

"What is truth?" (Slide 1)

John 18

Reading: John 1:14-18

John 18:37-38 (Slide 2)

37 Therefore Pilate said to Him, "So You are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say correctly that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice." 38 Pilate said to Him, "What is truth?"

Truth is something that all of us look for and desire. Sometimes we simply don't want to hear the *"Truth!"* We often know that the *"Truth Hurts!"*

Truth convicts, corrects, and directs, and exists even if we don't acknowledge it! Sometimes, Truth offends!!

The Greek word for truth has basically the same meaning in English: *unconcealed*, that is; *transparent, sincerity, factuality*, and *reality* as we will soon see.

When it comes to Jesus, His entire identity is Truth and not just Truth but "absolute" Truth.

Absolute truth exists whether we believe or not. For example "1" is greater than "zero."

So many people advocate that absolute truth cannot exist, yet, that very statement proves just the opposite to be true.

Nevertheless, whether we believe real truth to be truth or not, reality dictates its existence. *"Male and Female"* for example.

Today, when a liberal mind is given over to disregarding absolute truth the reality of physical truth can be skewed which allows for accepting alternatives.

Genesis 1:27 (Slide 3)

God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

The fact that so many don't believe in God, in Heaven and Hell doesn't cause them to cease to exist. Even some who profess to be Christians believe that only Heaven exists.

That God is Love and therefore, could not send one to eternity in "Hell!"

Matthew 13:36-43 (Slide 4)

36 Then He left the crowds and went into the house. And His disciples came to Him and said, "Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field." 37 And He said, "The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man, 38 and the field (Slide 5) is the world; and as for the good seed, these are the sons of the kingdom; and the tares are the sons of the evil one; 39 and the enemy who sowed them is the devil, and the harvest is the end of the age; and the reapers are angels. (Slide 6) 40 So just as the tares are gathered up and burned with fire, so shall it be at the end of the age. 41 The Son of Man will send forth His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all stumbling blocks, and those (Slide 7) who commit lawlessness, 42 and will throw them into the furnace of fire; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

These are the lost souls of man!! I really don't know how this could be more plain!!

Many think they have absolute control over what's acceptable for truth.

The Jewish Nation, sometimes by their leaders and sometimes by their own hand, were denied the truth or denied it themselves.

Matthew 23:13 (Slide 8)

“But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for you neither go in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in.”

This truth is a caution for all who would take it upon themselves to teach the truth.

James 3:1 (Slide 9)

Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such we will incur a stricter judgment.

Many didn't recognize the truth because it was for them hard to understand:

John 6:53-60, 66 (Slide 10)

53 Then Jesus said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. 54 Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. 55 For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. 56 He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. 57 As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me. 58 This is the bread which came down from heaven—not as your fathers ate the manna, and are dead. He who eats this bread will live forever.”

59 These things He said in the synagogue as He taught in Capernaum.

60 Therefore many of His disciples, when they heard this, said, “This is a hard saying; who can understand it?”

66 From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more.

Understandably, there are many things that we clearly don't understand in scripture, but that shouldn't cause us to abandon what we do know as “truth” which is exactly what these disciples did.

Truth is consistent. It does not vary.

John 8:12-14, 23-24 (Slide 11)

12 Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."

13 The Pharisees therefore said to Him, "You bear witness of Yourself; Your witness is not true."

(Slide 12) ***14 Jesus answered and said to them, "Even if I bear witness of Myself, My witness is true, for I know where I came from and where I am going; but you do not know where I come from and where I am going."***

Speaking again to the Jews:

(Slide 13) ***23 And He said to them, "You are from beneath; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world. 24 Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins."***

Absolute truth, one must believe!!

John 14:6 (Slide 14)

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."

"No alternative ways to God and Eternity"

John 3:3 (Slide 15)

Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Mark 16:15-16 (Slide 16)

15 And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. 16 He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.

These absolute truths are universal. They apply to all of mankind!

These truths do not allow for any variance. For example, *some say that the path set forth by Christianity is just one way to God. Some believe there are other ways to God and eternity.*

It begs one to consider that if it is absolutely true that through Christ is the only way to God, *and we just read a moment ago that to be the case*, what other truths that are dictated by God through His inspired word are absolutes?

Stands to reason then that it is the entirety of His Word!

A combination of two or more truths equals a pattern and indicates a direction.

For example; God is said to be the Father of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

It is also said about God that He is not the God of the dead.

Luke 20:27-38 (Slide 17)

27 Then some of the Sadducees, who deny that there is a resurrection, came to Him and asked Him, 28 saying: "Teacher, Moses wrote to us that if a man's brother dies, having a wife, and he dies without children, his brother (Slide 18) should take his wife and raise up offspring for his brother. 29 Now there were seven brothers. And the first took a wife, and died without children. 30 And the second took her as wife, and he died childless. 31 Then the third took her, and in like manner the seven also; and they left no children, and died. (Slide 19) 32 Last of all the woman died also. 33 Therefore, in the resurrection, whose wife does she become? For all seven had her as wife."

34 Jesus answered and said to them, “The sons of this age marry and are given in marriage. (Slide 20) 35 But those who are counted worthy to attain that age, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage; 36 nor can they die anymore, for they are equal to the angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection. (Slide 21) 37 But even Moses showed in the burning bush passage that the dead are raised, when he called the Lord ‘the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.’ 38 For He is not the God of the dead but of the living, for all live to Him.”

This truth, being absolute, makes it clear that *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob* are not dead!

The combination of what we know then about God, about those who formerly were on the earth is that they physically died but are “*Spiritually*” alive because of God and that they will be resurrected.

The unfortunate status for many is that they will miss the resurrection unto Life Eternal!

Paul will commend those of the church in Thessalonica for their faith, their steadfastness, their actual testimony of the truth by the way they live despite the persecutions they face.

Their testimony of truth is the very example of which those who persecuted them rejected. He assures them since God is just that He will repay that persecution by sentencing those violators to eternal destruction!! And He includes those that never acknowledge God!! Many will sadly be lost.....

2 Thessalonians 2:3-10 (Slide 22)

3 We ought always to give thanks to God for you, brethren, as is only fitting, because your faith is greatly enlarged, and the love of each one of you toward one another grows ever greater; 4 therefore, we ourselves speak proudly of you among the churches of God for your perseverance and faith in the midst of all your persecutions and afflictions which you endure. 5 This is a plain indication of God’s righteous judgment so that you will be

considered worthy of the kingdom of God, for which indeed you are suffering. 6 For after all it is only just for God to repay with affliction those who afflict you, 7 and to give relief to you who are afflicted and to us as well when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, 8 dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. 9 These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, 10 when He comes to be glorified in His saints on that day, and to be marveled at among all who have believed—for our testimony to you was believed.

The Bible is cumulative of all truths.

Psalm 119:160 (Slide 23)

The sum of Your word is truth,

And every one of Your righteous ordinances is everlasting.

Some will say that all one needs to do to be saved is found in:

Romans 10:8-9 (Slide 24)

8 But what does it say? "THE WORD IS NEAR YOU, IN YOUR MOUTH AND IN YOUR HEART"—that is, the word of faith which we are preaching, 9 that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved;

Since God's truth is a cumulative of truths, that is; a sum, we must consider the following:

Why then would Jesus say;

Therefore everyone who confesses Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven.

Why then would Peter say;

“Repent and be baptized for the remission of sins.”

Why would Jesus say;

He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.

The cumulative truths:

1 Peter 3:21 (Slide 25)

Corresponding to that, baptism now saves you—not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience—through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,

Yet, the absolute truth has been denied and alternatives to reality have come to exist in the mind of men. If this is the case for this simple reality, what other absolutes are denied now and will be in the future.

I am convinced that the demotion of absolute truth has greatly influenced the decline of church attendance in the US and somewhat across the globe. I can be a Christian on my own!!

But what do we do with:

Hebrews 10:25 (Slide 26)

not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.

The older we get the nearer that day!!!

Listen to the opening remarks of Paul's letter to:

Titus 1:1-3 (Slide 27)

1 Paul, a bond-servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the faith of those chosen of God and the knowledge of the truth which is according to godliness, 2 in the hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, (Slide 28)

promised long ages ago, 3 but at the proper time manifested, even His word, in the proclamation with which I was entrusted according to the commandment of God our Savior"

Remember this for our next lesson: Someone with the ***"knowledge of the truth"*** is someone we should be listening to!

Yet, today, truth has taken many forms and given new definitions. But absolute truth does not change even when men don't believe in it. $1 + 1 = 2$ despite the fact that new math has derived a prolonged method of achieving the correct answer and sometimes the incorrect answer. "3?!!"

The identity of Jesus as absolute truth is paramount to salvation. The Psalmist writes:

Psalm 96:11-13 (Slide 29)

11 Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice;

Let the sea roar, and all it contains;

12 Let the field exult, and all that is in it.

Then all the trees of the forest will sing for joy

(Slide 30) ***13 Before the LORD, for He is coming,***

For He is coming to judge the earth.

He will judge the world in righteousness

And the peoples in His faithfulness.

Faithfulness is often translated as Truth!!

Absolute truth, abiding in truth, is exclusive and not inclusive.

In our next lesson, we will look at, briefly perhaps, differing views of “*What is truth?*” and the guiding statement of Apostle Paul that helps us determine, in some uncertainties, “Truth.” Lord willing.

Invitation

The truth is unless one has believed, confessed the name of Jesus, repented and been baptized we are not saved.

The truth is if we have been baptized but not lived up to the truth, we are also at risk of judgment.

The truth is that if you have a need, the Brotherhood is ready to help in whatever way we can.

Please let us know this day and respond to the invitation of Jesus Himself.....

Reading:

John 1:14-18

14 And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth. 15 John testified about Him and cried out, saying, “This was He of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me has a higher rank than I, for He existed before me.’” 16 For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace. 17 For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ. 18 No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him.

Please visit our website for the full audio of this study:

Shelbyvillechurch.com

Shelbyville Church of Christ