

# Holding On to Our First Love

## Subtitle

2 Thessalonians 2:9–12 (NKJV): 9 The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, 10 **and with all unrighteous deception** among those who perish, because they did not receive **the love of the truth, that they might be saved**. 11 And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie,

Unrighteousness increases by deception or the observance of unrighteousness leads to unrighteousness:

The truth increases by love or the attention to truth produces love for the truth and for those who are in agreement with it. Truth, like God, is unquantifiable in amount, but it does seem at times to increase—that's because our understanding is developing—we're coming out of darkness, darkness of ignorance.

We increase our love of something by investing more attention to it.

-12 that they all may be condemned **who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness**.

Unrighteousness is itself deception because it's a departure from God, from truth.

Philippians 4:8–9 (KJV 1900): 8 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. **9 Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.**

## The Way

Proverbs 16:17 (NKJV): 17 The highway of the upright is to depart from evil; He who keeps his way preserves his soul.

1 Chronicles 29:18–19 (NKJV): 18 O Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, our fathers, keep this forever in the intent of the thoughts of the heart of Your people, and fix their heart toward You. 19 And give my son Solomon a loyal heart to keep Your commandments and Your testimonies and Your statutes, to do all these things, and to build the temple for which I have made provision.”

Proverbs 4:23 (NKJV): 23 Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it spring the issues of life.

Proverbs 19:16 (NKJV): 16 He who keeps the commandment keeps his soul, But he who is careless of his ways will die.

Leviticus 19:18 (NKJV): 18 You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, **but you shall love your neighbor as yourself**: I am the Lord.

John 13:34 (NKJV): 34 A new commandment I give to you, that **you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.**

Matthew 22:36–40 (NKJV): 36 “Teacher, which is **the great commandment** in the law?” 37 Jesus said to him, “ **‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’** 38 *This is the first and*

great commandment. **39** And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ **40** On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”

Romans 1:28–32 (NKJV): 28 And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; 29 **being filled with all unrighteousness**, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers, 30 backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, 31 undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful; 32 who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, **not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.**

Notice the increase—unrighteousness = unjust deed, this is the environment that all these ungodly attributes are spawned in.

2 Timothy 3:1–7 (NKJV): 3 But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: 2 For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, 3 unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, **without self-control**, brutal, **despisers of good**, 4 traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, 5 having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away! 6 For of this sort are those who creep into households and make captives of gullible women loaded down with sins, led away by various lusts, 7 **always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.**

Titus 1:1–3 (NKJV): 1 Paul, a bondservant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, **according to the faith of God’s elect and the acknowledgment of the truth which accords with godliness**, 2 in hope of eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began, 3 but has in due time

manifested His word through preaching, which was committed to me according to the commandment of God our Savior;

1 John 3:18–23 (NKJV): 18 My little children, *let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth.* 19 And by this we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him. 20 For if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things. 21 Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God. 22 And whatever we ask we receive from Him, *because we keep His commandments* and do those things that are pleasing in His sight. 23 And this is His commandment: *that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another*, as He gave us commandment.

Titus 1:12–14 (NKJV): 12 One of them, a prophet of their own, said, “Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons.” 13 This testimony is true. Therefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith, 14 not giving heed to Jewish fables and commandments of men who turn from the truth.