

Theme: 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.

I. Intro - What is Truth?

- A. Pilates words to Jesus' claim to Truth
- B. Many ideas of truth through the ages
- C. Postmodernity - There is no Truth - my truth, your truth
- D. Authenticity means following 'my truth'
- E. What is Authentic Truth?

II. John - The Apostle of Truth

- A. Truth is a key theme in this short letter

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. 2 John 1:1–4

 - 1. Truth - five times in these four verses! 2 and 3 John most concentrated use of 'truth' in NT!
 - 2. It is impossible to read these verses and miss 'truth'
 - 3. He unpacks 'truth' throughout the rest of the letter
- B. John speaks of truth a LOT
 - 1. John uses 'truth' 45 times in his writings
 - 2. This is 45 out of 109x in the whole NT

3. John is the apostle of truth!

- C. For Christians, the truth is a central concern, and we can never become weary in our pursuit of the truth, nor willing to compromise the truth for personal comfort.

III. Authentic Truth

- A. Authentic truth is THE truth

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. 2 John 1:1–4

 - 1. Not just 'truth' - THE truth
 - a. Explicit in Greek in v1b and v2
 - b. But clearly implied in the other occurrences
 - 2. John warns the church about error

Many **deceivers**, who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh, have gone out into the world. Any such person is the deceiver and the antichrist. ⁸ **Watch out that you do not lose what you have worked for**, but that you may be rewarded fully. 2 John 1:7–8

 - a. v7 - deceivers - 'my truth' is deceit and error
 - b. v8 - To follow error is dangerous and will cost
 - 3. Pilate and postmodernity are simply wrong on this point - there IS truth, and it can be known.

B. Authentic truth is centered on Jesus Christ

Many deceivers, **who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh**, have gone out into the world. Any such person is the deceiver and the **antichrist**. 2 John 1:7

1. Authentic truth is centered on Jesus Christ, His Person, and His redemptive work.
2. This is because Jesus is full of grace and truth
The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, **full of grace and truth**. John 1:14
3. In fact, Jesus IS THE Truth
Jesus answered, “**I am** the way and **the truth** and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” John 14:6
 - a. Jesus is full of grace AND truth.
 - b. To abandon THE truth is to abandon Jesus the Truth
 - c. One can not embrace the grace of Christ while rejecting the truth of Christ.
 - d. This is why John is giving such emphasis to truth

C. Authentic truth is recorded in the Scripture

Anyone who runs ahead and does not continue in **the teaching of Christ** does not have God; whoever continues in **the teaching** has both the Father and the Son. 2 John 1:9

1. The truth about Jesus is recorded in “the teaching of Christ”
2. Certainly Christ’s recorded words, but also ultimately the biblical teaching about Christ

3. The Scripture IS authentic truth

Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. John 17:17

- a. God’s Word, the Scripture, is truth.
- b. This is why we must “continue in the teaching of Christ” - to abandon the teaching of Christ contained in Scripture is to abandon Christ Himself.
- c. Other supposed ideas or revelations that disagree with Scripture, especially in its essential message, are antichrist deception and must be rejected.
- d. It is impossible to be devoted to following Christ and reject the Scripture as God’s Truth.
- e. This is why Machen said Christianity AND Liberalism - they are two different faiths, not two variants of the Christian faith. To deny Scripture is to deny Jesus!

D. Authentic truth indwells and is experienced by the Spirit because of the truth, which lives in us and will be with us forever: 2 John 1:2

1. The truth dwells in us and will be with us forever
2. For a Christian, the Truth is not just “out there” but is experienced as an inward reality.
3. By the Holy Spirit we experience the Truth of God as an inward reality and a daily, sustaining Presence.
And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever — ¹⁷ the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. John 14:16–17
 - a. Note the same words - with you forever, truth, in you

- b. When we were in the world, the Truth was at best an external idea, but when we come to Christ, the Spirit of Truth comes to dwell inside us and empower us
- c. This daily internal witness and power of the Spirit is given to sustain us in the Truth, preserving us from deception & empowering us if we will walk in the Spirit.

E. Authentic truth produces an obedient lifestyle

It has given me great joy to find some of your children [walking in the truth](#), just as the Father commanded us...

⁶ And this is love: that we [walk in obedience to his commands](#). As you have heard from the beginning, his command is that you walk in love. 2 John 1:4, 6

- 1. Authentic truth is not simply believing right doctrine; it must produce a lifestyle of obedience.
- 2. Those committed to authentic truth must be growing in obedience to God's Word & Spirit.
- 3. Those committed to authentic truth will restrain their words and actions, not speaking half-truths nor giving in to the spirit of lawlessness as is so common in our age.

F. 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.

IV. Applying the Authentic Word

A. Do I know there is authentic truth?

- 1. Our postmodern world cynically denies truth exists
- 2. Many speak of my truth, your truth, their truth

- 3. The only allowable truth is that there is no truth
- 4. This is utter foolishness & a denial of Christ & reality
- 5. This view is pressed upon us in mass media, social media, arts and entertainment, and by many "preachers"
- 6. This is often done to support the new morality
 - a. The sexual revolution demands a new form of truth
 - b. "The Church must change or it will be irrelevant"
 - c. Truth must change to be with the times
- 7. Have I bought into these lies - with my mind or emotions?
- 8. Do I see this is actually the spirit of antichrist?
- 9. The true Church will NEVER compromise authentic truth for current ease or popularity

B. Am I in authentic truth?

- 1. We are surrounded by deceptive beliefs and actions
- 2. But God has given us everything we need!
- 3. Am I being sanctified by the Scripture daily?
 - a. Simeon's challenge to us for 2021
 - b. Am I soaking in the Word more than the media?
 - c. Is the truth renewing my mind and sanctifying my desires so that they align with authentic truth?
- 4. Am I experiencing the filling of the Spirit daily?
 - a. He is the Spirit of Truth, and He dwells in us!

- b. We must cry out for fresh filling regularly!
 - c. We need to walk with Him, keeping in step with Him, so that truth is not “out there” but “in here”!
5. Are my actions guided and restrained by Word & Spirit?
- a. It is not enough to believe the truth; it must guide our behavior!
 - b. Our culture is increasingly characterized by unrestrained words and behavior
 - c. We must not engage in careless speech or unrestrained behavior
 - d. Am I trusting God enough to let authentic truth be a leash on my words and actions?

C. A prayer for authentic truth

Authentic Truth

2 John 1-4

January 10, 2021

Communion

Acts 20:32

Teaching keywords: Truth; Jesus; Holy Spirit

Now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified. Acts 20:32

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.
2 John 1:1–4