

God is... Truth
Jeremiah 10:11-13, Isaiah 28:23-29

Brothers and sisters, every once in a while, there's a line in a movie that eventually becomes more famous than the movie itself – do you know what I'm talking about? Maybe you've heard some of these;

"Frankly my dear I don't give a damm!" from Gone With the Wind... Or *"I don't think we're in Kansas anymore Toto..."* from the Wizard of Oz or *"Show me the Money!"* from Jerry Maguire. Or this one, from another Tom Cruise movie, A Few Good Men; *"You want the Truth! You can't Handle the Truth!!"* Have you heard that line?? Has someone ever tried to use it on you??

It implies that what you might know about a situation, or circumstances, or someone's motives is incomplete or incorrect – but is best for you to just stay that way because if you really knew the truth, it would shake you to the core and rock your foundations.

Sort of like how people in the Matrix movie react when they learn that their reality is nothing but a computer program being pumped into their minds, they are trapped in this Matrix where reality is not real – and in the real reality they are comatose captives being used as living batteries to power artificially intelligent machines who run the world.

It's actually a more modern take on the ancient teachings of the Greek philosopher Plato who proposed that what we know and see around us as reality is only just a material manifestation of the true spiritual reality – the world of ideal forms.

And How we experience reality is like being stuck in a cave, only being able to look at the back wall of the cave and seeing shadows cast upon it which indicate what is going on outside the cave. Of course, shadows are distorted representations of what casts them and Plato's whole point is that what we think is reality, is actually a distorted representation of the true spiritual reality.

If we are to know the truth, the true spiritual reality, Plato would say that we must learn not to trust our physical senses which can be deceived by material reality, but instead access the spiritual world of the forms through rational contemplation in our minds.

So as I mentioned, if we were to discover that everything we thought was real in reality - is not really real... but only a distorted reflection of the actual truth and we really don't know what is real anymore, that would shake us to our core and rock our foundations.

Because we can't really function as human beings if we don't have some level of certainty and confidence on which to base our interaction with the world around us and know if it real and true and not part of some elaborate illusion or deception.

Every single person needs a foundation of truth to stand upon and proceed from in order to live in reality – even if it is as contradictory a statement as *“the truth that there is no ultimate truth.”*

So, what we are going to learn about God this morning brothers and sisters, is exceedingly practical and important as a foundation for our daily lives, because there is no better rock to stand upon and be confident in than God, because the truth is... God is true.

Now when we say that God is true... that He is truth... we mean this in the most comprehensive sense possible.

First, as God is self-existent and eternal and all existence that we can know flows out of His eternal decision and commitment to create, we can thus be confident that reality is based upon something or rather someone who is reliable and solid and true that therefore this reality we live in is not a deception or an illusion, but it real and it is true and knowable because God is true. As the scripture says in Gen 1:31 *“God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.”*

Secondly, as we have been learning over the past weeks – there is nothing greater than God or outside of God by which He knows what He knows, from which He receives His power,

or by which we can determine if He is good – and that is still the same when it comes to Truth.

When we say God is truth, we mean that God in His very eternal self-existent being provides the basis for which anything can be considered to be true. He is in Himself the very definition of what it means to be True.

Some theologians have described God being true as God fully answering to the idea of the Godhead – but to my reading of that I find it places the “idea” of what God should be higher than God and outside of God and then requires God to meet it and thus be true.

So, I prefer to describe God as being true, and as the definition of truth within Himself, in the same way as we explained last week that God is good, when we said God is 100% fully in line with Who He reveals Himself to be as God. That of all the possibilities and potentials that God knows within His infinite eternal knowledge of Himself, there is never a contradiction or flaw or imperfection in His character or His actions. Thus God

is fully consistent, He is accurate, He is exactly who He is, He knows Himself and everything else, fully and completely and comprehensive, there is no deception or illusion in God, He is true.

1 John 1:5 *“God is light; in him there is no darkness at all”* and James 1:17 says that *“the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.”* He is Truth in Himself. Jesus says of Himself as God *“I am the way, The truth, and the life”* John 14:16.

Thirdly God is true in that He is the true God. There may be many other spiritual beings in this reality, there may be many other very powerful, magnificent and wise spiritual beings that exist within this creation, and they may have revealed themselves to human beings at some point and time and thus come to be worshiped and known as gods, but... the is only one true God.

There can only be one God who is self-existent and infinite and external, beyond whom there is nothing or no one else.

Any other spiritual being, that we may come across or who may reveal themselves to us, no matter how powerful or awesome or wise is just a part of the creation and cannot even be considered in the same category as the True God.

In Rev 22:9 the Apostle John has an encounter with such a spiritual being - an amazing angel, and he says *“when I had heard and seen [these visions] , I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who had been showing them to me. But he said to me, “Don’t do that! I am a fellow servant with you and with your fellow prophets and with all who keep the words of this scroll. Worship God!”* Only the true God, the uncreated God is worthy of worship.

And God Himself says through the prophet Jeramiah in 10:10-11 *“But Yahweh is the true God; he is the living God, the eternal King....These gods, who did not make the heavens and the earth, will perish from the earth and from under the heavens.”* Only the true God is the creator God, any other “god” is just a spiritual being, a creature – like us.

Only God is true - so there can only be one **true** God; Self-existing, All-knowing, All-powerful, All-good, Infinite and Eternal, the Creator of All, the Living God, the one true God. God is True.

So, let’s recap what we covered so far... when we say God is true; this means the reality which He created is true, it means that He is the very definition of truth within Himself, and it means He is the only God who is actually God.

Now let’s take a look at some of the practical implications of this for our everyday life.

First, let me make reference to another famous saying *“All truth is God’s truth.”* Now a lot of people misuse this statement to mean that there are many paths which lead to God, or that all religions are basically the same – but that’s not what it means, that’s not true...

All truth is God’s truth is a short pithy way of stating that God has created ALL of reality and that it is real and true and that

we are also created with the capacity to know it is real and true, so what we are able to know as truth... comes from God. Do you see how that works??

This is what is implied by the scriptures in Isaiah 28:26-29 as it talks about a farmer knowing the truth about how to farm correctly. It says *“God instructs him and teaches him the right way. Caraway is not threshed with a sledge, nor is the wheel of a cart rolled over cumin... The wheels of a threshing cart may be rolled over it, but one does not use horses to grind grain. All this also comes from the Lord Almighty... whose plan is wonderful, whose wisdom is magnificent.”*

All truth is God’s truth and when we are able learn, discover, know and understand and respond to the way in which God has designed His creation to work, as **His** truth – it is a beautiful thing brothers and sisters and it contributes to our appreciation and adoration and admiration and worship of God as Creator.

Now, you know I’m going to pause at this point to remind us that this is why we switch up our regular Sunday morning worship service for one month during the year and specifically dig into all the various ways God designed the different parts of His creation to work on the TALK Show with the special guests that we invite to be a part of the Show.

In fact if you think about it – this Creational truth from God is what we spend the majority of our time engaging with in our day to day lives isn’t it? If you are going to do your job properly – you need to know this truth... if you are going to have successful relationships, friendships, marriages, be a good parent, boss, employee, leader and so on – you need to understand this truth...

Now, it can be a struggle learning about God’s creational truth in the TALK Show format in lieu of a regular worship service. We might want to say; *“can’t we leave learning about this creational truth for our day to day lives in school, or on the job training, or from life experience?? Why do we have to bring that into our Sunday morning worship??”*

Well... because ALL truth is God's truth, and that means creational truth is something to be celebrated in Church on a Sunday morning as much as His revealed truth in scripture. But... more importantly, there are very few schools, and no workplaces that I'm aware of, where we are taught that the truth we are learning... is God's truth. AND where we see the relationship between God's creational truth and His revealed truth in scripture explained AND demonstrated for us.

If we use more theological terms for this - it is all about teaching us how to understand general revelation – creational truth, through the use of special revelation – scriptural truth.

So if you hear us talk about putting on our 4B Glasses, that's just a helpful analogy to explain that we look at, study and understand God's creational truth most correctly when we view it through the lens of the scripture – by specifically applying what God reveals about Creation, the Fall, Redemption and the New Creation, the 4 major themes in the bible, 4B, applying that to what we are looking at in our daily lives, in the world around us.

And this is important brothers and sisters – because God's revealed truth in scripture is critical to properly apprehending God's creational truth.

In fact – without the revealed truth from scripture about creation how would we even know to call the truth we learn from experience or through study and scientific inquiry “creational” truth?? We would just call it “knowledge” or “the science” right?

Here's a quick little test; do you find yourself talking about “the Laws of Nature?” If you do then you're not apprehending creational truth through God's revealed truth. If you didn't know about God's might and power and rule over His creation you could be forgiven for thinking nature was bound unto itself to work a certain way, the law of gravity for example.

But if you know that scripture reveals the Word of God spoke everything into existence, and continues to uphold reality, then its quite obvious that nature is not a law unto itself - what we are witnessing is the power of the Word at work

continuously and consistently calling forth a response from nature and nature obeying the Word of God. Do you see the difference?

We are not learning to shape our thinking and understanding of God's truth like this anywhere else – and to be honest brothers and sisters, without God's revealed truth in scripture... the truth that we discover in the creation is not the complete truth. To quote another famous saying *"its not the whole truth and nothing but the truth"*

So the Talk Show is important brothers and sisters, its when we take the glasses that we have spent 11 months out of the year examining, learning about all the details of the lenses and how it brings things into focus, admiring the frame and the design of these glasses, holding them in our hands enjoying how light and well made they are – and we finally put them on and use them for their intended purpose, to fully apprehend how ALL truth is actually God's truth – because God is true.

Now the other practical application of this attribute of God for our daily lives, has to do with the authority that the scriptures have in our lives as God's revealed truth. There's another famous saying – at least for bible believing Presbyterians anyways – that *"scripture is the only rule for faith and life."*

Now we've already dealt with how scripture helps us understand God's truth in creation, so we get how it's the only rule for life - so let's focus on what God's truth reveals to us about matters of faith. As we do I pray that the growing reverence and awe we have for God will extend to His amazing truth in His scriptures as well.

So how do we know that the scriptures reveal God's truth and by implication reveal God to us? Who says so and on what authority?

Do we believe the Bible as we have it today contains God's truth because at some point in the life of the early church it floated down out of heaven, like the Holy Spirit at Pentecost – printed, bound and ready for distribution in the Kings' English?

No, Brothers and sisters, we believe that the scriptures come from God and contain His truth because this is what the scriptures claim. In 2 Timothy 3:16 it says “*all scripture is God-breathed*” which means its source is from God, and since God is truth – scripture is thus truth also.

Now this this claim of scripture to be God-breathed doesn’t depend - in fact it can’t depend - on external evidence or proof because, as we have been learning- there is nothing outside of God which is adequate enough to stand as a reference for God.

When we look for assurance or proof that something is true we are looking for something with greater reliability or authority to back up a claim which is dubious or just needs proof.

Will I be a good employee? I’ll certainly say I will be – but my assurance is suspect because I’m looking after my own self-interests, so don’t take my word – ask my references, because their word will carry more weight than mine – especially if

they are established and well-respected people in their field and or community.

But who or what is greater than God? In order to vouch that what God has said or done to reveal himself is true and reliable and trustworthy? Nothing...

So, just as we said that God is the very definition of truth within Himself, God’s revelation in scripture is also a self-authenticating revelation brought about by the Holy Spirit. It is the internal witness of the scriptures – it’s claim to be God-breathed which establishes its divine authority – and must be accepted by faith, and responded to in obedience.

However having said that, there are external factors which do bear witness to the fact that the scriptures come from God; just as we learned last week that we can determine the goodness of God by how much glory He will bring to Himself.

So what external factors can be considered as testimony to the truth and authority of God’s truth in scripture? Well,

consider that the bible as we have it today was formed over a time period of fifteen centuries where the major civilizations of our history rose and fell and their cultures changed and evolved and it was written in three different languages.

And there were forty different authors who contributed to the writings in the bible over that time period, coming from a diverse variety of backgrounds, contexts, occupations and levels of education – there were kings, fishermen, a tax collector, farmers, shepherds, and prophets – even a doctor.

And these authors wrote in different periods in world history and under a variety of different personal circumstances, and from a variety of locations across the ancient world – North Africa, the Middle East, Asia Minor – even southern Europe...

And yet in spite of all this diversity and the passage of time there is a coherent story-line, a unity of theme, and consistency of intention and fulfilment and purpose that weaves all of these sixty six books together!

That is a remarkable occurrence, and it ought to be enough of a witness to consider the Bible's own claim that it comes from God, reveals His truth and carries His authority for our lives.

We might also consider the external factor of the effectiveness of the bible. Consider how many millions of people across the ages have had God reveal Himself to them through the scriptures?!

The truth is through reading and studying the scriptures millions of people have come to know that humanity was created in God's own image, but that through Adam and Eve's rebellion they share in their original sin and perpetrate their own sin and offend their Creator God.

Consider how this revelation has prompted millions of people to ask the question "*what do I do?*" and then receive the answer from scripture "*Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household.*" (Acts 16:31)

Consider that whenever there is any concerted effort to try to stop the spread of the gospel and persecute the Christian faith – the focus is on taking away access to the scriptures...

Brothers and sisters, the apparent truth of these external factors is enough of a witness that we ought to accept the self-authenticating testimony of the scriptures that they are from God, and contain His truth, and carry His authority for our lives and for our faith.

God is true and so is His Word.

God is true and All truth is His truth.

God is true and His creation is real and we can truly know it.

This is the truth of God and the truth about God because only God Himself is the truth. The only true God – may He alone have ALL glory. Amen.