

Talk It Over

TRUTH HAS AN EDGE (Week 1) Sharper Than A Sword

SMALL TALK

1. How do you know if something is true?

VIEWPOINT

2. **READ Hebrews 4:12-13.** What does it mean that God's Word is living? Active? That it penetrates? That it is sharper than a sword?
3. **READ Romans 1:18-20.** What was the best excuse you ever gave when your parents (or someone else) caught you doing something wrong? What's the best one you heard from your own kids? If Romans 1:17 is the solution, how does 1:18-20 describe the problem? Why is there "no excuse" for the problem?

GETTING PERSONAL

4. When have you been short fused (easily angered or offended)? What caused it?
5. How can God's Word which is living, active, penetrating, and sharp help?

PRACTICE!

6. Devote Daily, Pursue Relationally, Guide Biblically, Live Authentically, Engage Missionally (3 Qs to help):

September 5, 2021

Truth Has An Edge (Week 1) Sharper Than A Sword

- What is your source of truth?
- How do you know something is true?
- For you, is truth objective or subjective?
- How valid is the statement, “I’ll live by my truth, and you live by your truth.”?
- Does sincerely believing something make it true?

- **MATH & MORALITY:** Our culture has a difference of opinion about truth when talking about Math & when talking about God or Morality. In Math, our culture is ok with there only being one truth to mathematical equations. In Mathematics, the truth is “Clear & Black & White.”
- But when it comes to God, Morality, or how to get to heaven, our culture is completely repulsed by there only being one right answer. Our culture prefers a “**Foggy & Gray** ” answer. Why is that?

And there is another **PROBLEM:**

- We live in the information age, and now truth is buried in a massive haystack of contradictory information.
- This should not surprise us. Ever since the Garden of Eden, there has been an intentional strategy for spreading misinformation and misdirection.
- Now we live in a flood of contradictions and endless distractions to confuse truth and bury it.
- In such a world as ours, in a massive haystack of intentionally planted misinformation, & excessive information, to bury the truth, the temptation is to give up on truth. **Don’t do it.** We are truth seekers! Keep seeking and you will find.

- One of the reasons for this series is to help us see the sharp edge of Truth as Good News rather than bad news.

This series is a short 3 Part series:

- 1 Sharper than a Sword
- 2 The Truth Will Set You Free
- 3 Truth Versus The Cancel Culture

I. Truth is SHARP *(That's the good news?!)*

- **By definition truth has an edge.** It cuts out error; it slices away what is false. Truth is not relative, subjective, or soft.
- Truth is reality. Seeking truth is seeking out what is really real.

Romans 1:19–20 (CSB) since what can be known about God is evident among them, because God has shown it to them. ²⁰ For his invisible attributes, that is, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen since the creation of the world, being understood through what he has made. As a result, people are without excuse.

“GENERAL REVELATION” (creation) reveals God

- What it reveals to everyone is that God is BIG and WAY BEYOND US! There is a design in everything.
- To IGNORE God is INEXCUSABLE! With intelligent design there is always a designer.
- To disagree with this says something about us. Back up one verse and this is what it says about us.

Romans 1:18 (CSB) For God's wrath is revealed from heaven against all godlessness and unrighteousness of people who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth,

Why do people suppress the truth? Because they don't want to change their behavior. In spite of the evidence, people tend to believe what they want to believe.

We believe Strange Conclusions like: NOTHING x NOBODY =
 (wait for it... BANG!) EVERYTHING! Nothing x Nobody =

everything? How can that be? Why would anyone believe this? Could it be that we would rather believe this than be held accountable to the almighty and Holy God?

We believe strange excuses like: *“I’m not hurting anyone”, “everyone is doing it”, “it’s not so bad”, “I like it”, “It makes me feel good”. “It makes me happy”. “It helps me cope”.* We are only fooling ourselves.

I met up with an extreme EXAMPLE of fooling oneself: I once had a conversation with a drug addict that had lost everything: job, family, driver’s license, any kind of social life, everything! Nevertheless, he told me, drugs didn’t affect him like it affects others. He tried to convince me that drugs helped him...like medicine.

WE HUMANS ARE STRANGE

- We prefer to believe what we want so we can do what we want.
- We don’t want anyone telling us what we can and cannot do.
- We do not want to be held accountable for our self made re-design flops.
- We do not want anyone to call these flops “sin”, even though deep down...we all know we ought to live a certain way, and can’t seem to pull it off.
- So what do we do? We try not to think about it too much. We fill our lives with distractions and temporary feel good fixes.

We need help, and there is good news. God has given us **“Special Revelation”** that cuts right through the lies and distractions **in order to help us.**

That’s where the sweeping history of salvation comes in. It culminates with solid evidence for Jesus’ crucifixion victory & resurrection.

Imagine with me, MOVIE Versus MAILER: Imagine, watching a movie about Jesus’ claims, and his crucifixion. Imagine it was very compelling, and moving. Imagine coming home very somber, and checking your mail, only to find this mass mailer:

MAILER: Come to our “special community”:

- *No religious dogma*—We encourage the freedom of individual thought and belief. A humanist view of life...
- *Warm, accessible services*— a mix of music, readings, contemplation,...
- *Our children's religious education program*—We teach our kids to be accepting of differing beliefs and the importance of each person seeking his or her own truth. They study the world's major religions and draw on the core values of each faith tradition....

Which is right, the MOVIE or the MAILER? Both cannot be right.

Matthew 26:39 (CSB) Going a little farther, he fell facedown and prayed, “My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will.”

- If it was possible to save any other way...wouldn't God have answered Jesus' prayer?
- God does not allow sin into heaven.
- The GOOD NEWS is that God made A WAY TO separate us from our sin!

How?

Jesus death: 1 Peter 2:24 *“He himself, bore our sins in his body, on the cross so that we could die to sins, and live for righteousness”.*

Jesus' burial: Our old sin centered life was crucified with Jesus and buried with him when we united with him by faith.

Jesus' resurrection: The same Holy Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead gives us resurrection life (now... and beyond the grave).

The New Testament makes these SHARP truths clear:

- Rejection of Jesus HIS SON, is a rejection of God's offer & a rejection of God himself!
- There is no Jesus-less salvation.
- There is no Jesus-less God.
- There is no Jesus-less heaven.

- Jesus is the king of heaven and earth, all authority on heaven and on earth and beneath the earth has been given to Jesus.
- Although the cross unites believers with God and each other; It divides the world in two.
- Either you will try to save yourself, by creating your own coping version of suppressed truth, or you will accept Jesus as the way, the truth, and the life. Jesus said only a few will find this way.

TRUTH is sharp.

Hebrews 4:12 (CSB) For the word of God is living and effective and sharper than any double-edged sword, penetrating as far as the separation of soul and spirit, joints and marrow. It is able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

- The Word of God isn't merely a book we interpret; the Word of God interprets us. It's the diagnostic truth telling MIRROR.
- The Word of God is living and effective, sharp and penetrating, cutting away our excuses and defenses, exposing our hidden thoughts and intentions.
- God knows us better than we know ourselves. Are you surprised by this?

- **Sharp Truth points us to our need for a savior.**
- We need him now (even if we have already been saved. This is not just about your past, and not just for the future. We need him now.)

Only after we have allowed the JESUS GOSPEL truth to penetrate deeply, into the thoughts and intentions of our own heart, can we then proceed to point 2.

I. Truth is SHARP..... SO, . →

II. Handle Truth with **KINDNESS**

John 1:14 (CSB) The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. We observed his glory, the glory as the one and only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Full of grace and Truth... is an important concept, in the context of how sharp truth is.

Truth is a Scalpel.

Grace is the Anesthetic.

Full of grace and Truth is described as GLORY, something the disciples observed in Jesus!

As followers of Jesus, we must likewise apply the anesthetic when we apply the scalpel. Graceless truth is not “glory” but gory. The L is missing. The Lord is not in it.

Today we have seen God’s Word as a **mirror** to interpret us and a **scalpel** to heal us.

Next week we see truth as **the key** that sets us free!