

The Truth About the Truth

Good morning church! It is good to be with you and I'm excited for what God has for us.

My name is Robbie Isley, I serve as the High School Pastor.

If you're joining us online, welcome. I'm glad you're with us this morning.

I need to say thank you to Pastor Rob for giving me the opportunity to study God's Word with you this morning. I truly do consider this an honor.

So, let's do that, shall we? Open your Bible to 2 Timothy.

We are going to begin our time in chapter 3, starting in 14. I will meet you there in just a second.

As you can see, this morning we are talking about the Truth.

Whether you want to admit it or not, the truth matters. It matters for you, and it matters what you do with it. This morning we are going to shine some light on the Truth and explore exactly what the truth about the truth is.

What I've learned over the past few years is how extensive the attack on truth really is.

The attack manifests itself through a concept called worldview which is simply the lens at which you view, or interpret, the experiences you go through.

George Barna, and the Cultural Research Center at Arizona Christian University narrowed the worldview map down to 7 worldviews.

This graphic gives you a good idea of those 7 worldviews, Marxism, Secular Humanism, Nihilism, Eastern Mysticism, Moralistic Therapeutic Deism, Postmodernism, and Biblical Theism (or a Biblical Worldview). **[slide]**

Each of these worldviews has a different explanation for what is going on and the fascinating thing is that their research has shown that our world doesn't really like any of them.

What is happening in our world is increasingly becoming Syncretistic.

Meaning, we are taking bits and pieces from multiple different worldviews that suits our fancy. Pieces that line up with what we want, regardless of contradiction, and regardless of the truth.

Barna found that that 88% of the people they polled held to this syncretistic worldview system.

Our culture is increasingly being based on feeling and whims.

However, as Christians, as the Church, this cannot define who we are. I have the unique opportunity to be immersed in the culture of the next generation. I get the opportunity to see how a select group of young people think, how they feel, how they process, and how they view the world.

A few things I have noticed is, they are intelligent, they are motivated, and they need guidance. Guidance in God's truth.

So let's get to God's truth. Shall we?

Read with me, once again, 2 Timothy 3:14, we are going to read through chapter 4 verse 5.

¹⁴ But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it ¹⁵ and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

¹⁶ All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, ¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

***4** I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: ² preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching.*

³ For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, ⁴ and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths.

⁵ As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

The book of 2 Timothy was written by Paul as a final charge to Timothy. Paul is in prison in Rome. He is awaiting his execution and writes this letter as a final encouragement to Timothy to keep on.

There are five truths about the truth we can pull out from this passage.

The first it's:

- **It's powerful [slide]**

The Truth (capital T) is powerful.

Look at verses 14 & 15 again.

¹⁴ But as for you, (Timothy) continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Jesus Christ.

Paul is reminding Timothy that he was taught God's truth from early on in life, and from 2 Timothy 1:5 we know that Timothy was taught from his grandmother Lois and his mother Eunice.

If you were here this past weekend, Pastor Rob spoke about the influence that his mom had on his life. How she taught him from flannel graphs the truth of God's Word.

God's timing is amazing. I have been planning this message for months and Pastor Rob, the week before, gives an entire analogy for this point.

Last week Pastor Rob said his mom, "taught him biblical convictions."

Just like Pastor Rob's mom, Timothy's mom and grandma did the same.

From childhood they were acquainted with, they were taught, and they were brought up in that teaching.

And then Paul shares why that matters. Because they are *“able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Jesus Christ.”*

Lois, Eunice, and Mrs. Willey were not teaching their children to be morally good kids.

They were teaching them to be godly. There is power in the pages of Scripture. Life changing, legacy making power.

That’s the gospel. That’s the truth.

It’s powerful. So...

- **Believe it [slide]**

Paul reminds Timothy of his belief in verse 14. *“You have learned it and you believed it.”*

Let’s be honest. There are some weird things in the Bible.

This past week we were doing family devotions and, I’m going to be honest, I don’t remember how we got on this subject but we started talking about the stories of Judges. And without fail my boys ask about the judge with the sword.

If you’re not familiar Judges 3 tells the account of Ehud. The left-handed, sword wielding judge who stabbed king Eglon in the gut and lost his sword in the chub. Not only that, but the king was in the bathroom.

This story checks all the boxes for boys. Swords, oddities, and toilets.

⇒ If you’re at all curious, yes that’s usually how devotions go in our house.

But it’s true, these “stories” aren’t fairytales. They are God’s revealed word to us. It was given to us to believe.

Sometimes we tend to dismiss the weird, or explain them away and want to focus on the NT. We say to ourselves, ‘that’s the stuff that matters, that’s the meat.’

But all of Scripture points to Jesus, all of Scripture reveals God’s Truth. It was written so that we can know God, so that we can see our sin, so that we know our need for a savior, it was written for us to believe.

There is life changing power in the pages of this book. Believe what it says.

The second truth about the truth is:

- **It’s valuable [slide]**

Look at verses 16 & 17.

¹⁶All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, ¹⁷that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

God, through the Holy Spirit, used human authors to write the exact words that he wanted on the pages of Scripture.

We mentioned that Paul wrote this letter to Timothy, that is true. It’s called inspiration. It’s this miraculous event that happened when God wrote by using human authors. The authors wrote their intended words which are also God’s intended words.

This is what Paul is describing when he penned the words, *“All Scripture is breathed out by God.”*

God wrote the book, but once again, he didn’t write it to give us fairytales. God’s intention for giving us his Word was not to entertain us. Although sometimes they do, like every time my boys giggle when I say a chubby king died on the toilet.

God gave us his word to reveal himself to us, in so doing he revealed how he demands his people to live therefore it’s valuable...for teaching, for reproof (or to call out our sin), for correction, and for training. It’s valuable.

And because it’s valuable you need to...

- **Seek it [slide]**

Meaning, read it. Dig into the Word of God to extract truth.

I’m a big fan of podcasts, articles that talk about Scripture and theology...but if that’s where your knowledge stops, you’re looking in the wrong place.

Read God’s Word. If you’re doing a study and you spend more time reading what the author of the study says than you are reading what the Bible says, you’re doing it backward.

I tell my students quite often when you have a question don’t look for an answer. Look for the truth. The world can give you all sorts of answers, but Scripture will give you the truth. Either through principle, or directly.

The Bible is only good for teaching, reproof, correction, and training if you know what it says.

Colossians 3:1 tells us to seek the things above. Seek the heavenly truths found in Scripture. That is, as Paul put it, our training for righteousness.

I look at the world today and it’s not hard to see what happens when we seek out what we want, our sinful desires.

I’ve heard the question asked, “How did we get here?”

Honestly, that question is pretty easy to answer. Our world does not seek the truth of Scripture, but you need to. The truth needs to govern the way you conduct yourself, how you make your decisions. Your worldview.

We are under the authority of what God says, not the other way around.

The truth isn’t just a good idea or a pleasant platitude to hang on your wall, but:

- **It’s needed [slide]**

Look back at verses 1&2 of chapter 4.

4 I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: ² preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching.

In verse one Paul is adding weight to his next sentence.

He's emphasizing, adding weight by invoking God's name, God's position, and God's action. In short, pay attention to what I'm about to say.

You know when you're giving direction to someone and you want to make sure they're paying attention, so you grab their shoulders, or their face so they must make eye contact? That's what Paul is doing in verse 1.

Then Paul says...Preach the word; be ready in season and out of season.

You can't be ready without God's word.

Hebrews 4:12 tells us that God's word is living and active, sharper than any 2-edged sword piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, joints, and marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

We have no Truth if not for God's Truth.

It's needed so:

- **Proclaim it [slide]**

This is where we go from the internal perspective of believing and seeking, to our outward action.

Paul's instruction to Timothy doesn't stop at pastors. This is for the entire body of Christ.

Paul says preach the Word! Proclaim the truth. When it's popular and especially when it's not. That's what he means by in season and out.

It seems more and more these days it is definitely out of season. Our culture is daily growing more and more hostile to the truths of God's word.

Much of the time that hostility is in your face hatred, but sometimes it's more subtle, like when preachers will attempt to make Scripture conform to culture and preach a false gospel.

That's why it's so important to proclaim the truth! But Paul is no dummy and he knows how we can be...he says rebuke and exhort...with what? Complete patience.

1 Peter 3:15 – be ready to make a defense for the hope that is within you...yet do it with all gentleness and respect.

If we don't proclaim the truth in love then we just sound, as 1 Corinthians 13:1 says, like a clanging cymbal.

Proclaim the truth. Our fourth truth about the truth is:

- **It's Timely [slide]**

Verses 3&4 say:

³ For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, ⁴ and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths.

Paul said, "For the time is coming."

This was written almost 2000 years ago, but his implication was that it was already happening and news flash...it still is.

People are leaving Bible believing, Bible preaching churches in droves because of what the word of God says, but now is the time to be digging into God's Word, solidifying your convictions.

Paul warned Timothy that people would not endure sound teaching, but they will leave the church to "accumulate" for themselves teachers to suit their passions.

Does this or does this not sound exactly like our culture? It does. 100%.

Just like George Barna said in his research, people are picking and choosing bits and pieces from different worldviews that suit their fancy.

We live in a culture that anyone can identify as anything, can claim what they want to be. There are groups of people that claim to be animals, grown men that claim to be babies and demand to be treated as such.

I just saw a video the other day of a person who identified as blind...they were not blind. This person, although she could see just fine felt like she should have been born blind and identified as a blind person.

She took action to remedy her dreaded sight...she poured drain cleaner in her eyes so that she could live "her truth".

That's not even the weirdest one. I didn't even search, but you know how Google will fill in the blank for you on what it thinks you want to search for?

I typed in "Person identifies" and here are the top responses that Google thought would be applicable.

⇒ Person identifies as: wolf, dog, cat, furniture, hawk, bird, dragon, baby, broccoli, alligator...and my personal favorite; camera.

We've all done the hard blink to take a mental picture, but this takes it to a new level.

The point is that our world constantly leaves sound teaching to pursue their own passions, their own desires.

It's not just the culture though. There are churches leaving sound teaching to cater to the world. The time is now, the Truth is needed now more than ever.

So, what does this mean for you?

- **Teach it [slide]**

Teach the truth.

Our response, our collective response needs to be to teach the truth to those around us.

Be the antithesis of the teachers that suit their passions, be a teacher of Truth.

I am going to take just a second to brag on our kid's ministry. Erin, Jonathan, and their team have done such an awesome job of teaching the next generation the truth of God's word.

They teach the truth in an age-appropriate way, without dumbing down the content. During our Tuesday night Kid's Club, Jonathan taught on the hypostatic union of Christ.

And you know what? They learned that the hypostatic union refers to Jesus's two natures, his human nature, and his divine nature. Some of them even went home and taught you about the hypostatic union.

Concepts like this, theology is not "too advanced" for them, instead it's exactly what our kids need to hear.

They need the Truth, and there is no better time to start than now.

Barna's research shows that a person's worldview begins to develop between the ages of 15-18 months! Too often we don't give our children enough credit for their intelligence. Their worldview starts to form then and is almost fully formed by the age of 13.

Not only that, but most Americans die with the same worldview that was nearly solidified as a 13-year-old child.

What this means is the time is now. Teach the Truth now.

If you have missed those ages, all is not lost. Believe it or not God is more powerful than a worldview. Begin to teach those around you about the Truth of God's word.

This needs to happen at home, not just on Sundays or Tuesdays, or Wednesdays. Speaking of the youth and the next generation, they can be intimidating. They wear funny clothes, they speak a different language, most of them can use technology better than you.

Let me say...once upon a time you appeared that way to the old hats.

I saw this quote from the New York Times, "The now generation has now become the ME generation." You know when that was written? 1976. Gen Z...the Boomers were viewed just like you are. So...someday the phrase "OK Boomer" is going to apply to you.

This is another quote I saw, "They have trouble making decisions. They would rather hike the Himalayas than climb a corporate ladder. They crave entertainment, but their attention span is as short as one zap of a TV dial. They postpone marriage because they dread divorce."

Ok...the "TV dial" already dates this quote, but this is a quote from TIME magazine in 1990 about Gen Xers.

Side note: to all you young people, yes. There were actual dials on a tv, and you had to physically get up and turn the dial if you wanted to turn the channel. And you might as well adjust the bunny ear antenna while you're up.

The point is, we were the younger generation once and should know the importance of teaching the word.

However, this does not apply to just those with children, but everyone. If you have someone in your life, then you have someone to teach.

God has given us each a circle of influence, and this is part of our responsibility, to teach the Truth to those in your sphere of influence.

Because the Truth is timely, teach it now.

Finally, the last truth about the truth that I want to share with you is,

- **It's vital [slide]**

Look at our final verse for the morning, verse 5.

⁵As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

The truth is vital we cannot do the work of the evangelist without it. It's vital because without God's Word we can't be sober-minded, and we will not endure suffering.

No doubt things were hard for Timothy, ministry is hard. Anyone in this church who has served in any sort of capacity can tell you that ministry is hard.

Serving in God's Kingdom was never promised to be easy, in fact it is promised to be hard.

In John 16:33 Jesus promises his disciples that in the world they will have hardship.

Without God's revelation of who he is and his promise to never leave us, there is no hope it is absolutely vital to our Christian life.

Not only is it vital to our life, but it is vital to the Kingdom of God. Paul tells Timothy to do the work of an evangelist. To do that the gospel is required.

Romans 1:16 tells us that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation. Going all the way back to point one, it's vital because it's powerful.

The Truth of the gospel is how salvation possible.

It's vital so...

- **Spread it [slide]**

"Do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry."

In other words, spread the gospel.

Share it with anyone and everyone!

At the end of Matthew Jesus gives his final charge to the disciples.

Chapter 28:19-20 tells us to go, make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded.

Spread the Word. It truly doesn't get much simpler than that.

5 simple truths about the truth. God has given us his Word, the Truth.

In a culture that is hostile toward Scripture remember to fight the good fight, to hold fast, and to rest in God's grace.

Do not keep the Truth to yourself but spread it to everyone you encounter.

Let's Pray.