

Sermon for Sunday, August 15, 2021

Proverbs 23:23

Romans 7:15

John 8:31-36

Message "Get Truth"

Truth is in short supply within our world. The Word of God gives us all of the truth we need to live a full life in Christ. We should keep these truths and consider them wisdom, instruction, and insight for our lives. No matter what we do, we cannot lose truth.

The Word of God is the only place we can find the real truth. So, what are my current thoughts around the Bible? Are those thoughts prohibiting me from spending enough time in it?

The goal with reading the Bible is not simply to read it, but ultimately to do it. I need to feel the truth as much as I read the truth, so that I can live the truth.

I have to be willing to actually open God's Word every morning and every evening. Start with something short and easy, when it comes to getting into a rhythm with the Bible.

Today we are in week three of our series "Collide." In week one, we laid the foundation for standing firm on the Word of God, the only truth we can find in this world. Then in week two, we talked about the first thing God desires out of our lives once we initially learn to stand firm in our faith, amidst the conflicting values of the world we constantly collide with.

We must be renewed and transformed.

And today, we are going to take it one step further, because after God begins to transform us, especially within our minds, we have to pursue the source of truth so that we can ultimately live it out. The Word, the truth of God, is powerful and effective.

Listen to this story:

"One day a shoemaker in Meshed, a very religious city in Northeastern Iran, brought home for his lunch some cheese which the grocer had wrapped in a page of the New Testament, which he was using as wrapping paper. After eating his lunch he picked up the piece of paper and read the story of the man who hired laborers for his vineyard, and at the end of the day paid all the laborers the same wage, whether they had worked twelve hours or one.

The shoemaker liked the story, and the next day went again to the grocery store and bought cheese, asking that it be wrapped 'in another page of that book.'

Finally, on the third day he bought what remained of the New Testament and showed it to his brother. The two of them then went to a missionary, who gave them a complete copy, and also gave them regular instruction in the Word of God.

Both men were later baptized and were among the first believers in that city.¹" -

Dr. William Miller

Even when the words of scripture are torn page by page and used as trash, it still has power to redeem.

"I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do."

Romans 7:15.

¹ Safa, Reza F. *Inside Islam, Exposing and Reaching the World of Islam*. Charisma House Press, pg. 122.

In this verse, Paul is talking specifically about sin. But I wonder how many of us take this same principle and apply it to our time spent with God in His Word, or lack thereof. We know what we *should* do, but don't do it. I'm believing that today is the day God is going to give you a new hunger for His Word.

Turn with me back to the Old Testament in Proverbs, chapter 23 verse 23. The writer of Proverbs tells us something about the Truth that is incredibly important. He emphasizes how important it is in this one verse.

"Buy the truth and do not sell it-- wisdom, instruction and insight as well."

We have already said the truth comes from the Word of God. But once we have it, how do we keep it? The first step is what the writer of Proverbs makes clear in this verse.

Don't sell it!

I don't think he is talking about us standing on the side of the road with our Bible, attempting to sell the physical Bible to someone. Instead, the writer is talking here about an internal struggle. It is one thing to receive the Word of God. It is another thing to actually keep it as your priority in life.

I have a friend who was once very close to God. This person seemed very strong in their faith but as I was speaking with them one day, I found that they were starting to have doubts about the truth we find in Scripture. They were having some family issues, some health issues and it just didn't seem that God was present in their life. They began thinking God didn't care and everything around them seem to say they could fix things themselves.

Why is it, when our life gets a little tough, it's so easy to give in to doubt and fear? Why is it we think we can fix everything ourselves and forget to rely on God?

Unfortunately, this happens to people all the time. As we mentioned in week one of this series, the things of the world can be seductive. They attempt to draw us in and convince us of *their* truth, rather than *the* truth.

It is easy to sell ourselves short by selling what we hold onto as the truth in Scripture. Maybe some of us are in that place right now. We feel an internal war going on within us. We feel as if we are being pulled in two different directions, and the direction of the world is gaining an advantage because we know it will offer a satisfaction that we can see and feel, although it is temporary. Jesus had an external dialogue with a woman about this same struggle in her life.

Let's look at John 4:7-15;

"There came a woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink." For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food. Therefore the Samaritan woman said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask me for a drink since I am a Samaritan woman?" (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.) Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water." She said to Him, "Sir, You have nothing to draw with and the well is deep; where then do You get that living water? "You are not greater than our father Jacob, are You, who gave us the well, and drank of it himself and his sons and his cattle?" Jesus answered and said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again; but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never thirst; but the water that I will give him will become in

him a well of water springing up to eternal life.” The woman said to Him, “Sir, give me this water, so I will not be thirsty nor come all the way here to draw.”

In this story, Jesus offered the woman the true source of life, one that would satisfy her completely. Before this interaction, she was in the middle of being pulled in worldly directions, all the while searching for what would truly satisfy, and then it came walking into her life. The truth incarnate, *Jesus Christ*, collided with her sin and she was set free. The Bible tells us elsewhere that Jesus is the Word of God in the flesh (John 1:14).

Therefore, if we know Jesus, we know the truth. And how do we learn more about the truth? We spend time in the Word of God! Once we know it, and we learn not to lose it, I believe there is a proper response God desires from us next... We give it away freely.

Go share it.

All throughout the Bible, it is made clear that the Word was never meant to *just* dwell within us. As we turn to the very end of Matthew’s gospel, we read chapter 28:18-20.

“And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

This passage is often called “The Great Commission.” Jesus commands His disciples to go and spread the Word of God: The Gospel message about Him to the world. I believe the same commission is given to us when we accept Christ. When we begin to read and study the Word of God, even when we begin to put it into practice, we are then called to go and share it. And, amazingly, sharing the Word with others will strengthen our own faith as well!

I can remember a time in a store when a young man came up to me and started to talk about personal issues in his life. I wasn’t really sure why he felt the need to share with me because I didn’t really know this young man. But as we talked, I was able to zero in on the fact that my faith and belief in God was what helped me get through issues in my life. I told him how much God loved him and all of us and that he only wants the best for us. I think God gives us the opportunity and puts people in our path that we can share our faith with. Several weeks later I ran into this young man again, and he shared with me that he knows God had put me there that day to help get his focus back on God. I felt very humbled knowing God had used me to help this troubled young man.

This isn’t just me, or people in ministry who are called to do this. Instead, God is calling YOU to do the same! We are all called to give it away, to share the gospel freely. And what a joy it is to share with others what God has done. You have a story to tell as well. Chances are, if you have invited Jesus to do something in your life, He has shown up.

Share it with someone this week!

Today, maybe you are in a place where you are tempted to sell yourself short by following worldly temptations rather than the eternal truth in the Word of God. You feel like you have an internal wrestling match going on. The kingdoms are colliding within you and you feel you need to make a choice.

Today can be the day you submit fully to God’s Word. It’s the only source of true, abundant life. It’s the only thing that can fully satisfy you.

Will you allow it to do its work in you?

Would you pray that God would soften your heart to His gospel?

Once you receive the Word, as we talked about today, pray for opportunities to share it. This is as simple as knowing what it says, living it out, and sharing your story of redemption with those around you.

Prayer

Father, you are good. You sent your Son for us and you are merciful to us daily, moment by moment, even to the final cost. Remind us today of your sacrifice and keep it close to our heart. Make us not only thankful, but to be a vessel of your grace. Don't let your grace stop with me, but show the grace and truth to others through me. Be with those today who are hurting physically and emotionally. Given the strength they need so that they can continue to be your disciples sharing the Good News. And now let us pray the prayer that Jesus taught us:

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come.

Thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us,
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.

Benediction

Will you pray for an open door to share this week with someone close to you? There's so much joy that comes with giving the gospel to someone else. In fact, Jesus said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." (Acts 20:35)

It will strengthen your faith in Christ. He's called us to believe, receive, and give. Get ready for the open doors coming your way this week.