

Truth, Trust, and Transformation

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[0 : 0 0] full and I'm going to have mercy, but only a little bit. I want so much to encourage your hearts in what I know is true about you already as our church family. You have a wonderful and growing confidence in the truth of God's word for life and godliness. And we're in 2 Peter together, going verse by verse. And the next sermon that I prayerfully anticipate preaching from 2 Peter will deal very, very strongly with the power and authority and sufficiency of God's word as the greater testimony and witness of the truth of the Lord in our lives. And Peter's going to deal with that. That's God willing for next time. What I'd like to minister to you today is, according to the title, Truth, Trust, and Transformation. And it's going to be a number of different scriptures.

Truth, Trust, and Transformation. Now let me bring you into this. Beloved, how would you use scripture? Right? The question I'm about to ask you, I'd like for you to try to answer in your minds, not out loud, by scripture. Where would you go in scripture to answer this question?

What is the ultimate goal of the life of every believer? What is the ultimate goal, the life of every believer? Now to render the question in more personal terms, according to scripture, what is your highest calling for living your Christian life?

Another way of asking the same question, I'm asking it several different ways, same question, same idea. What is the point of your daily walk with God? We want to make this as personal as we can. Or finally, what is the point of the process of your sanctification? The point of the process. So I asked it in maybe four different ways. I'm looking for the same answer in each of those questions. I'm not going to answer it right now. We're going to move toward the answer.

[2 : 1 4] Now let's ask another question as it bears on the issue of you being faithful to God's goal for your daily life with him. God has a goal for your daily life and your walk with him.

Let's ask another question that bears on that. Is man's wisdom necessary to this process? Is man's wisdom necessary to help you fulfill the goal that God has for you in your walk with him as a Christian believer? Did God leave out something that man's wisdom can and must complete for you to fulfill God's goal in the process of your sanctification? We use a big old five dollar word there, sanctification. What does that mean? Your spiritual growth in terms of your growth, your spiritual growth in the Lord. Has God left something out that man needs to complete? All right, so those two questions I want you to please keep in mind as I walk us through this following outline. So ask yourself, if you would, how each passage that I'm going to share with you might relate to answering these questions, particularly as we think about how we grow as Christians and about how we care for each other's souls as God's people. So here are four areas that bear on answering these questions biblically. This forms the nucleus and heart of our church around the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

These are the kinds of things that we ministered over there and that they are so desperate for and that they're not getting. The first point in the outline that I want to bring is the schemes of Satan, which involves spiritual warfare. You know that if you've been here on Wednesday nights for months, Greg and I have taught through the screw tape letters, helping us get into scripture about demonic strategies to distract and discourage and deny the truth of the Lord in our lives. The first place that I'd like to take you then is first Peter five. Now we're going to turn all over the Bible. You'll definitely get an exercise in turning to places in scripture this morning. First Peter five, just a couple of verses. Now I'm going to have to be picky and choosy. So we're going to jump around and I won't have a lot of time to explain the context. If you think that I might be proof texting, you're welcome to come and challenge me. But hopefully you'll see upon further observation that I'm trying to bring these messages to you, these verses in context. I'm not just making them say what I want. Verse eight, be of sober spirit.

That's a call and a command. Be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour, but resist him firm in your faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brothers who are in the world. So whatever it is you're experiencing in the way of this demonic attack on your life against spiritual truth and the gospel working in your heart and life to make you a light in the nations, whatever you're experiencing, your brothers and sisters, and we can testify to this in a fresh way, are experiencing the same kinds of attack across the world. It is not unique to America or unique to your life, but it's real, isn't it? It's very real. If you'll look with me at 2 Corinthians 11, under the schemes of Satan, 2 Corinthians 11. Some of these passages will be very familiar to people in our church, this is one of them. We hit this passage in numbers of times over the Wednesday nights, over the last few months. It's verse three. But I am afraid, Paul says, as he warns the Corinthians, I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ. That's the main thing. The target that Satan has for each one of us is to distract and deceive us away from a simple and pure devotion to Jesus Christ. You can know the Bible, you can go to Sunday school, you can show up for church, you can do all kinds of ministry, but if you're missing devotion to Jesus Christ, you're missing the point of the Christian life.

[6 : 59] We are calling one another to be loyal, devoted, and loving to Jesus, and then to minister that love and loyalty to our neighbors. We got to get that right in terms of its order. Love the Lord your God with all your mind, heart, soul, and strength. Love your neighbor as yourself. We turn from that love that Jesus is filling us with for himself, and then we minister that love to each other and to the watching world. But the deception that Satan wants to bring into your life is designed to distract you from that devotion. If you look down at verses 13 through 15 in that same chapter, for such men are false apostles. Now Paul is going to be attacking those men who've been attacking him as an apostle bringing the truth to the Corinthians. They are trying to undermine the confidence that they have in Paul as someone bringing them God's truth. They're saying, no, this guy's just after your money. Paul is now saying such men are false apostles. Now look, notice the next words, deceitful workers. You're going to see deceit show up time and again. They disguise themselves as apostles of Jesus. You see that? That's what they do. They're not going to come through the door, as I've said to you before, with a bifurcated tail, horns, you know, in a red suit, announcing I'm the devil. They're going to come in looking and sounding just like us. Now he and I have a huge responsibility to be able to see and sniff that out. That's one of the ways that we safeguard the sheep. But this is a promise from scripture. They will come from within. They will sneak in unawares. Well, we hope, not on our watch, not unawares, but we have the truth. Such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Jesus. Verse 14. No wonder. No wonder that's not surprising.

For even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. Therefore, it's not surprising if his servants, human servants, also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness, whose end will be according to their deeds. So we need to be alert and vigilant and spiritually discerning and aware. We cannot do that by trying to mix man's wisdom with God's wisdom. That waters down the reality of our discernment regarding truth and error. We have to sharpen that focus, not dilute it, not bring it out of sync.

And there's a way that we do that together as a church family. People who teach systems and promote ideologies which counter scripture are the physical expressions or they are the tools of demonic spirits.

Now listen, please listen carefully to what I say next. All error is of the devil ultimately. I am not saying that all these people that are being referred to here in scripture and that I'm referring to in general, that all these people are demon possessed. I am not saying that. I personally believe that demon possession is alive and well, but it's extremely rare, extremely rare. And I am not saying that these people I'm referencing and that scripture is referencing realize they are teaching the doctrines of demons. Regardless, they don't have to recognize or realize that's what's going on. But behind all error are demonic spirits promoting these systems in our midst. That's just the truth of scripture. We need to know who the enemy is and what's going on. The people are not our enemies.

[10 : 55] They say terrible things. They persecute us. They come after Jesus. They say vile things. They're our mission field. What do you expect? They're unbelievers. They are caught by Satan and entrapped and imprisoned by him. Such were each of. That's right. To include your pastors, right?

We had to be delivered from that as well. I am so glad you guys didn't know me before Jesus. I'm so glad I was not a nice person.

The grace of God in our working in our lives. I am saying that these people we're referencing are being used by evil to promote the purposes of evil, whether they recognize it or realize it or not. That was true of my life. Now the point here is that Satan propagates false doctrine through his human agents who espouse demonic ideologies raised up against the wisdom and knowledge of God.

That's the truth. We need to take the Casper the ghost idea of demonic warfare out of our understanding. This is not. It's not that this is very tangible, real and fleshly. You can touch it and see it and hear it.

It looks you in the eyes. And then it cuts your throat. You understand your enemy is murderous. He wants you. He wants your family. He wants your kids.

[12 : 29] He wants your testimony. He wants your effectiveness. He hates, hates, hates Jesus and the gospel. And he is on the prowl, according to scripture, seeking whom he may devour.

Now, folks, in one sense, we need to let that sober us. In the other sense, we run over here and we stand on the level ground of the cross and we say, yes, but greater is his grace than our sin. Amen. And so that's where we camp. We do not camp in the wisdom of men and look to men to do what the gospel accomplished for us on the cross. That's the issue. This is an active, then, ongoing spiritual force of evil at work in the minds of unbelievers and set against the truth of God. Now, I want to look at some of that a little more specifically. All right. So let's do that. The spiritual force of evil raised up against the wisdom and knowledge of God is active and ongoing in. Look at this. The systems of society. This is the spiritual deception. These verses were pointing to. We're going to outline that. The first place that I'd like to take you is first Corinthians chapter one.

First Corinthians one. I'm going to be speaking fast. Verses 18 through 31. One of the things that I want you to be reminded of, and perhaps some of you sitting in here would say, wow, that's that's kind of new. You know, I've never heard it like that before or whatever. I'm not trying to be novel. I want you to see this from scripture. This has been around for a long time. The apostles were having to deal with this on a constant basis, this deception through society, through the culture. Paul says, beginning in verse 18, for the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing. Those who are perishing mean unbelievers. But to us who are being saved, it is the power of God. That's why I say we run to the cross. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise and the cleverness of the clever. I will set aside. This is God speaking.

[14 : 46] Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? In other words, where are all the brilliant people that claim brilliance in this? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? And of course, the answer there rhetorically, yes. For since in the wisdom of God, the world through its wisdom did not come to know God. God was well pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. For indeed, Jews ask for signs. What do Greeks ask for?

Wisdom. But we preach Christ crucified. To Jews, he is a stumbling block. To Gentiles, that is mere foolishness.

But to those who are the call, that is the saved, the born again, both Jews and Greeks, Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

Consider your calling, brethren. Consider your salvation. That there were not many wise according to the flesh. Not many mighty, not many noble. But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise.

And God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong. Aren't you glad? And the base things of the world. And the despised God has chosen.

[16 : 21] The things that are not. So that he may nullify the things that are. So that no man may boast before God. But by his doing, you are in Christ Jesus. Who became to us wisdom from God.

And righteousness and sanctification and redemption. So that, just as it's written, let him who boasts, boast in the Lord. Amen!

He is the wisdom. He is the treasure. It's not just knowing about him. It's knowing him. And only the cross can accomplish that.

We have the power. We do. Say, where do we get it from? It lives in you. Jesus Christ is the treasure and the power.

And he lives in you. You carry that power with you everywhere you go. You cannot escape it. You can try to deny it. You can neglect it.

[17 : 22] You can take it for granted. You don't have to even be thankful for it. And you can sin. But the power is within you if you are truly saved. And that is what we need to rely on.

They say, all right, yeah. I get it. Foolishness, man's wisdom. Man calls God's wisdom foolishness. They call each other foolishness. There's this thing. All right, all right, all right.

But, but, but, can't we benefit from taking some of man's wisdom as maybe, for example, the best of psychology's teachings about soul care?

And can't we add the best of those teachings to God's wisdom so that we kind of come up with the best of both worlds? Some kind of really great hybrid that we can work with?

No, we can't. Can't we blend and benefit from this integration of man's wisdom and God's wisdom?

No, we cannot. I'm going to show you that.

[18 : 22] This is what we've just come off of for two solid weeks in both countries. This is the air they breathe. This is what they told us. It's not anything we had to surmise.

They told us. Integration is king. Psychology is king. That's a quote from our German hosts.

Psychology rules the day in our country.

Let me show you something else. 2 Corinthians 10. 2 Corinthians 10. Verses 3 through 5. For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh.

That's why I say the people are not our enemies. They're our mission field. For the weapons of our warfare are spiritual. They're not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for what?

They are divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. But you can't see physical castles, physical forts, physical military bases. That's not what we're talking about.

[19 : 24] This is spiritual warfare. What's he talking about? Look at verse 5. We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God.

And we, as his people, are taking every thought captive in our own lives to the obedience of Jesus Christ. What are we talking about? Fortresses. This is a quote from Dr. MacArthur.

If you have his study Bible, you can read along in the study Bible. It's where I got it from. The formidable spiritual strongholds manned by the forces of hell can be demolished only by spiritual weapons wielded by godly believers.

Singularly, the sword of the spirit. The word of God. Since only the truth of God's word can defeat satanic footholds, falsehoods. That's right.

What are we talking about in speculations? Speculations. Speculations. Thoughts, ideas, reasonings, philosophies, false religions. They are the ideological forts in which men barricade themselves against God and the gospel.

[20 : 27] Folks, it's not a new thing that human beings have been raising up these ideologies and these philosophies and ideas and thoughts to help them navigate the issues of life.

What are they supposed to do apart from God? Well, they've got to make up something. They've got to fill the void. That's human nature. And so they fill it with their own ideas and wisdom. That's what they do.

We understand that. That's what I did. I assume that's what you did. You have to come up with some kind of a deal. When I first started in my training, way back before I even got my bachelor's degree, I was in junior college and I decided that I wanted to do people helping.

I was going to go in the ministry and I thought psychology. That's the air I breathe. So I started. I got my bachelor's degree in psychology with a minor in Bible. Suzanne hears me tell that story and she winks and says, that ought to tell you all you need to know about Jeff at that time in his life.

He got a psychology major and a minor in Bible. That did get switched and got righted at some point. Then I went on to spend eight more years getting degrees in psychology.

[21 : 34] What I'm talking to you about now, I'm not talking because I read it in a news article or somebody. I lived it, breathed it, and studied it for years and years and years. All the secular guys, all the modalities.

Thank God the Lord's removed a lot of that from me now. Somebody will mention something and I'll say, ooh, that's vaguely familiar. And I go, thank you, Lord. Thank you, Lord. This is what we're dealing with.

Second Corinthians chapter four. I'm just trying to flood your heart and soul with the truth of how this works. This is what we're fighting against.

Fortresses, speculations, things that are raised up by man's wisdom against the knowledge and grace. Of almighty God. Second Corinthians four. Three and four.

And even if our gospel is veiled. Now, you can read that this way and understand what he's trying to say here. Paul is saying, even if our gospel, that the gospel of Jesus, the truth of the freedom of Jesus against sin.

[22 : 35] Is criticized, rejected, denied. It is all those things to those who are perishing. That is unbelievers. That's how they view the gospel apart from the Holy Spirit opening their minds and hearts.

It's they criticize it, reject it, deny it. Now, look at verse four. In whose case the God of this world has done what? Blinded the minds of the unbelieving.

So that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. There's the work of the devil. To blind the minds of unbelieving people to keep them from seeing who?

Jesus and his glory for salvation. That they have a loving savior that would gladly receive them and forgive them and bring them into his heaven. Satan wants to keep the glory of Jesus veiled.

So that they criticize it, deny it, run from it, make fun of it, mock it. That's the reality. That is an active, ongoing spiritual force. And you will never be able to talk anybody out of it.

[23 : 43] Never. In a million years of trying. That is a work of the Holy Spirit. And that is the work of the truth being used by the Holy Spirit in their lives. You will never be eloquent enough or clever enough to talk somebody out of darkness.

You have to pray them out and you have to witness them out with truth in love. What if it takes you two years? Ron says, okay.

Amen, brother. Patience, mercy, love. It's messy. 1 Corinthians chapter 2. This is a critical, critical passage.

I may have to abbreviate this one a little bit. I was going to read the whole chapter. But let me get to the heart of it so that you can see what we're dealing with. I would encourage you to come back and read this chapter in its entirety.

But I'm going to zero in real fast here. Verse 6. Yet we do speak wisdom among those who are mature. That is, people who are growing in the Lord.

[24 : 46] A wisdom, however. A wisdom not of this age. Nor of the rulers of this age who are passing away. So he's saying this is not a wisdom that we're speaking that comes from men.

The cleverest of men. Verse 7. We speak God's wisdom in a mystery. A mystery means it's hidden. It needs to be revealed. The hidden wisdom which God predestined before the ages to our glory.

This is the wisdom which none of the rulers of this age has understood. For if they'd understood it, they never would have crucified the Lord of glory. You catch that? But just as it's written, things which eye has not seen, ears not heard, which have not entered the heart of man.

That's very important. None of these things have entered the heart of man. All that God has prepared for those who love him. For to us, God revealed them.

You see that? God revealed them through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. For the Holy Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God. Who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him?

[25 : 55] That's right. You could sit here right now and get thoughts in your mind and I would have no idea what you're thinking. None whatsoever. I can't look into your mind and see that. But your own spirit knows what you're thinking.

Right? Now look at the analogy. Verse 12. Now we have received. We didn't get it by cleverness. We didn't go find it. We have received not the spirit of the world, but the spirit, Holy Spirit, who is from God.

Why? So that we may know the things freely given to us by God. How else would we know them? Which things we also speak? Not in words taught by human wisdom.

No. But in those taught by the Holy Spirit. We combine then spiritual thoughts with spiritual words. So here the apostles are saying, God has given us his word. And we combine what God is giving us in direct revelation.

And we put that in the language that we speak. And we bring that to you. And we've written it down. And this is the word that you have now. This is what you need to rely on and trust.

[26 : 59] This is why Paul is making defense of his apostleship. We are being used by God to bring you this truth. These are the words of the Holy Spirit. You push us out of your life. You push out the people that are bringing you the truth.

Don't do that. This is what Paul is defending. He's not trying to make himself all that. He's trying to love these people well by saying, don't push the people away that God's brought into your life to bring you the truth.

It's not man's wisdom that we're bringing you. It's not cleverly devised tales. Peter's going to say that in my next sermon. God willing, next Sunday. What does it say in verse 14?

A natural man. That is an unbeliever. A natural man does not accept the things of the Holy Spirit of God. For they are foolishness to him. And he cannot. Look, look. He cannot understand them.

Because why? They are spiritually understood. But he who is spiritual appraises all things. Yet he himself is appraised by no one. For who's known the mind of the Lord?

[27 : 58] No one. That he would instruct God? No one. But what do we have? The mind of Christ. That's how we know God. We have the mind of Jesus. Jesus lives within us.

And so now we can read the scripture and we can think God's thoughts after him. Because these are God's thoughts. These aren't just opinions. These are statements of truth from God himself that we can rely on and live by.

Let me give you another one. Well, let me point out. The unbelieving mind here. Notice the unbelieving mind cannot understand the things of God. This is the work of the spirit. When it says spiritual, it means of the Holy Spirit.

That's what spiritual means. Romans 8, 5 through 8. One more quick one here before we move on to the third.

And then I'll do that quickly for the fourth point. Romans 8, 5 through 8. Now, folks, for you visitors, this is very unusual for us. We're usually working verse by verse through the Bible.

[29 : 00] So this is just me getting it out. I got to get it out. I could do it to the trees. But you're more fun. Romans 8, 5 through 8. For those who are according to the flesh.

There it is again. We're talking about unbelievers. People who are living by the system of the world. They set their minds on the things of the flesh. Of course. But those who are according to the Holy Spirit.

The things of the Holy Spirit. For the mind set on the flesh is death. But the mind set on the Holy Spirit is life and peace. You see the contrast there?

Oil and water. Because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God. The unbelieving mind is hostile toward God.

For it does not subject itself to the law of God. For it is not even able to do so. It can't do it. And those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

[30 : 02] That's the reality of this passage. The unbelieving mind of man is not neutral. It is not innocent in terms of its relationship to God or the truth of God.

It is hostile to the truth. The unbelieving mind is anti-God. No matter what the lips may say. That's the truth of the word. So this, listen now, this selfish hostility to the truth.

That is why there are so many modalities, methodologies, and conflicting opinions about diagnoses and treatments among secular theories for soul care.

My goodness. I think there's, I don't know, how many did we hear recently? Hundreds. There are hundreds of them. There's all kinds. Why? Because these are all unbelieving people who are trying to fill a void with their own wisdom and they can't even agree.

They're selfishly hostile to each other. They are not being united in the truth. Do you know what unites God's people? How can we know unity and love in our church?

[31 : 17] It's very straightforward from scripture. What unifies us in the love that we would have for each other? Truth. God puts us all on the same doctrinal page and says, follow Christ.

Speak the truth in love to each other. And that pulls us together and unifies us. That's, listen, I'll start with me. That helps Jeff deal with Jeff.

Because I'll tell you what you don't want. You don't want Jeff. You want Jesus living in Jeff. That's what you want. That's what you need. And I need Jesus living in you to sharpen me, humble me, teach me, help me, encourage me, affirm the work of God in my life.

That's what you need. And we cannot do that with 65 different opinions about how it's to be done. We come to the truth of the Lord with one Lord of the church, one truth in the church, one baptism, one mind, one heart, and one goal.

A simple and pure devotion to Jesus. We rally to Jesus. We follow Jesus. We speak the truth of Jesus to each other. And we don't allow each other to lose sight of the main thing.

[32 : 33] Treasuring him. Amen? Treasuring him. That's what we need. So are you keeping the questions in mind that I asked earlier? First, what is the ultimate goal of the life of every believer?

Second, is man's wisdom necessary to this goal or to this process? Third, and real quickly, I got to give you these. The sanctification of the spirit or what we're going to refer to as spiritual living.

What is spiritual again? Of the Holy Spirit. What does it look like to live in the spirit of God and not in the spirit of the system of the world? Two different things. First Corinthians 10 31.

You're familiar with these, so I won't even make much comment. We'll just look at them. Our church is very familiar with turning to this passage. Whether then you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the...

Amen, church. Everything. Even the monotonous issues of life like eating, drinking, sleeping. Do all to the glory of God. Wow. That pretty much covers it.

[33 : 34] How about this one? Romans 8 29. Romans 8 29. By the way, I'm throwing some counseling at you here.

You don't even know it. These are the kinds of passages that we turn to early in the counseling process to help people begin to think truthfully about the issues of life and the kinds of enemy that they're facing and what Satan's trying to do in their lives.

We're just trying to help them get a biblical foundation for understanding problems, concerns, trials. So Romans 8 29. Wonderful passage.

For those whom God foreknew, he also predestined, predetermined, to become what? Conformed to the image of his son so that he would be the firstborn among many brethren.

This is a beautiful statement of truth. So now you're seeing the answer to the question. What is the ultimate goal of the life of every believer?

[34 : 40] To be conformed to Christ. You say, well, I thought it was to glorify God and enjoy him forever. To be conformed to Christ is to glorify God and enjoy him forever.

You're not in heaven yet. You need to be more and more like your savior. That is the point of the Christian life. Now I ask you the question. What did God leave out that man needs to fill for us to be successful in that mandate?

What has man designed to help you be more like Jesus? They don't even understand it. Come on! We have the word of God made more certain.

We have the truth of God. Friends, be confident in your weaponry. You have the ultimate nuclear weapon. Push the button.

Blow the demons back to hell. Bring the gospel of Christ to bear on the truth that people need so that their hearts will be freed from the prison that Satan has them in.

[35 : 53] This is the battle that we're in. It's real. It's palpable. And if anything happened for us going to Europe, it lit the fire even more in me that this is exactly what we need to be. We've been on the right track and we need to keep going.

Because many of our European brothers and sisters look at our country. Boy, they know more about our politics than I did. They started talking about it and I couldn't keep up. I'm like, you know, can we change the subject?

This is depressing. So at one point they said, you will be where we are very soon. The darkness that we live in will soon be your darkness.

That's what they think. If we keep going the way we're going. Finally, let me give you this one. 2 Corinthians 3.18. 2 Corinthians 3.18.

This is a wonderful verse. Again, one that we turn to often in our counseling ministry to encourage, to give hope. But we all with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, that is, as we look at Jesus, we are being transformed into the same image of Jesus from glory to glory, from day to day, from aspect to aspect, just as from the Lord, the Holy Spirit.

[37 : 04] The simple truth is this. This is how Dr. MacArthur defined it. The more believers grow in their knowledge of Jesus or Christ, the more he is revealed in their lives. As you gaze on Jesus, as you walk with Jesus, as you come to know more intimately Jesus, as you surrender self to Jesus

and learn to worship Jesus and treasure Jesus for who he is, the more and more that Jesus will shine through your life and be seen by those around you.

That's what you want. It's very straightforward and simple of that. So the question comes, is psychology wrong? All right, listen now. Is psychology wrong?

That's an important question. And the answer is yes, it is wrong. It is wrong because it's built on the wisdom of man apart from the wisdom of God.

But there's another fundamental question. Another fundamental question that's perhaps even more relevant to our concerns this morning. And here's the question. Is psychology necessary for life and godliness?

Is man's wisdom in the social sciences necessary for our being more and more conformed to the image of Jesus? Was that God's design?

[38 : 20] Was it God's design to command us to be conformed to the image of his son and to predestine that, to predetermine that before the foundation of the world and call you to that glory and excellence in Christ and then leave out certain aspects of it so that man could come along and fill them in and man get the glory?

I don't think so. I can't find that in scripture. What I found is what I shared with you. Man's wisdom is anti-God. It's hostile to God. And behind that hostility is a very important person, Satan.

Psychology, listen to this. Psychology is to God's wisdom of soul care what Darwinian evolution is to God's wisdom of soul creation. Darwin was used by demons in order to subvert the wisdom of God in creating the souls of human beings.

And so now we have evolution. We have millions and millions of years. We have all kinds of theories about being raised up out of the muck and things crashing together. I would defy them to do one thing.

They could do this in any place in the world. Man, go to a humble honeybee and watch a honeybee do its thing. Watch a documentary on the honeybees and get saved.

[39 : 37] It's amazing what God designed in those little bitty bees and how they do a little dance and they tell everybody else which direction to go in to find the food and bring it back.

Well, that took billions of years, you know, for that to happen. Again, we need to remember these. What they're doing is what they know. What's the saying?

You don't know what you don't know. So I don't want to give you the impression that I'm mocking them. It's ridiculous and I'm going to call it what it is. But we need to win them. We need to win them away from that ridiculousness.

I'm really glad somebody took time to do that with me and bring me to Christ or I'd stay ridiculous and lost. Look, anytime, anytime we take the wisdom of man and try to add it to the wisdom of God, we are betraying in our own hearts the issue of our lack of trust in Jesus and the sufficiency of this truth.

That's just the reality. It's the raw reality. We can spin it all we want. We can make it sound clever all we want. That's one of the criticisms that come to Christians about scripture. It's just not sophisticated enough to meet the modern demands of a modern contemporary culture.

[40 : 50] And that is hooey. This is a timeless truth. And this is the most sophisticated answer that human beings can come up with. Nobody gets that.

Nobody. Apart from the spirit of God. It takes the Holy Spirit to reveal that because we are so desperately lost. And that's what we need. For the sake of the tape, I'm pointing to the cross.

The final one, I'll give you three scriptures and we're done. I told you it was going to be somewhat abbreviated. I did air quotes. All right. The sufficiency of scripture. These are our spiritual resources in brief.

John 17, 17. You had to know I was going to go there. Sanctify them. This is Jesus' priestly prayer. Sanctify them in the truth. Your word is truth. Sanctify. Set them apart. Save them. Make them holy. Progress them in holiness. Do that by the truth.

[41 : 49] What's the truth? Your word. Your word is the truth that will do that in the lives of God's people. Romans 12, 1 and 2. Another familiar passage to our church family.

Therefore, Paul says, after all of 11 chapters of just profound, the most profound theological treatise that many people think has ever been written.

He says this. Therefore, I urge you, brothers, by the mercies of God. All the mercies I've been rehearsing in chapters 1 through 11. All the tender mercies of God present your bodies a living and

holy sacrifice acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.

That's a word to a corporate group of people. Not just you as an individual. He's speaking to the church. And do not be conformed to this world.

You see that? But be transformed by the renewing of your mind so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

[42 : 58] I want you to notice that it does not read like this. By the renewing of your mind so that you may prove what the wisdom and cleverness of Jeff is. Nope.

Jeff is nowhere in there. And neither are you. So that you may prove what the will of God is. You are an instrument in a service of the Lord Jesus Christ. What a wonderful privilege.

What a beautiful reality that God has made you his child and put you in service to the truth. What an honor. What a wonderful way and reason to be grateful.

No matter what the circumstances are because the world cannot rob you of Jesus. And then finally, 2 Peter 1, 3 through 4. You know, I had to end with Peter. 2 Peter 1.

We went over this, I don't know, a few months ago. I don't know how long I've been in 2 Peter. I'm at verse 16 of chapter 1. But we went over this not too long ago.

[44 : 02] We'll start in verse 2. Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.

Seeing that his divine power has granted to us a few things pertaining to life and godliness. No. I misread that. Has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness.

Through the true knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and excellence. For by these he has granted to us his precious and magnificent promises.

So that purpose clause. By them you may become partakers of what? The divine nature. Having escaped the corruption that is in the world by evil desires.

My goodness, there it is. Just a beautiful rendition. Where has God revealed himself and his wisdom to us? Where does God provide us all we need to know?

[45 : 03] In terms of how to please him in every aspect of our lives. Where do we find the single source of God's truth to help us combat the deceptive schemes of Satan?

Working in the systems of the wisdom of man. How do we answer the questions we ask? What is the highest and ultimate goal for every Christian believer's life?

To become more like Jesus Christ. Has man offered us anything that we need to add to that reality that God has left out by giving us Jesus and the truth?

No. Aren't you glad that if you need surgery you can go to a medical doctor? This is not a sermon putting down medicine. This is a sermon putting down the pseudosciences of man's wisdom that has been raised up by demonic issues against the wisdom of God.

We need to combat that. And the answer is loving Jesus well through the truth and speaking that truth to each other in love. Will you pray with me? Father, we believe in the sufficient salvation.

[46 : 12] We believe in a sufficient Savior. We believe in a sufficient scripture. And we believe in a sufficient sanctification provided to us by the power of the Holy Spirit and the love of Jesus Christ from your heart.

Thank you for bringing us Jesus. Thank you almighty God for showing us the way of selflessness. Thank you for defining for us the ultimate nature of sacrifice.

We would never be able in a million lifetimes to make the sacrifice that you've made. And so we call it a privilege, not a sacrifice. We call it an honor.

However, we give you thanks that we can suffer on behalf of Jesus for the truth that he's brought to us in his person. Thank you that Jesus himself is the way, the truth, and the life.

We live in him. And we thank you for him. And we love him. And we love you. And we love the Spirit. And we pray that you would make this church family strong in the truth.

[47 : 16] That we may be lights in a dark place. Help us to bring hope to our community as we love Jesus well and turn to love each other. In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen.