

Jesus is the truth (John 14:6)

What is truth? How do we know what is true and what is false? Who can we trust completely to tell us the truth? In the times in which we live there are many competing claims to truth. Different religions claim that they know what the world is like and how to achieve satisfaction in life. Others say that all religions really just lead to the same end destination and so it doesn't really matter which religion you believe. Many today believe that science and technology hold the answers for us and tell us what is real and true. Since science has resulted in many brilliant discoveries and improved our standard of living and advanced our medicine and health care, for example, it must be reliable, true and something we can trust. But others are more pessimistic about our ability to discern the truth. They believe that there is no ultimate truth. The great diversity in the world is believed to show that there is no truth. Everyone can only have their opinions and must simply live as he or she sees fit.

There is a lot of confusion in the world about the truth. There is also a general perception that so many people and organizations have their own agendas and purposes which they try to promote by telling people certain things. Often people are deceived into buying a product they don't actually need or they are manipulated into promoting a certain cause without really understanding the whole picture.

In this world, where do we go to find the truth and how can we know what the truth is? The truth is what is real; the truth is the whole of reality. The truth is the opposite of falsehood, which does not match reality but is something different, a fabrication.

All truth comes from God, the Maker of heaven and earth. If we ignore God, who made everything and sustains and upholds everything, then we are missing by far the most important part of reality. All truth comes from God because he alone is completely trustworthy. His Word is truth; there is no falsehood or trickery in him at all. His Word is completely reliable.

In his gospel, the apostle John really stresses that what he is writing is the truth. His gospel is the testimony of a reliable eye witness. He writes about Jesus Christ who came into the world from God the Father in heaven. Jesus came from the Father, "full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). Jesus is full of grace because it is through him that there is forgiveness of sins for a world lost in sin. Grace is the undeserved favour of God for sinners. This undeserved favour of God is personified in Jesus Christ. He endured God's wrath for sinners so that they might have life through him. Jesus' coming into the world is full of grace; he is grace personified. He is God's precious gift to humankind for the forgiveness of sins. All those who believe in him have received eternal life.

Jesus also came from God the Father "full of truth." His coming was the fulfillment of all the prophecies of the Old Testament. His coming showed that God's Word is reliable and

completely trustworthy. Throughout Old Testament times, the coming of the Saviour was predicted and foreshadowed in many ways and at many different times. In the fullness of time according to God's plan, Jesus Christ, the Son of God came. Jesus is the embodiment of the truth in his person. His very existence shows the faithfulness of God. He is the fulfillment of God's promises. While we may often not keep our promises or forget about them, God is faithful and true. He never forgets his promises but he always comes through on his Word and sent his Son to rescue a fallen world from sin and the evil one.

When Jesus lived and walked on this earth in his public ministry, then he spoke and taught with authority. He often underlined what he said with the words, "I tell you the truth." The prophets of the Old Testament often said, "This is what the Lord says" or "Thus says the Lord" because they were speaking on behalf of God and could only say what God told them. They did not have the truth in themselves but received it from God. But Jesus is God himself, his only begotten and eternal Son, and so he speaks the truth always and for the benefit of his listeners he emphasized this with his words "I tell you the truth." He is saying, "Listen very carefully to what I say for I am speaking the truth to you. These are reliable words and must be taken very seriously." How wonderful it is to have Jesus' words recorded for us in Scripture! We may read them and treasure them in our heart for they are true words, the words of life.

A high point in Jesus' teaching came when he said to his disciples in John 14, "I am the way and the truth and the life." Jesus is the way to God, the only way to God. There is no other way. Other ways which claim to lead to God are falsehoods and delusions. Jesus Christ alone is the way. He alone is the truth, in the fullest sense of the word. It is in Jesus Christ that we see most clearly the truth of God in this world. His presence in this world, his existence in this world confirmed very powerfully the truth of the message of God. And now he has risen from the dead and ascended into heaven and rules the world at God's right hand. This is the truth, the reality of which the Scriptures speak and testify on the basis of the eye witnesses of the apostles.

There are many today who want to undermine the witness of the Bible and claim that it is false. But however much they rage against God's Word of truth, this Word will stand and endure forever. Their attacks will come to nothing for they can never erase the testimony which has been written down. The Bible can never be disproved. The very existence of the Christian church almost two thousand years after Jesus Christ lived on this earth is a clear testimony to the truth of God's Word.

When Jesus spoke to his disciples, he also promised them that he would send to them the Spirit of truth who would guide them in the truth after he had ascended into heaven. The Spirit of Christ continues to guide the church today so that we might understand the Word of God. The apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthian church in 1 Corinthians 2:12, "We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely

given us.” Those who have not received the Spirit of truth cannot understand the things of God and they appear to be foolishness. The cross of Jesus Christ is a hard message and a stumbling block for many. Yet it is the power and wisdom of God for all those who believe. Jesus Christ is the truth and the wisdom of God. Blessed are all those who believe in this truth of God and rely upon the trustworthy testimony of the apostles. Jesus said, “Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.” (John 20:29).

What are we to do with this truth of God? Believe this truth and walk by it. Let your life be determined by the truth of God. Ultimately it is the only truth there is. Jesus said, “whoever lives by the truth comes into the light” (John 3:21). When we live by God’s truth, we escape from the darkness and have sure direction and purpose in our life for then it is lived in accordance with the truth. Falsehoods and lies will enslave and lead nowhere. But when we hold to Jesus’ teaching, then we will know the truth and this truth will set us free (John 8:32). For Jesus is the way and the truth and the life. All those who believe in him have been set free from sin and have received eternal life with the God of all truth.