

Truth Led

The Bible says Jesus was “full of grace and truth.” These two concepts are both essential pieces of our faith, but can sometimes feel hard to balance, or even contradictory. Let’s study how Jesus lived out perfect grace and perfect truth without compromising either one.



INTRODUCTION

As we examine the model of being grace-driven and truth-led, we need to take a meaningful look at truth: how God’s Word defines truth, how we balance truth with grace, and specifically what Jesus’s encounter with the woman at the well teaches us about His approach to truth. When we understand truth from this perspective, we can hand over our brokenness to God and help those who are brokenhearted as well.

STARTER QUESTION

John 1:14 says, “The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of *grace and truth*.” There is a tension that exists between the two but does not need to be managed. So, what DOES God’s truth look like? What can we learn about truth that will impact our lives and the lives of those around us?

INTO THE WORD

1. Today we learned that truth HEALS and REVEALS our brokenness. Psalm 34:18 says the Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit. How is revealing our brokenness fundamental to its healing? What kind of healing can this bring? Can you recall some examples in Scripture in which this was the case? Start with Adam in Genesis 3:9-12. How did he experience healing after handing over his brokenness to God?
2. In today’s sermon, we were told that what we sacrifice for the most is what we worship. Pastor David referred to five common things our culture worships: food, pleasure, alcohol, money, and career. Do you agree with these categories? Sometimes it is hard to see this false worship in our own lives, because our perspective is off, or because we choose not to see, or for any other number of reasons. How can we recognize in our own lives what it is we are truly worshipping? What are ways God can help us to worship Him alone? Reference Psalm 139:23-24 and Romans 12:2 as a starting point.
3. Truth says that we are the temple of God – we do not have to go to the temple to be holy. What does this mean to you? The temple was a very integral piece of the Israelites’ lives in the Old Testament. Jesus changed the way one thought of the temple in the New Testament – for example, in Matthew 26:61, where he states that He will destroy the temple of God and rebuild it in three days (referring to His death and resurrection). In what ways do you believe we are God’s temple? Think in terms of spirit, soul, and body. In what other ways did Jesus change discussion about the temple? Refer to Revelation 3:12 and 21:22.

APPLICATION

4. Today we learned that grace and truth should not be 50-50 but mixed together and indistinguishable. What are the consequences of leaning too heavily toward truth? Toward grace? What Biblical examples come to mind of these two extremes? What personal examples come to mind of these two extremes?
5. We also learned that truth is not a set of rules to be followed. Truth is a person, as evidenced in John 14:6 where we read, "*Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and **the truth**, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."* (John 14:6). Are we encountering God, our Truth, on a daily basis? Since truth is a person, how does this challenge how we approach life choices and our interactions with others? How else does this concept impact our way of viewing our relationship with God and our relationships with others?
6. Consider the statement that truth is more important than tolerance. How do you believe this concept applies to our lives in our culture, our neighborhoods, our workplaces, our families, our friends, and our own lives? How can we live out God's truth in all these areas?

PRAYER

Dear God, You are the ultimate Truth, and you want me to be truth-led. I know that you always move toward those who are rejected, as is so beautifully illustrated in the story of the Samaritan woman you waited to meet at the well. Show me how to make truth my lifestyle as I focus on You and trust in You. Remind me that I am Your temple as I serve you each day. In Jesus' name, Amen.

SUGGESTED ANSWER GUIDE / MORE FOOD FOR THOUGHT FOR SELECTED QUESTIONS:

In reference to question 1:

God wants to heal our broken hearts. Once we take ownership of the brokenness in our lives, God works in tandem with us to heal us. We cannot be healed of something that we are not guilty of or isn't ours -- or about something that we think we have "under control." Examples from the Bible include Adam (Genesis 3:9-12), King David (2 Sam 12:13), the thief on the cross (Luke 23:41), and the apostle Paul (1 Timothy 1:15-16).

In reference to question 2:

Psalm 139:23-24 and Romans 12:2 – If we ask God and are open to his guidance, he will show us if we are worshipping something other than Him.

Proverbs 12:15, Proverbs 19:20, and Ecclesiastes 4:13 – God has provided godly, wise people around us. Having someone we trust and respect that will keep us accountable and lovingly correct us is a wonderful tool that can ensure that we are worshipping God alone.

Additionally, as the website Bible Study Tools reminds us, God provides "Scripture to remind us how great God is and how He is worthy of our praise. Focus your mind and heart on God with these Bible verses about worship and let your praise go up. Jesus said we are to worship in Spirit and truth, and these verses will help you access the power of the Holy Spirit and the truth of Scripture in order to experience true worship:"

Daniel 2:20 – God is powerful and wise.

Deuteronomy 10:21 – God does great wonders!

Jeremiah 20:13 – God is our Rescuer.

Exodus 20:2-6 – God has released us from bondage.

Psalm 99 – God is all-powerful.

In reference to question 4:

The Pharisees leaned very heavily on truth. Throughout the Scriptures (including John 8:1-11, Luke 18:9-14), we see them absorbed with following rules and holding others to a higher standard than even they themselves could reach. In Matthew 23, Jesus has harsh words against this legalistic approach to religion. Jesus came to lighten our burdens (see Matthew 11:28-30). By focusing only on truth, and making it about a list of guidelines, we do the opposite; we increase the burdens of those we should be helping.

In Deuteronomy 7:3-4 and Joshua 23:11-16, we learn that the Israelites were warned more than once about marrying people who did not have the same beliefs. These verses tell us that if they do, then they will be drawn away from worshiping the Lord and begin worshipping other gods. The Israelites did not listen; they leaned too heavily on grace and began to compromise their beliefs. In 1 Kings 11:1-13, we see that even King Solomon did not follow these commands and married many women who held

other beliefs than he did. The result was that he (and others who made this mistake) started worshipping things other than God.