

God Is Truth

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[0:00] This is actually our last lesson in John chapter 16 and we will be moving next time into John chapter 17!

We're doing a whole range of things. The inner Trinitarian prayer. We get to be the fly on the wall, so to speak, and listen to that prayer and we'll be studying it.

This evening though I want to talk about this and the topic is God is truth. Not going to get any arguments in here over that, are we?

Well really what do we mean when we say those words? It's easy to say them. God is truth. But I wonder if most people can really get their arms around that concept.

So let me put it to you this way. God is absolute truth and as such he is incapable of lying.

[1:21] Totally incapable. And that means that everything that he says is absolute truth. There is no mixture of error in anything he says.

And this core fact concerning the Almighty extends beyond what he has spoken verbally to encompass all that he has written or caused to be written.

What he has written is of course the 66 books that make up the Holy Bible. And all that is written there since it originated with God is absolute truth.

I've heard a number of pastors say they don't care for red letter Bibles. Because we sometimes think well that's more important than some passage in Romans or something that Peter said.

But it's all inspired by the Spirit of God. It's all God breathed. And it is absolute truth. Now modern man living in a post-modern world, whatever that is, I hear that all the time, rejects his fact.

[2:44] Rejects the fact there's even anything such as absolute truth. Rejects the fact there's anything like an absolute God. They believe that truth can be compartmentalized.

You have science. You have mathematics. You have history. You have human reason on one side of the paper. And the post-modernist in almost hushed tones of reverence speaks of those things. That's his religion. That's his religion. On the other side of the equation, you have religion, faith, morality, and things like that.

These things are spoken of as subjective and containing error. And they're certainly not in our day considered to be universally binding.

That modern man has rejected that thought. But let me suggest to you that man is very confused.

[3:56] Very confused. He has rejected the idea of creation. Accepted the idea of evolution.

And when you start at that point and work outward, The bottom line is it's impossible for man to know himself in any real sense.

And especially to know himself in relationship with the Creator God. Who we know is Jesus Christ. Modern man believes he is a product of random chance.

As one atheist philosopher put it, Our number came up in a Monte Carlo game. All chance. We are what we are by mere chance.

And a thousand or a million years from now, We will be something different by the same process of evolution and random chance.

[5:07] We may not even have humans. It will be something else. Because it will evolve. That's modern man. I'm always reminded about the great paleontologist in England who said, Studied fossils for his whole life and he's never seen one bit of evidence of a transitional fossil.

And he said, But I have to believe in it because the alternative is unacceptable. What's the alternative? Bow down before the living God who created the universe. Now all of this has created a tremendous dilemma for modern man.

Not knowing God means he cannot know himself. He doesn't even know where he came from.

Rejecting the concept of God places man at the center of the universe. Now that goes by a definition or a word it's called humanism.

That is defined as man being the center of all things and man being the final judge of himself. Or if you were Hitler or Stalin the final judge of yourself and everybody else with tragic results.

[6:32] In that system morality becomes what man says it is. And we saw this played out in Germany in the 1930s.

amazing book and video series by the late Dr. Francis Schaeffer of whatever happened to the human race. And he goes back into Germany and it was real interesting and Schaeffer did this years ago but he said man changed definitions.

We don't kill the unborn we have choice. We don't kill the elderly we have euthanasia these soft words.

All those came from Nazi Germany to describe the atrocities of the Jews and the gypsies and the other the mental patients and the other undesirables some 11 million people that were exterminated.

Having then rejected the concept of a creator God who by the way has introduced order and morality into the universe man having rejected that has no basis by which to behave ethically or morally.

[7:52] I remember when I was sworn in as your police chief the second time in 2007 in front of a city council and a room full of people and I had to add the word so help me God.

They wouldn't utter that. And there's even moves now in court to ban that and say and I pledge to tell the truth in the name of all humanity.

What does that mean? What does that mean? Maybe all humanity who live in North Korea whatever.

Such things as ethics and morality from those springs qualities such as freedom and dignity. Freedom and dignity.

You know the American experience we had titanic freedoms but it did not lead to chaos which in a fallen world that's what happens because when we were birthed as a nation we understood there was a law giver in heaven and therefore we could write laws that did not conflict with his and live in peace and harmony with those laws.

[9:12] Well that's all gone now. Having a degree in political science and history you know we actually when you look at it we have tried unsuccessfully to transplant the American experience on just about every continent probably with the exception of Antarctica we've certainly tried it in Africa we've tried it in Asia and it's always failed.

Why? We don't take the foundation of belief in a supreme being who wrote laws to govern our conduct. Well they would never we'd never take that you know well then they don't have a foundation then they're building the house on sand as the Lord warned in Matthew chapter 7 but without a foundation the things I'm talking about here are mere abstract concepts and they have no foundation certainly anywhere in the universe morality then becomes what those who are in control say it is.

The ones in control will determine what morality is. And this has had tragic consequences for the modern man. For instance in the area of abortion we have far surpassed Hitler and the Nazis. We're leaps and bounds beyond them in the level of carnage. And we have done this quite frankly with barely a whisper from moral beings and from the church.

The Catholics are the ones that picked up that crusade and a few others. But it's amazing how this has been inculcated into our very thought process.

[11:05] And you know it was easy for those who support abortion how do you get by with it? It's not human. It's tissue. It's just tissue. How amazing.

Well if it's just tissue what's it going to become if you don't kill it? Of course we know it's a human conception. It's a human mind of God from the foundation of the world. Now all of this has bred upon the culture of today a bleak world.

Guys we live in a world of hopelessness. We live in a world of despair. people want to have significance but they have no world view which creates the conditions of significance and meaning and purpose.

Now over and above this we have true Christianity. And that alone should speak volumes. We have to speak of it in terms of true Christianity. There's a false brand out there.

I've been talking about that on Wednesday night. There's false teachers but we have true Christianity. It is there that we find the great virtues of life.

[12 : 19] The three greatest virtues found repeatedly in the scriptures are those of love, faith, and hope. You're not going to hear that on late night TV or some of the talk shows or meet the press.

things. So let's focus on those a little bit. In John chapter 16 verse 25 Jesus speaking, these things I have spoken to you in figurative language.

An hour is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figurative language but will tell you plainly of the Father. In that day you will ask in my name and I do not say to you that I will request of the Father on your behalf for the Father himself loves you because you have loved me.

Wow, what a verse of scripture. Several verses. Often when the Lord spoke to his followers it was in figurative language and very difficult to understand.

In the Greek language I'm told it meant that he spoke in cryptic or veiled language. And we know for a fact that the Lord always spoke to the disciples in parables.

[13 : 39] And often the disciples failed to grasp the meaning of what the Lord was trying to say and he would explain it to them. Well that all changed of course when the Spirit of God came to live with and in the church.

Let me remind you the church is not brick and mortar, the church is people. The church is people. Now ironically they understood more about the Lord's earthly ministry after he departed than when he was on earth.

Because the Holy Spirit came and reminded them of all those things. That's how they could write down what was said. The Holy Spirit reminded them. They now had the Holy Spirit to illuminate truth to them.

And by the way that is the same Holy Spirit the church possesses today. That hasn't changed anything. Indwells us, never leaves us, never forsakes us. And Jesus promised that all of this would happen.

He told them it's better that I go away. Because I'm going to send another. And he did. He told them about a time that was coming when he would no longer speak to them in figurative language.

[14 : 55] The two most difficult things to understand before the Holy Spirit filled the church were the plan of redemption and the depth of God's love for his elect. Very difficult to understand.

But when the day of Pentecost came the veil that had literally been drawn over their eyes was lifted and they saw things in a new light. It was then they began to appreciate the fullness of God's love for his son and those for whom the son died.

It was also then that they became very bold. Remember Peter and John were arrested like on day 0.5 of the church or 1.5 at the most.

They started being arrested very early, persecuted very early. Jesus even spoke of the time when the children that he called to the Father would be able to go directly to the Father with their requests.

Now that was revolutionary. If you want to know how revolutionary that is, go read Leviticus chapter 16. One of my favorite chapters and that's when the high priest has to enter into the Holy Bowers once a year and goes through this 24 hour ceremony and I think seven worshipings and they have a rope tied on him because if he does it wrong, God's going to strike him dead and they can't go over and retrieve him.

[16 : 19] They've got to reel him out like a fish. I mean it is an amazing chapter of scripture. scripture. No one dared go directly to God.

They'd have been a guy who tried it. It didn't work out very well. They became dust from the fire of God that came out and consumed them. Not even the pagan religions taught that.

They didn't even approach their deities. Even in today the world's religions were probably the only I'm not going to say religion because Christianity is not a religion.

But we refer to God as Father. When you do that in the Arab world you're in deep trouble. They never refer to God as Father. That's too familiar. And other religions as well.

But because of Christ the children of God can go to the Father. We've been brought to the Father because of Jesus.

[17 : 21] Because of Jesus. He became sin for us so that we become the righteousness of God. The Scriptures teach us even that we can boldly enter into the very throne room where God sits in glory.

There to receive mercy and grace in our hour of need. And let me just ask this. I don't need anyone to answer. But when are we not needy?

Do you ever get to the point and say, I don't need anything? We'll never do that because He holds our very breath in His hand. We can't even take another breath or another heartbeat without the mercy and grace of God.

Now the great symbol of this was the tearing of the veil that separated the Holy of Holies from the people. No one could enter into the Holy of Holies except the high priest and he only entered in once per year on the day of atonement.

There to atone for the sins of the people. But toward the end of the crucifixion the veil was rent. And don't picture that veil like that.

[18:39] I don't know if it was Josephus or who. I forgot the great Jewish writer. But another one. But this thing was thick and tall and strong.

And I once read an engineer did some studies and said if you had been able to hook two locomotives up to this and start them opposite directions it wouldn't have torn. It would have stopped the wheels would have spun.

And God just goes from the top to the bottom. Who did it? God did it. Top to bottom. And now as the veil was rent at the crucifixion access to the very presence of God was granted.

Now I don't get my theology from the Passion of the Christ by Mel Gibson. He needs to watch it a little bit more himself. But I will say this and I don't know if it was accurate but the depiction of the veil being rent was very moving in that movie.

I don't know if you remember or not but it was the earthquake and it was torn and the high priest and the other priests were standing there and they're looking into the holy of holies and they realize who tore it.

[20:00] And in Mel Gibson's interpretation started to realize what have we done here? Who is this person we have killed? That was his interpretation.

But it was very dramatic to watch whether it happened or not. Now access was granted to those who believe because the veil has been written.

The veil was Jesus' flesh. And again this concept is foreign to the world. no one teaches direct access to God.

But we can enter in through the torn veil of Christ's flesh because of Him we have direct access to the Father. Now what is the motive of all this? It is God's great love for His people.

We will never plumb the depths of the Father's love for His children. I heard a man the other day, I don't remember who it was, but he's a good preacher, but he said in eternity we're going to pick nuggets of gold off the walls and floors of heaven as we learn more and deeper truth about the Lord.

[21:09] So that's going to go on for eternity. We can't plumb the depths. He has the deepest affection for His children, treating each child of His as if he or she were Jesus.

We're fond of saying just as if you never sinned, it's just as if you were Jesus, His own Son. So one of the great virtues of the Christian life that we learn from the triune God is this virtue of love.

It is a virtue of love. And we're also taught about the virtue of faith starting in the middle of verse 27. And have believed that I came from God, I came from the Father, and entered the world.

Now I'm leaving the world and going back to the Father. Then Jesus' disciples said, now you are speaking clearly and well, figures of speech. Now we can see that you know all things, took a little time for them to come to it, and that you do not even need to have anyone ask you questions.

This makes us believe that you came from God. have been with Him for three and a years. He's been raising the dead, making eyes out of dirt. And Jesus says, you believe at last.

[22:33] I love the way the Lord put that. And then He says, but a time is coming and has come. And that ought to give shivers if you're standing there.

But the time is coming and has come, and you're hanging, you know, what's next? When you will all be scattered. Each will flee to his own home.

You will leave me all alone, yet I am not alone, for my Father is with me. Wow, we could spend some time there, couldn't we?

We tend to think that people have little faith and trust. In fact, the opposite is true. Many of us go out after church on Sunday, and we go to a restaurant, and we trust that the food is good, that the hands that prepared it have been washed, the eating utensils are clean.

I go to all the restaurants where Jerry cleans them, because I know they're going to be done right. And we trust that the chairs are going to hold us up.

[23 : 46] And as we go through life, really that level of faith increases. We trust Christ, true Christians, we trust Christ because we believe that He came from the Father and returned to the Father, just as He said He would.

Now, Christ came into this world to accomplish redemption for those whom God was saving. as the angels told Mary and Joseph, He came to save His people from their sins.

And I got good news, guys, He's still doing that. Aren't you glad? He's still doing that. Now, we witnessed the baptism yesterday morning, and that bore testimony that Christ is still in the business of saving.

And I don't know how old Charles is, I guess he's in his 50s. You know, when Mike was here, we baptized two one morning, there was an 8-year-old and an 87-year-old.

And I asked Mike, he was in the water like you were yesterday, and I spoke to you, and I said, which one do you want in the water first? And he said, I don't know. And I said, what about both of them? He said, yeah.

[25 : 03] So he did a whole sermonette on there's room at the cross whether you're 8 or 87. And it worked out. Except we had to stop it, had to retrieve the hearing aid out of the elderly man.

We were about to destroy a \$2,500 hearing aid. But we saved it. Not here. Put the old man said, he's got in a hearing aid. The Lord came to serve the people of God.

He was fully God. He came to serve. That's unheard of by world's religions. Their gods don't serve anybody. They are served. Go to India.

Look at those people. No man could come up with that story. Even in fiction. Well, God came down from heaven to serve us. You're not going to read that.

Except in the Bible. No one would read that. He did not seek the Father to prevent the cross. In fact, he acknowledged that he had come into the world for that very purpose of dying on the cross to save lost mankind.

[26 : 12] Jesus knew the hearts of his disciples. He asked them if they now believed. The Greek word *pastuo* meaning have faith, trust. Just before the cross, Jesus acknowledges that the faith of the disciples was genuine though still immature.

I hope I can get out of immaturity someday. I really do. the Lord knew that the flock would be scattered. He knew they were going to run away.

He knew that Peter would deny him. He's going to deny him three times. But Jesus knew that he would not be alone because the Father was with him except for that period of time when he's bearing the sins of the world on the cross and he became gross to look upon.

By the Father. He became sin for us. He took upon himself our sins and through him we become the righteousness of God.

That's an amazing verse of scripture. And finally the Lord speaks of the virtue of hope. These things I have spoken to you so that in me you may have peace in the world you will have tribulation but take courage I have overcome the world.

[27 : 44] Boy that'll encourage you. That'll encourage you. When we understand God's great love for us and place our faith in him then we obtain the peace of hope.

Now the world is hostile to us. The world hates us. The world would like to see us dead. In this life we have relentless tribulation.

but Christ has overcome the world. Jesus made a comment on this. Let me read it to you.

It's a long one. Dr. Luke wrote long passages. And he said see to it that you're not misled for many will come in my name saying I am he and the time is near.

But do not go after them. When you hear of wars and disturbances do not be afraid. For these things must take place first but the end does not follow immediately.

[28 : 57] And he continued saying to them nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom and there will be a great earthquake or earthquakes and in various places plagues and famines there will be terrors and great signs from heaven.

But before all these things they will lay their hands on you and will persecute you delivering you to the synagogues and prisons bringing you before kings and governors for my name's sake.

It will lead to an opportunity for your testimony. You did that in China when you were basically arrested. so make up your minds not to prepare beforehand to defend yourselves for I will give you

utterance and wisdom which none of your opponents will be able to resist or refute but you will be betrayed even by parents brothers and relatives and friends and they will put some of you to death and you will be hated by all because of my name.

Not a hair on your head will perish but your endurance will gain your lives. But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies then recognize that her desolation is near and those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains and those who are in the midst of the city must leave and those who are in the country must not enter the city because these days are days of vengeance so that all things which are written will be fulfilled.

Woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days for there will be great distress upon the land and wrath to this people and they will fall by the edge of the sword and will be led captive into the nations and Jerusalem will be trampled underfoot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

[30:57] I want to read that to the church some morning Sunday morning and say okay Dan let's have a hymn of invitation who will come to Jesus and some will marked out by God before him!

even in the midst of all of this we are to be a people of love faith and hope we don't cower in fear but we are to boldly proclaim the truth there is salvation in no other name and we're to take that message to the world the Lord's last words to his followers were ones of love faith and hope the cross is really just a few hours away until the end he reminded them of the foundation of the Christian belief system and having reminded them of these great virtues he next turns to the father in prayer and the greatest prayer ever recorded in the word of God probably the greatest prayer ever prayed and he's going to allow us to be the fly on the wall and listen to all of it as he communicates to his father and even talks about the men in this classroom it's an amazing prayer and that's where we pick it up next time