

Joke: Two little brothers, Harry and James, had finished supper and were playing until bedtime. Somehow, Harry hit James with a stick, and tears and bitter words followed. Charges and accusations were still being exchanged as mother prepared them for bed.

The mother instructed, "Now, James, before you go to bed, you're going to have to forgive your brother." James was thoughtful for a few moments, and then he replied, "Well, OK, I'll forgive him tonight, but if I don't die in the night, he'd better look out in the morning."

Collide Week 3: Get Truth

Let me begin by saying that I have found that truth is in really short supply in the world today. But here's the good news the word of God gives us all of the truth we need to live a full and abundant life in Christ.

We need to keep those truths found in Scripture and consider them wisdom, instruction, insight even for our lives. No matter what we do, no matter what comes your way we must cling to that which is the truth.

And. . .

The word of God is the only place we can find real truth.

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

So, let me ask you a couple questions. What are your thoughts concerning the Bible? And are those thoughts prohibiting you from spending enough time in it?

You need to understand that the goal with reading the Bible is not simply to read it, but ultimately to do it. To live it. I need to feel the truth as much as I read the truth, so that I can live the truth.

I have to be willing to actually open God's word every day not just Sunday.

Today we are in week three of our series "Collision course." In week one, we laid the foundation for standing firm on the word of God. In week two, we talked about the first thing God desires out of our lives once we learn to stand firm in our faith, especially when the conflicting values of the world are constantly on a collision course with us.

And that is we must have our mind renewed and be transformed to looking more and more like Him and less and less like us.

And today, we are going to take it one step further, because after God begins to transform us, we have to pursue the source of truth so that we can ultimately live it out. The word, the truth of God, is powerful and effective.

Listen to this story as told from Dr. William Miller:

It's from *Inside Islam, Exposing and Reaching the World of Islam*. Charisma House Press, pg. 122. Written by Reza F. Safa.

It goes like this. . .

"One day a shoemaker in Meshed, a very religious city in Northeastern Iran, brought home for his lunch some cheese

which the grocer had wrapped in a page of the New Testament, which he was using as wrapping paper. After eating his lunch he picked up a piece of paper and read the story of the man who hired laborers for his vineyard, and at the end of the day paid all the laborers the same wage, whether they had worked twelve hours or one.

The shoemaker liked the story, and the next day went again to the grocery store and bought cheese, asking that it be wrapped 'in another page of that book.' Finally, on the third day he bought what remained of the New Testament and showed it to his brother. The two of them then went to a missionary, who gave them a complete copy, and also gave them regular instruction in the Word of God. Both men were later baptized and were among the first believers in that city."

Even when the words of scripture are torn page by page and used as trash, it still has power to redeem.

Turn with me to Romans 7:15.

Romans 7:15 (NIV): I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do.

In this verse, Paul is talking specifically about sin. But I wonder how many of us can take this same principle Paul is using and apply it to our time spent with God in His word, or should I say the lack thereof.

We know what we *should* do, but don't do it. My prayer for us today is that God will give each of us a renewed hunger for His word.

Turn with me back to the Old Testament in Proverbs, chapter 23 verse 23. The writer of Proverbs tells us something about the Truth that is so full of wisdom.

Listen to what the writer emphasizes in this one verse.

Proverbs 23:23 (NIV): Buy the truth and do not sell it— wisdom, instruction and insight as well.

I have already mentioned that truth comes from the word of God. But once we have it, how do we keep it? The first step is what the writer of Proverbs makes clear in this verse.

Point 1: Don't sell it

I don't believe he is talking about us standing on the side of the road with our Bible, or going house to house attempting to sell a physical Bible to someone. Rather, I think the writer is talking about an internal struggle.

You see, It is one thing to receive the Word of God. It is another thing to actually keep it as your priority in life. To live the truth found on the pages of Scripture.

I don't know if you have met anyone like this but I certainly have.

I know some who was once very close to God, but then something happened, maybe they weren't healed, lost a loved one, when through a time of difficulty and they started having doubts about the truth found within the pages of scripture. They started to doubt what they believed, and some were even swayed in a different direction by the worlds.

Unfortunately, this happens to people all the time. As we mentioned in week one of this series, the things of the world can

be seductive. They attempt to draw us in and convince us of their truth, rather than the truth.

It is easy to sell ourselves short by selling what we hold onto as the truth in Scripture.

Maybe some of us are in that place right now. We feel an internal war going on within us. We feel as if we are being pulled in two different directions, and the direction of the world is gaining an advantage because we know it will look like that offer has satisfaction that we can see and feel, but truth is, it is always temporary and rarely truth when given into.

Jesus had a dialogue with a woman about this type of struggle in her life. Let's pick the story up in John chapter 4 we will begin in verse 7.

John 4:7–15 (NIV): When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, “Will you give me a drink?” 8 (His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.) 9 The Samaritan woman said to him, “You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?” (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.) 10 Jesus answered her, “If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water.” 11 “Sir,” the woman said, “you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water? 12 Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his livestock?” 13 Jesus answered, “Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, 14 but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life.” 15 The woman said to him, “Sir, give me this water so that I won’t get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water.”

In this story, Jesus offered the woman the true source of life, one that would satisfy her completely. Before this encounter, she was in the middle of being pulled in the wrong direction, all the while she was searching for what would truly satisfy, and then it came walking into her life.

The truth incarnate, Jesus Christ, collided with her sin and she was set free.

John 1:14 (NIV): The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

That day he showed this woman grace and truth. Amen.

And here's more good news He is stilling showing people today that very same thing.

Hear this church, if you know Jesus, you know the truth.

1 John 5:20 (NIV): We know also that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true. And we are in him who is true by being in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.

How do we learn more about the truth? We spend time in the word that is truth. You spend time meditating on truth. We spend time with the author who wrote the truth.

Once we know it, don't lose it.

And let me add something else to this, don't twist it to fit your believe system.

2 Timothy 2:15 (NIV): Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.

Jesus told us. . .

Matthew 24:35 (NIV): Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

I think that once we receive what we know is truth God wants us to give it away. Which brings me to point number two.

Point 2: Go share it

All throughout the Bible, it is made clear that the word was never meant to just dwell within us.

Look how Matthew closes out his book.

Matthew 28:18–20 (NIV): Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.
19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,
20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

This passage is often called “The Great Commission.” Jesus commands His disciples to go and spread the word of God: the Gospel message about Him to the world. I believe the same commission is given to us when we accept Christ. When we begin to read and study the word of God, when we begin to put it into practice, we are then called to go and share it.

Habakkuk 2:1–3 (NIV): I will stand at my watch and station myself on the ramparts; I will look to see what he will say to me, and

what answer I am to give to this complaint. 2 Then the Lord replied: "Write down the revelation and make it plain on tablets so that a herald may run with it. 3 For the revelation awaits an appointed time; it speaks of the end and will not prove false. Though it linger, wait for it; it will certainly come and will not delay.

And, amazingly, sharing the word with others will strengthen our own faith in the process!

Listen church I have had so many opportunities to share the truth found in Scripture. And have witnessed the impact that that truth has had on someone. All because I was obedient to share the good news.

Why is it we are more excited about sharing the news that we are expecting a baby then we are about sharing the gospel.

Psalm 19:7–10 (NIV): The law of the Lord is perfect, refreshing the soul. The statutes of the Lord are trustworthy, making wise the simple. 8 The precepts of the Lord are right, giving joy to the heart. The commands of the Lord are radiant, giving light to the eyes. 9 The fear of the Lord is pure, enduring forever. The decrees of the Lord are firm, and all of them are righteous. 10 They are more precious than gold, than much pure gold; they are sweeter than honey, than honey from the honeycomb.

This isn't just for me, or people called to some ministry who are called to do this. Truth is, God is calling you to do the same! We are all called to give it away, to share the gospel freely.

And what a joy it is to share with others what God has done. You have a story to tell as well. Chances are, if you have lived for Jesus for any length of time, or you prayed for something, He has shown up.

Maybe you need help learning how to do that. Let me show you how not to do it first.

Show video - skitguys.com - Evangelism

Talk about Lonney

Today, maybe you are in a place where you are tempted to sell yourself short by following the worlds temptations rather than the truth found in the word of God. You feel like you have an internal wrestling match going on. The kingdoms are colliding within you and you feel you need to make a choice.

Today can be the day you submit fully to God's Word. It's the only source of true, abundant life. It's the only thing that can fully satisfy you.

John 8:31–32 (NIV): To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. 32 Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." Will you allow it to do it's work in you?

Would you pray that God would soften the heart of those you know that need to hear His gospel? So when you share it they will receive it.

Once you receive the word, just as we talked about today, pray for opportunities to share it. This is as simple as knowing what it says, living it out, and sharing your story of redemption with those around you.

Will you pray for an open door to share this week with someone close to you? There's so much joy that comes with giving the gospel to someone else. In fact Jesus said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

It will strengthen your faith in Christ. He's called us to believe, receive, and give. Get ready for the open doors coming your way this week.

Let's pray.