



Authentic Truth

Key idea:

Authentic truth has been revealed in Jesus Christ, preserved for us in Scripture, is experienced by Christians through the powerful Presence of the indwelling Holy Spirit, and is displayed in a life of obedience to God.

Key text:

2 John 1-4

The elder, To the chosen lady and her children, whom I love in the truth — and not I only, but also all who know the truth — ² because of the truth, which lives in us and will be with us forever: ³ Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Father's Son, will be with us in truth and love. ⁴ It has given me great joy to find some of your children walking in the truth, just as the Father commanded us.

Key points:

1. John is the apostle of truth, the biblical writer who speaks of the truth more frequently than any other. In particular, truth is a key theme in the letters of 2 and 3 John.
2. There is authentic, actual truth that can be known and distinguished from error.
3. Authentic truth is centered on the Person and work of Jesus Christ, Who is the Truth and Who came to reveal grace and truth.
4. Authentic truth is recorded for us in the Scripture, God's Word of truth.
5. Authentic truth indwells and is experienced by every Christian through the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth.
6. Authentic truth is not simply believing right doctrine; it must produce a lifestyle of obedience to God.

Questions for discussion/application:

1. What part of Sunday's teaching stood out most to you? Why?

2. Why does truth seem to be such an emphasis for John? What about God necessitates this emphasis? What about the situation in which John ministered and wrote necessitated this emphasis?
3. Can I think of ways I have seen our culture deny the existence of truth? Is this just something done by philosophers, or is it a regular feature of our current culture?
4. Francis Schaeffer, who was one of the great Christian thinkers of the 20th Century, wrote a lot about truth and accurately foresaw the current denial that truth actually exists. He forcefully taught that Christians must stand strong for “true truth” or the Church will become irrelevant and the Gospel will be utterly undermined. Do you agree with Schaeffer? Why or why not?
5. Why is absolute truth centered on Jesus Christ? How is this related to John’s teaching of Jesus as the Word, the logos?
6. Does it really matter if Scripture is the truth? Can it just contain religious truth but have errors on other matters? Why or why not?
7. What is the relationship between truth and morality? If there is no such thing as truth, can there be actual right and wrong? In a society that does not believe in truth, how are right and wrong determined?
8. Why is it important that for the Christian the truth is not just “out there” but is experienced by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit?
9. What temptations do I face that undermine my commitment to truth? What is the strongest temptation for me to compromise truth - money, power, prestige, social acceptance, friendship, fear, or something else? How can I be prepared to stand for truth when this temptation arises?
10. Are there areas where authentic truth is not restraining my words or actions? How can I be prepared to let my words and actions be controlled by truth?
11. Who will I call or see to encourage this week?

For further Study:

[Authentic](#) - A Series on 1 John

[Guarding the Deposit of the Faith](#) (September 6, 2015)

Preview of next week: Our Long War Against God’s Image (Genesis 4:8-12; James 3:9-10)