



#2 In the Family Foundation Series

Build on Truth

Forest Park Church

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During the trial of Jesus, Governor Pilate interrogated Jesus about His kingdom. In His response, Jesus affirmed the spiritual nature of His kingdom and told Pilate,

- "Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice."
- To which Pilate cynically answered, "What is truth?" [John 18:37-8]

"When England closed its Libyan Embassy, Muammar Qaddafi became so angry that he ordered England to be removed from all maps in Libya. If you bought a map in that country for many years, that area was represented by a new arm of the North Sea bordered by Scotland and Wales. But it didn't change the fact that Britain was still there.

I. What Is Truth?

- What is it that we are building on families on?
- What are we building our lives on?
- What would we trust above everything else?

1. Defining truth.

A survey of common definitions reveals the commonly accepted variables of meaning. Consider the following definitions:

- Dictionary.com - The actual state of matter in conformity with reality.
- Wikipedia - To be in accord with fact or reality.

- Merriam-Webster Dictionary - Fidelity, Constancy, fact, actuality.

My favorite definition of truth is, "An understanding of facts that corresponds to reality."

2. The Problem

Why do we demand concrete truth in the physical realm but deny absolute truth in the spiritual realm?

We want truth in the physical realm to be concrete and fixed.

- There is no room for broad-mindedness in the chemical laboratory.
- Water is composed of two parts hydrogen and one part oxygen.
- The same holds true in biology, athletics, and mechanics.

But we want truth in the meta-physical realm to be

- fluid,
- non-factual,
- morally neutral,
- and open to interpretation.

We hold this position because spiritual realities make moral judgments about right and wrong.

Much of this discussion is based on philosophical questions.

- What makes something true?
- How do we know what we know [epistemology]?
- Does this proposition satisfy the theory of correspondence [a statement or proposition is true if it coincides with reality]?

In contrast to those thoughts, we find one of the most quoted sayings of Jesus.

John 8:32

"You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

But when we read the preceding verse all of the sudden Jesus intent for this statement becomes much clearer.

John 8:31-32

"If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, 32 and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

The Bible doesn't just contain truth, it is truth. Consider these views of truth.

A. The secular approach: Truth is perspective

Some have suggested that perspective is truth. The basis for their approach is personal opinion. We can all be like the men and women in a study about their weight.

"There is a vast difference between truth, and the perception of truth.

- In a survey of American health, it was learned that 40 percent of overweight men thought they looked fine and "felt they were at about the right weight."
- In contrast, 29 percent of women who were not overweight "felt they needed to lose pounds to achieve a healthy body weight."
- Both groups were operating under the perception of truth rather than truth itself. Such thinking leads to erroneous behavior. "

B. The spiritual approach: Truth is tradition

Our world is full of religions.

Each of them claims to possess the truth..

However accepting all systems to be truth cases immediate issues.

- Just consider the comparisons between any monotheistic system of belief [Judaism, Christianity, and Islam]
- And any polytheistic system of belief [Hinduism, Shintoism, Animalism].
- They may both be false, but they can't both be true.

C. The scientific approach: Truth is facts

The basis for this approach is verifiable empirical data.

- However Scientists, despite their claim to the contrary, are equally influenced by professional biases, political correctness, atheistic and evolutionary worldviews, and blind spots in their thinking.
- This doesn't make the scientist evil; it makes him/her human.

While the scientific approach can discover certain facts about our world, it cannot make any moral judgments in regard to those facts.

D. The Scriptural approach: Truth is a person

Ultimately, we are asking, "Has God spoken?" And, if so, what has He said?"

As Christians, we believe that God has spoken and that He has revealed Himself through His Son and His Word.

Jesus embodies truth

John 14:6

"I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life"

What will we do with these statements?

What will we do with Jesus?

Luke 6:46

"Why do you call me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do what I tell you? 47 Everyone who comes to me and hears my words and does them, I will show you what he is like: 48 he is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when a flood arose, the stream broke against that house and could not shake it, because it had been well built.[c] 49 But the one who hears and does not do them is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. When the stream broke against it, immediately it fell, and the ruin of that house was great."

II. We are building

Luke 6:47

Everyone who comes to me and hears my words and does them, I will show you what he is like: 48 he is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock.

49 But the one who hears and does not do them is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation.

Jesus' sermon was not concerned with house construction or building code violations.

The spiritual meaning of the parable is found in Matthew 7:24: "Everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock."

- We are each building a life and a family.
- The proper foundation for a life is Jesus' words—not just the hearing of them, but the doing of them, too (see James 1:22).

It seems at times that everything in the world is set up to make us turn away from God's words.

- And often, our own feelings pull us toward doing the exact opposite of what the Bible says.

All through the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus presented Himself as the final authority on and fulfiller of the Law;

He ends the sermon with a call to heed His message and, in fact, find one's security in Him (see 1 Corinthians 3:11).

III. Hear and Do

Luke 6:

*Everyone who comes to me and hears my words and does them,
But the one who hears and does not do them*

A: What Does it Mean to Build Your House on the Sand?

What do you build your personal and family thoughts on?

- The always present financial worry can destroy your joy. It is a true concern, after all, we have to pay our bills! We need money to purchase food and clothing.
- Are broken relationships and health problems stealing your peace?
- Do you worry about what other people think or are you busy comparing yourself to others? This can be a trap and spiral both your thoughts and actions down quickly.
- Do you become easily overwhelmed when things go wrong, leaving your thoughts in a negative spin (that was me last week when both my dishwasher and washing machine broke!).
- Build your house on the sand means our thoughts are built on the worries and concerns of this world. The everyday distractions and fears that prevent us from trusting in our Lord and Savior.

These toxic thoughts are the doubts that sneak in, the anxieties that need to be released.

B: What Does it Mean to Build Your House on the Rock?

- Build your house on the rock would then be the opposite of build your house on the sand. Keeping in mind that we are talking about thoughts here, what then would be thoughts built on the rock?
- Our thoughts would be built on Biblical truths! Building our thoughts on the promises of God will serve us much better than building our house on the sinking sand!
- Jesus knew we are prone to worry and fear. He speaks these encouraging words a little before his wise and foolish builders sermon.

Matthew 6:25-34

“Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds

them. Are you not of more value than they? Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? "So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?" Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

Maybe this is the first step. If we first build our thoughts on Christ and focus on His truths and promises, then our lives will also fall into sync.

IV. A Storm is coming

And when a flood arose, the stream broke against that house and could not shake it, because it had been well built.

49 When the stream broke against it, immediately it fell, and the ruin of that house was great."

I don't know what that storm will be but I know it's coming!!

Matthew 7:21-23

Not everyone who says to me, "Lord, Lord," will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, "Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?" Then I will tell them plainly, "I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!"

As you think about this parable and its relevance to you, remember that in Scripture a house can symbolically refer to one of four different things. Each of them is a sphere to which kingdom men should be bringing their influence.

The Individual: Kingdom people pursue personal purpose and aim to leave a lasting impact.

The Family: Kingdom people seek to impact their homes in such a way that all within them grow to be mature, responsible believers in Christ.

The Church: Kingdom people concern themselves with the spiritual footprint they are making with their lives.

The Society: Kingdom people involve themselves in the structural entities that govern a land so as to influence the culture for Christ.

Conclusion

It's a tough lesson, but we're responsible for practicing what we know. James says it this way:

James 1:22-25

Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it-not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it-they will be blessed in what they do

He's telling us that it's easy to see ourselves as devout because we understand what we've heard, but our faithfulness requires that we practice what we've learned. Our dedication is shown in our willingness to walk in the light that we've received.

"Lew Wallace, governor of New Mexico, was writing a book against Jesus Christ and in the process was converted to Christianity. He told a friend how it happened."

"I had always been an agnostic and denied Christianity," Wallace said. "Robert C. Ingersoll, a famous agnostic, was one of my most intimate friends. He once said, 'See here, Wallace, you are a learned man and a thinker. Why don't you gather material and write a book to prove the falsity concerning Jesus Christ, that no such man has ever lived, much less the author of the teachings found in the New Testament? Such a book would make you famous. It would be a

masterpiece, and a way of putting an end to the foolishness about the so-called Christ."

"Wallace went home and told his wife about the project. She was a member of the Methodist Church and did not like the idea. But Wallace began to collect material from libraries all over the world that covered the period in which Jesus Christ should have lived. He did that for several years and then began writing. He was four chapters into the book, he says, when it became clear to him that Jesus Christ was just as real a personality as Socrates, Plato, or Caesar. "The conviction became a certainty. I knew that Jesus Christ had lived because of the facts connected with the period in which he lived."

So he asked himself candidly, "If he was a real person, was he not then also the Son of God and the Savior of the world?" Gradually Wallace realized that since Jesus Christ was a real person, he probably was the one he claimed to be."

"I fell on my knees to pray for the first time in my life, and I asked God to reveal himself to me, forgive my sins, and help me to become a follower of Christ. Toward morning the light broke into my soul. I went into my bedroom, woke my wife, and told her that I had received Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior."

"'O Lew,' she said, 'I have prayed for this ever since you told me of your purpose to write this book, that you would find him while you wrote it!' "

"Wallace went on to write a famous book. Every time I watch the epic film Ben Hur, based on that book, I wonder at how it was written by a man who wanted to disprove that Jesus ever existed and instead became convinced that he was the greatest man who ever lived." [David Holdaway, *The Life of Jesus*, Sovereign World Publishers, 1997]