

MESSAGE OUTLINE

Sunday, September 10, 2023

Today's Message: **GOD INVITES US TO KNOW TRUTH**
Thoughts on the Challenges of Accepting or Rejecting Absolute Truth
Pastor Matthew A. Vander Wiele, Ed.D.
Experiencing God—Reality 3-B

Review: Realities of experiencing God: God is at work around you, God pursues a love relationship with you, God invites you to join you in His Word and God invites you to join Him.

God is Truth to be known first and experienced second.

Question: How can you encourage someone who struggles with faith, and challenges the concept of Truth?

Douglas Groothuis addresses the issue of "Why Truth Matters Most" – Gary discussed the reality of Experiencing God by accepting his INVITATION to join Him in His Word.

One of the first ways God does this is by assisting people in knowing truth.

1. Truth: an intellectual access to reality. Douglas Groothuis notes that "Truth is a staple in our language and in every language. One cannot imagine a human language lacking the concept of truth. Such a language would never inform anyone of anything – it would lack any intellectual access to reality."

Truth – Seeking leads to Truth: An intellectual access to what is real

Language:

Biblical Worldview – Who's language are you listening to? God invites you into HIS Word – not someone else's (including yours!)

And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. ⁴God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. ⁵God called the light "day," and the darkness he called "night." And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day. (Genesis 1:3-4)

Truth is framed in Language.

Truth is framed in Language –

And God said, "Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: the livestock, the creatures that move along the ground, and the wild animals, each according to its kind." And it was so. ²⁵God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. (Genesis 1: 24-25)

Truth is discoverable by man NOT constructed by man
Douglas Groothuis, Ph.D. – "Why Truth Matters Most"

"Truth seems to stand over us as a kind of silent referee, arms folded confidently, ears open, eyes staring intently and authoritatively into everything and missing nothing. Even when an important truth seems out of reach on vital matters, we yearn for it and lament its invisibility, as we yearn for a long-lost friend or the parent we never knew. Yet when the truth unmask and convicts us, and we refuse to return its gaze, we would rather banish it in favor of our own self-serving and protective version of reality."

Truth exists in limits and man rejects boundaries

The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden,³ but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'" ⁴"You will not certainly die," the serpent said to the woman. ⁵"For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." (Genesis 3: 1-5)

PP GRAPH



2 Examples of Attempting to Construct Truth

I am talking about something much deeper—namely the fear of religion itself. I speak from experience, being strongly subject to this fear myself: I want atheism to be true and am made uneasy by the fact that some of the most intelligent and well-informed people I know are religious believers. It isn't just that I don't believe in God and, naturally, hope that I'm right in my belief. It's that I hope there is no God! I don't want there to be a God; I don't want the universe to be like that. - Thomas Nagel

Jesus and Pilate:

³³ So Pilate entered his headquarters again and called Jesus and said to him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" ³⁴ Jesus answered, "Do you say this of your own accord, or did others say it to you about me?" ³⁵ Pilate answered, "Am I a Jew? Your own nation and the chief priests have delivered you over to me. What have you done?" ³⁶ Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from the world." ³⁷ Then Pilate said to him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice." ³⁸ Pilate said to him, "What is truth?" (John 18: 36-39)

Silence is Needed: Soren Kierkegaard

In observing the present state of affairs and of life in general, from a Christian point of view one would have to say: It is a disease. And if I were a physician and someone asked me, "What do you think should be done?" I would answer, "Create silence, bring about silence." God's Word cannot be heard, and if in order to be heard in the hullabaloo it must be shouted deafeningly with noisy means, then it is not God's Word; create silence!... And we humans, we clever fellows, seem to have become sleepless in order to invent every new means to increase noise, to spread noise and insignificance with the greatest possible ease and on the greatest possible scale. Yes, everything has been turned upside down. The means of communication have been perfected, but what is publicized with such hot haste is rubbish. Oh, create silence!

Self-Reflection, Silence and Humility

The Lord said, "Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by." Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and shattered the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake. ¹² After the earthquake came a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper. ¹³ When Elijah heard it, he pulled his cloak over his face and went out and stood at the mouth of the cave. (1 Kings 19:11-13)

2. People who challenge the concept of Truth are not TRUTH- Seekers... The idea is to recognize that before one can experience "truth", one must accept that TRUTH cannot be found in ourselves – Truth is only discoverable not constructed

So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, "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." (John 8:31-32)

Curiosity may be no more than lust for what one need not know (or should not know); and it may be driven by ulterior motives such as vanity, pride, or restlessness. Curiosity is not intrinsically good because it can lead to gossip, violations of privacy (snooping, voyeurism), and wasted intellectual time and effort—as represented by the content of any issue of People magazine. In other words, curiosity can be a vice, despite the fact that it is a principal passion (or lust) of contemporary Western culture. Studiousness, on the other hand, earnestly inquires after what ought to be known in ways fitting the subject matter. Studiousness sniffs out its own areas of ignorance and pursues knowledge prudently, patiently, and humbly—not resting until what needs to be known has been pursued to its end. Thus, one labors to avoid both gullibility (holding too many false beliefs) and extreme skepticism (missing out on too many true beliefs). (Why Truth Matter Most, 2004)

Pilate has already determined and rejected that Truth is discoverable, therefore, truth is attempted to be constructed. Truth and truth seeking is limited to the language and authority it is placed in. Who's language and authority do you believe TRUTH is found?

Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. (John 14:6)

Once you accept that Truth is worth seeking – (courage) – then you have to reject the state of remaining "curious" – Douglas Groothuis states:

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No one has stated it better than Kierkegaard, who wrote before the onset of electricity and its manifold mind-numbing media. In observing the present state of affairs and of life in general, from a Christian point of view one would have to say: It is a disease. And if I were a physician and someone asked me, "What do you think should be done?" I would answer, "Create silence, bring about silence." God's Word cannot be heard, and if in order to be heard in the hullabaloo it must be shouted deafeningly with noisy means, then it is not God's Word; create silence! And we humans, we clever fellows, seem to have become sleepless in order to invent every new means to increase noise, to spread noise and insignificance with the greatest possible ease and on the greatest possible scale. Yes, everything has been turned upside down. The means of communication have been perfected, but what is publicized with such hot haste is rubbish. Oh, create silence!⁵²



ONWARD CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2023

1. NO YOUTH GROUP TONIGHT (Family Camp)

2. HIGH SCHOOL BIBLE STUDY (Grades 9-12) EVERY WEDNESDAY 6-8PM—We would love to have you join us at the Brock and Angi Vaughters house (15098 E 191ST Street, Noblesville, IN 46060). You can bring your high school friends!

3. MEN'S BIBLE STUDY—Beginning Friday September 15th—Each Friday at 7am at MCA. Study in the book of Romans. See Alex Abell for more info.

4. LADIES BIBLE STUDY (Two Options):

- **Beginning September 13th Wednesday Mornings @ 9:30am**—Each Wednesday morning at 9:30am at Kathy Stump's house (12928 Whitehaven Lane, Fishers, IN 46038). Studying the book of Ephesians. For more info email Kathy at kathystump77@gmail.com.
- **Beginning September 14th Thursday Evenings @ 7:00-8:30 pm**—Each Thursday evening at 7:00-8:30pm at Lynda North's house (9929 Brightwater Dr., Fishers, IN 46038). Studying the book of Ephesians. For more info email Lynda at LANorth7@gmail.com.

5. NEW GIVING QR CODE—If you would like to give online you can use this code →

6. PAL ("PARENTS OF ADDICTED LOVED ONES") MEETING—This is for families of adult children dealing with substance addiction. Every Tuesday night, 6:30 - 8:00 p.m. Free weekly meetings. Dr. Nancy Smith, facilitator. For more information, contact nancy1108smith@gmail.com or 317-508-8149.



Giving QR Code

7. GIVE BIBLES IN HONOR OF OR IN MEMORY OF A LOVED ONE—The Gideons have provided a display on the counter in the foyer for you to give God's word in honor or in memory of a loved one.

8. ONWARD PRAYER RESPONSE CARD ONLINE—To make it easier for some to complete your Prayer Response Card... you can **scan this QR code.** →



Prayer Card QR Code