Christianity and therefore adopt a false Christianity.

Examples are The Church of Scientology founded on L. Ron Hubbard, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormonism) which adheres to *The Book of Mormon* and Joseph Smith, and the Jehovah's Witnesses and its publication *The Watchtower*.

All of these add supplemental doctrines and revelations to the Bible. This is done through the views of enlightened founders and by use of extra-Biblical texts that claim to have scriptural authority.

Cults claim their founders, texts and teachings to be just as relevant as what the Bible says. They try many sorts of ways to make their man-made systems appear compatible with Christianity. Most even use Jesus as a doorway to their systems of "religion." Yet what they believe is not Biblical Christianity at all.

Biblical Christianity: A complete and final revelation

Cults claim to present a fully complete version of Christianity. However, as Christians we believe and are told directly in scripture that the Bible is God's once and for all complete and final revelation to man.

(Jude 3) We also are not to add to or take away from God's word. (Prov. 30:5-6)

The Bible and Christianity do not require any final doctrinal revelation for the Bible is complete for all things. (2 Tim. 3:16-17) Jesus and His Word are God's final revelation to man. (Heb. 1:1-2)

Cults and false teachers are devastating to God's work. They ensnare countless people and lead astray believers. Also, they deceive the unconverted and keep them from ever knowing the truth. In fact, the Bible calls these people deceivers. (2 Pet. 2:1, 2 Jn. 7-11)

Christians must always teach sound doctrine. They must also warn others of cults and teach people to test those whose claims appear to be Christian but that sound incorrect based on the clear teachings of scripture. (1 Jn. 4:1)

Cults are a terrible example of what happens when core doctrines are twisted and distorted. Thankfully, we can rest in God's clear and complete revelation in His divinely inspired Word.

Now we will transition from looking at differences on core doctrines to learning about matters of conscience and how they differ from foundational doctrines.

We will see how to get along and remain in fellowship with other Christians who, while sharing the same core beliefs, may have different convictions over secondary or tertiary matters or who have different personal preferences in regards to non-essentials.

Unity is possible

For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men. (Romans 14:17-18)

What Paul is talking about in these verses and in Romans 14 are

differences in believers' preferences and personal convictions. The early church was made up of many different people from all walks of life and backgrounds, just as it is today and as it will always be.

Gray areas, those not out-rightly condemned or plainly supported by the Bible, became areas of contention among believers and churches then just as now. For example, adhering to specific diets was a major concern for some believers but not others. (Rom. 14:6)

The challenge for Paul was setting about a way for believers to maintain unity in the presence of different personal preferences and convictions. Thankfully, unity among believers is not an unattainable ideal but a reachable reality. We can have true unity and fellowship with fellow Christians who hold to different personal convictions than us.

Freedom of conscience

The first thing we must realize is that every Christian resides somewhere on a spectrum of growth. The beginning of the spectrum is the moment of conversion (salvation) and the end is glorification in heaven.

We always lie somewhere between those two points during our life on earth. Generally we are to be moving ever closer to being more like Christ. That is the meaning and essence of sanctification. We will never be fully glorified until heaven but we must strive in that direction through obedience to God. This is our reasonable service. (Rom. 12:1-2)

No two brothers and sisters in Christ are at the same level of spiritual strength or stage of maturity. (Rom. 14:1-4) We all have different spiritual strengths and weaknesses. We are not to judge a fellow believer if they are weaker in an area than we are or if they hold to more stringent beliefs because of that. Nor are we to assume that they struggle with the same sins we do. What could be a very challenging sin for them might not be to us and vice versa.

Perhaps one Christian drinks wine occasionally and his or her

Christian friend does not due to their own convictions. In an instance like this it is the responsibility of the Christian for whom wine is not a problem to neither ridicule the other believer or be a hindrance to them.

Practically this means being aware and respectful of the other Christian's belief even if it means not consuming wine around them. In this case as with all others in matters of conscience both are believers and earnest followers of Jesus. Both are honoring God based on their own conscience regarding a topic that is scripturally open to both persons understanding.

Perhaps the other who appears weaker for abstaining from alcohol actually does so because it is a sin that easily besets them or perhaps because they used to be an alcoholic. Or it could be they simply want to please God and hold that it is an appropriate way to do so based on the guidance of the Holy Spirit in their life and their understanding of scripture. In all cases we are to respect their beliefs and remember that in this instance it is not a matter of doctrinal difference but of personal preference.

Knowing there are always underlying reasons for matters of conscience brings up another point. Unless we learn about and are open to the convictions of our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ we will never have true fellowship with them or understand why they believe what they do. In fact, learning about them promotes fellowship and might even change some of our attitudes and beliefs in the process and for the better.

It is important not to judge fellow Christians in regards to their matters of conscience. Rather we must give them the freedom to follow Jesus as He has led them to do for we have all been called to liberty. (Gal. 5:13) This does not mean we have freedom and license to sin, but it does mean we are free to serve God as best we know how through His enabling Holy Spirit and we are to let all believes do the same in regard to areas not clearly outlined or taught in scripture. (2 Cor. 3:17)

We must be accepting and open to all believers. We must give others

the freedom to be fully persuaded in their own minds to the convictions they hold dear when it comes to matters of conscience that are not related to core Biblical doctrines. (Rom. 14:5)

In addition, while we might be at different levels spiritually, we all share the same savior and are His servants and He our master. He is the one we are to ultimately answer to, not to each other, in matters of conscience. (Rom. 14:4)

Rejoice in results

In the midst of these differences we can rejoice in results. All well-meaning and God honoring Christians might not always see eye to eye on matters of conscience. Still, even in the midst of differences both agree on one thing: serving God.

The service of a loving heart that strives to please and honor God always bears the same glorious results. Notice in our main verses what Paul says: “For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men.” What are *these things*? Verse 17 tells us, they are “righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.” These are the glorious results of the devout Christian’s service.

They are the outward results of lives lived in service for God. We have to move our focus beyond mere customs and preferences. Our gaze must not be on the inner convictions of others and how they differ from ours. Instead we must place our attention on what those convictions represent (loyalty to God) and what they foster (righteousness, peace, and joy).

Christians all share in “righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.” No matter the conviction, all believers preferences are to be based on the common desire to serve God. (Rom. 14:7-8) Serving God and glorifying Him are common to all who follow Jesus.

Righteousness, peace, and joy flow from the Holy Spirit working in all believers. They are fruits of the spirit and are evidences of a Christian who is following and who desires to follow his or her savior. (Gal. 5:22-

23, Jn. 15:4, Eph. 2:10)

We all, when we are in step with Jesus, produce the same kinds of spiritual fruit. This is what we are to rejoice with others about. We can celebrate the harvest with them and in the process accept differences that still yield believers to Jesus. There is also a final way to foster unity among Christians with differences of personal conviction.

Walking together in the spirit in the kingdom of God

Paul also tells us something about the kingdom of God. He states that it is not “meat and drink” but “righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.”

Righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost are not just things we all share in common with our spiritual brothers and sisters in Christ. They are also fundamental attributes of God’s kingdom. Just as we share and can rejoice in the same fruits of Christian service so do we share the same citizenship in God’s kingdom. This citizenship is both in the now and the here to come. (Eph. 2:19)

Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.
(Matthew 6:10)

Jesus told us to pray that His kingdom will be visible on earth through his will being done here as in heaven. He does this by saving a lost and dying world. He uses His saints to help accomplish His will and bring about small evidences of His kingdom throughout this wicked world.

All the more reason for us to walk in the spirit together and in unity. (Gal. 5:16) Let us follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith we may edify one another.

This is our charge as God’s citizens and ambassadors to a lost a dying world. (2 Cor. 5:20)

The responsibility of an ambassador is to promote good will and to

reflect those traits that characterize the culture of his or her home. As Christians we live in a foreign land for our home is in God's kingdom and it is that which we seek first. (Heb. 13:14, Jn. 14:2, Matt. 6:33)

Righteousness, peace, and joy can be in the here and now and they are through our service to God and His kingdom on this earth. We only need rejoice in the results of our fellow Christians and share our fruits with them and with the world.

God gave his family a great variety of spiritual gifts (Eph. 4:11) so that we may all be united. (Eph. 4:13) His family is from all across the world and in Him there are no divisions of class or ethnicity, rather we all are one in Jesus. (Mk. 16:15, Gal. 3:26-28)

As it turns out, we have far more in common than we may have ever realized before. Let's embrace our fellow believers and work together in fellowship and service to build up God's kingdom as fellow lights amidst the darkness of a lost and dying world.

Conclusion

I have had fellowship with many believers over the years who had different preferences and personal convictions than me. Yet all have been passionate believers in Jesus. Each exhibited a life of righteousness through service to God.

They walked with an air of peace about them because they understood that unity with believers was possible. They exhibited great joy in their demeanor and lifestyle and lived a lifestyle characterized with earnest righteousness.

Yes, there are cults and people out there who intentionally misconstrue core Biblical doctrines. To these we must always beware and must contend for the truth.

However, in matters of personal conviction over non-essential doctrines among earnest Christians we must promote liberty, rejoice in results and remember that we are all fellow citizens of God's kingdom.

May we all work together for the gospel and walk in the spirit together. Then may we know how good and pleasant it really is to dwell together in unity. (Ps. 133:1)

About The Greater Heritage



Mission

The Greater Heritage equips Christians for an abundant life of service, personal spiritual growth and character development through the study of God's Word and the contributions of His people in the fields of art, literature and music throughout history.

What We Do

The Greater Heritage publishes written content in the forms of original articles, books and Bible studies. The organization also hosts a digital museum that promotes great works of art, music and literature by Christians throughout history and a weekly podcast featuring Bible studies and Christian book reviews.

Want to publish with us? Inquire at:

The Greater Heritage
1170 Tree Swallow Dr., Suite 309
Winter Springs, Florida 32708
info@thegreaterheritage.com
www.thegreaterheritage.com

God's truths don't just last forever, they endure forever!

One of the most comforting things about God is that He never changes. Jesus is the same “yesterday, and today, and forever.” What is more, not only do His nature and attributes remain the same, His words and truths are equally unchanging.

This collection of Bible studies, though each a bit different in scope and topic, share a single profound commonality. They each present readers with priceless, and timeless truths from God's Word.

Inside readers will be treated to a bountiful feast of everlasting truths from God's Word. With subjects ranging from salvation, to sanctification, to Christian maturity and more, every lesson is meant to provide readers with a greater understanding of essential Biblical truths and doctrines.

JEREMY ROBERT (“J.R.”) WALLER, MBA is the Founder of The Greater Heritage, and host of The Greater Heritage Podcast. He holds an MBA from Rollins College, Certificate in Christian Apologetics from Biola University and Bible Knowledge Certificate from The Master's Seminary. He is former James Madison Institute Leaders Fellow and University of Central Florida Center for Public and Nonprofit Management Fellow. He is the author of *Thoughts for Along the Journey* and *Something to Write About* and currently resides in Orlando, Florida.

