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SERMON TITLE

What is Truth? Part 2

SERIES

DATE

5/4/2025

KEY SCRIPTURE

Various Scriptures

SYNOPSIS

Truth is eternally and critically important. The very purpose for Jesus coming into the world was to make the truth plain.

HIGHLIGHTS



☞ What is Truth? part 2

“Truth be told,” “As a matter of fact,” “Can I be honest with you,” “To tell the truth.” These are all common phrases we use from time to time. As I shared last week, we want and expect truth in many situations – from our loved ones, from the doctor, from road signs and more. But people often don’t really want the truth when it comes to matters of faith and religion. Instead, they think each person can have their own truth. But there really is no such thing as individual truth. There’s simply truth and not truth.

An engineer, a physicist, an economist and a publicist were being interviewed for a position as chief executive officer of a large Local Authority. The engineer was interviewed first, and was asked a long list of questions, ending with: "How much is two plus two?" The engineer excused himself, and made a series of measurements and calculations before returning to the boardroom and announcing, "Four."

The physicist was next interviewed, and was asked the same questions. Before answering the last question, he excused himself, made for the library, and did a great deal of research. After a consultation with the Standards Authority and many calculations, he also announced, "Four."

Then the interviewers called in the economist and asked the same question: "What does two plus two equal?" The economist said: "On average, four - give or take ten percent, but on average, four."

The publicist was interviewed last, and was asked the same questions. At the end of his interview, before answering the last question, he drew all the shades in the room, looked outside the door to see if anyone was there, checked the telephone for listening devices, and asked, "How much do you want it to be?"

Last week we looked at **John 18** where Pilate questioned Jesus and asked sarcastically, “What is truth?”

☞ Jesus had already stated that **the reason he came into the world was to testify to the truth**. That’s a big deal! His purpose for even being born was to testify – to give a report; to explain the truth. The truth is opposed to that which is fictitious or false. Truth is reality and fact. It is not like lies or wishes. It is like the walls of this building – you can run at this brick wall telling yourself it isn’t there, wishing with all your being that it isn’t there, but when you hit it, you will learn the lesson of truth.

Truth is eternally and critically important. So many things in this world are lies and misconceptions, but Jesus came to make the truth plain. It was his purpose, right along with destroying the devil’s work (1 John 3:8), and taking away our sins (1 John 3:5). Destroying the devil’s work and taking away our sins are extremely important, and so is truth!

☞ God is the Wellspring of Truth

Isaiah 45:18-19

18 For this is what the LORD says— he who created the heavens, he is God; he who fashioned and made the earth, he founded it; he did not create it to be empty, but formed it to be inhabited— he says: “I am the LORD, and there is no other. 19 I have not spoken in secret, from somewhere in a land of darkness; I have not said to Jacob’s descendants, ‘Seek me in vain.’ **I, the LORD, speak the truth; I declare what is right.**



1 Timothy 3:15 says that he is the pillar and foundation of truth, and **Titus 1:2** says that God does not lie. In fact, **Hebrews 6:18** explains that it is actually impossible for God to lie. We often think that nothing is impossible for God, but it is impossible for him to lie. He can't do it! That's a hard concept to grasp, because we all have lied at one time or another. But not God. He's always true and he does **☞ not change. God, the Father always tells the truth.**

Jesus says that he not only testifies to the truth, but that he is literally the truth, personified. In **John 14:6**, he said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life." You want truth? Come to Jesus because he **☞ is the way and the truth. Jesus always testifies to the truth.**

So, we've got God as the source of truth and Jesus as the living truth, now we also see that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth. In **John 16:13** we see that the Holy Spirit is a gift from Jesus who will only **☞ speak what he hears the Father saying, and who guides us into all truth. The Spirit always teaches the truth.**

In contrast to all this, the Devil is a liar. **John 8:44** tells us that there is no truth in him. Whereas Jesus is the truth, the Devil has no truth in him. What a contrast! The bible says he is a liar and has been from the beginning. He is the father of lies and when he speaks, he lies because that is his native language. **☞ The Devil always twists the truth.** The Devil is a master at telling you what you want to hear, but will never tell you what you need to hear. He is the antithesis to God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit.

God is the wellspring of truth. The Father always tells the truth; The Son always testifies to the truth; The Spirit always teaches the truth.

☞ God's Word is the Truth

Psalms 119:160 says that all God's words are true, and he made sure we had a record of his truth. He didn't set us down on this earth without an instruction manual, he didn't expect us to figure out how we were supposed to live by chance, and he isn't going to judge us based on a bunch of unwritten rules. Instead he gave us his Word, and his Word is the truth.

☞ John 17:17 explicitly says that God's word is truth, and it adds that **we are sanctified by the truth.** If we want to live according to God's will and become more and more like Jesus, we need the Word of God. We need to **read it, hear it, understand it, and apply it.**

Proverbs 30:5 says that "every word of God is flawless." **2 Timothy 3:16** adds that "all Scripture is God-breathed," meaning it was inspired by God. It goes on to say that it is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. If want the truth; if want to live in truth; if you want to be more like Jesus, who is the truth, you need the Word of God.

God has given us this book for a reason and his rules are for a reason, because he loves us and cares **☞ for us.** When he says a certain behavior is sin, he is trying to **protect us from the consequences of sin.** So, when God says the act of sexual intimacy is reserved for marriage, it isn't because he's a prude,



it's because he is protecting us. And when God says "do not hate" we need to understand he's protecting us from what hate will do to us, not just to the person we hate.

☞ The truth of God's Word also **gives us confidence in the days ahead**. **Psalm 19:8** says it brings joy to the heart and gives insight for living.

A Peanuts cartoon pictured Lucy and Linus looking out the window at a steady downpour of rain.

"Boy," said Lucy, "look at it rain. What if it floods the whole world?"

"It will never do that," Linus replied confidently. "In the ninth chapter of Genesis, God promised Noah that would never happen again, and the sign of the promise is the rainbow."

"You've taken a great load off my mind," said Lucy with a relieved smile.

"Sound theology," pontificated Linus, "has a way of doing that."

Like a compass which always points north, God's Word is truth and a reliable guide for life.

☞ **Truth is a Way of life**

The X-Files had a very quotable line which said, "the truth is out there." But you need to know, is the truth in you?

Over the years there has been a lot of division in the church. One reason is because some people have moved away from God's Word. They look at the Bible, and only accept the verses they like - the rest of it they reject, and then add their own thoughts to the Word of God. They want to change the Bible to fit in with their lifestyle, instead of changing their lifestyle, to fit in with what God's Word says.

But, here at OBC, we want to live in accordance with God's Word – the truth. It doesn't matter how I feel about it, or how you feel about it, God's Word is truth. If you're uncomfortable with certain verses in the Bible it's probably a sign that you need to read it and change your lifestyle to match it. Truth should be incorporated into all of your life, not just partially or once in a while, but as a way of life. So, how is that done?

As I mentioned last week, we need to be like the Bereans in **Acts 17:11**, who "examined the Scriptures ☞ every day to see if what Paul said was true." So, **scrutinize everything against the Word and submit yourself to it, instead of your personal preferences or feelings**. Your feelings will lie to you, but God's Word won't. **1 John 4:1** adds that we shouldn't just believe everything any preacher speaks, but we should "test the spirits to see whether they are from God."

☞ Then, **speak the truth from the heart** and don't lie. In fact, **Ephesians 4:25** it says we are supposed to completely put off falsehood, and in **Proverbs 8:7**, we should speak the truth and detest wickedness. Truth as a way of life means that it should ooze out of us, and anything that is not truth should be rejected. However, **Ephesians 4:15** clarifies that when we speak the truth, it should be done **in love**. So, we don't need to chase after liars and condemn them, and when we reject falsehood and lies, we ☞ don't have to be inconsiderate or inflammatory. But, we should always **celebrate truth**, because according to **1 Corinthians 13:6** love always rejoices with the truth.



Here's another great reason to embrace the truth...

☞ Truth will Withstand the test of time

Mark Twain famously said, "if you tell the truth, you don't have to remember anything." Lies require a lot of good memory to be sustained, but truth naturally comes to the surface. Another famous quote is that "the truth always comes out in the end." The complete quote goes on to say, "lies are just a temporary delay to the inevitable." Lies eventually fall apart, but truth withstands the test of time.

In **Luke 8:17** Jesus said, "there is nothing hidden that will not be disclosed, and nothing concealed that will not be known or brought out into the open." After all, God sees and knows everything, and he has ☞ the final say. **1 Corinthians 4:5** says, "**He will bring to light what is hidden** in darkness and will expose the motives of men's hearts." Then, **Romans 2:2** says that God's judgment is based on truth. ☞ And, finally, **Revelation 16:7** says, "Yes, Lord God Almighty, **true and just are your judgments.**"

God is the Wellspring of truth and all reality, and truth will Withstand the test of time. Furthermore, **the very purpose and reason for Jesus coming into the world is to testify to the truth. Therefore, truth is vitally important and has eternal consequences.** So, let's seek to understand and apply God's Word of truth, choosing truth as a Way of life by submitting to God's Word, speaking the truth in love, and celebrating truth in all circumstances. And, that's the truth!