

READ Psalm 25:4-11

In this Psalm that is attributed to David, the great king expresses deep dependance upon the Lord for help in the face of enemies who are seeking to disgrace him. I love how instead of asking for straight up deliverance, David asks that the Lord would make His ways known to him, teach him His paths, and guide him in His truth. It seems to be David's full belief and confidence that standing in the ways of God is the best place to be if he desired to experience the salvation that He was capable of giving.

There are two things that I want us to key in on concerning God that David seems to have the most confidence in...God's faithful love and truth. (**vv.5,7,10**) Those two key characteristics of who God is are steadfast and never changing, and they are foundational anchors that we, too, would do well to latch onto in a world that seems to be anything but steadfast and never changing.

Maybe you have felt the same type of disappointment as I have in the reality that many of the common sense truths that once seemed to be...well...common sense are simply no longer seen as being truth. There has been an attack on the concept of truth from those who would like to move our society away from being one that is founded upon truth and move it towards one that accepts individuals truths. Long gone are the days when objective truth was nearly universally accepted as being a real part of our world. Now we are living in times when truths can be purely subjective depending on the person's desires and perspective.

This becomes especially problematic as we claim and strive to be a people who are wholly committed to the truths that are revealed within God's Word. We are called to be like David by being a people who long and desire to be guided by God's ways and paths of truth. We, too, long to know the truth so that we can be set free from that which might cause us to stand condemned before God. We want to be people who are able to be in covenant relationship with God based upon His decrees.

However, we are sadly surrounded by many people who don't want to hear of those decrees. They don't want to hear truths that demand that they repent and change course in this life. They would much rather be who they want to be and do what they want to do. Suppression of the truth or straight up denial of truth are their main means of operation. Whereas these types of people might have been a very small minority if days past... they are now growing in rapid number, and the tides unfortunately seem to be turning their way. What are we to do in a world where truth is constantly being suppressed? My contention is that we are called, just as we are called in other aspects of life, to forsake the world's ungodly influences and rise above to be where God would have us to be. As we continue to year long series of living Godly in an Ungodly World, I would like for us to discuss the need for continuing to embrace truth in a world where the truth is constantly being suppressed. No better text of Scripture addresses these thoughts like that of **Romans 1:16-32**. We will spend out time working our way through this text this morning in order to establish the needed realization that our rejection of the truth that leads to life will only leave us with lies that will surely lead to our deaths.

Romans 1:16-32

A. The Truth Of The Gospel (Romans 1:16,17)

1. In this letter that could be seen as a letter requesting support for his intents to go west into Spain with the Gospel, the Apostle Paul wants to make it abundantly clear that the message he is desiring to take is nothing but the pure Gospel of God. Beginning in **1:16,17**, the Apostle Paul lays out in an orderly fashion the nuts and bolts of God's Gospel that is found in Jesus.
2. It is this Gospel that Paul says he is not ashamed of. He is not ashamed of it because he is convinced that it is the message that brings salvation to every single person who would believe in it. Whether they be Jews or Greeks, this message of Jesus coming into the world to die for the sins of sinful man had the power to bring forgiveness of sins, justification, and sanctification to all who would come to God in faith. In fact, it is God's own righteousness and faithfulness that brought all of this about.

3. Paul then quotes from **Habakkuk 2:4** as a proof that God's righteousness and faithfulness are sure and guaranteed to be in play. Going back to this short prophetic message, Habakkuk is distraught over the wickedness of the people, and he wonders if God is going to continue to force him to witness all of it. God's response is that He has indeed seen the wickedness of the people, and that He is going to raise of the Chaldeans as the tool by which to punish His people. Habakkuk responds by stating that the Chaldeans are even worse than God's own people! How could God allow such a people to have victory?
4. God reassures Habakkuk in the first few verses of chapter 2, and includes in **v.4**, *"Look, his ego is inflated, he is without integrity. But the righteous one will live by his faith."* Within this verse there are a couple of faiths to consider based upon variances in the different manuscripts. Some speak of the faith as if it is the faith of the Jew while others speak as if it is actually contingent upon God's faithfulness. In reality, it is six in one and a half dozen in the other. Both end with the surety of God's faithfulness and our salvation through trusting that God is faithful and will reward those who come to Him in faith. This is Paul's point. God has always been faithful to those who respond to Him in faith. If we will respond to Christ in faith then we, too, will experience the faithfulness of God.
5. How does this tie into our need for embracing truth? It ties in by us needing to recognize that this all indeed is the truth! We need to embrace the reality of God being over the entire creation and our rejection of Him as God and Creator because of our sins and rebellion. Yet, in His infinite grace and mercy, He gave up His only Son for our sins. He continues to show Himself as faithful, so it all comes down to whether or not we will show ourselves as faithful. If we will embrace the truth of our failures and acknowledge that God has made the way for our reconciliation then we have the opportunity to be saved through our faith.

B. Man's Suppression Of Truth (Romans 1:18-23)

1. Yet sadly, there are so many out in the world who simply don't want to hear about their rebellion against God and need for repentance through faith in God and what He has done for them. Because of this, God's wrath is revealed against them because they fail to embrace the truth and instead actively seek to suppress it. They ignore and might even try to hide or deny the truth of God when the need arises.
2. But let's notice that they actually have to suppress the truth. It isn't that they are simply ignorant of the truth, but they have to actively suppress it because the truth is evident to them. Consider what Paul says being in **v. 19** concerning the truth of God being evident among them. How is He evident? We have what could be a bit of a paradoxical statement in **v.20** concerning God's invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, being clearly seen since the creation of the world. This might seem strange to us since Paul is talking about God's invisible attributes, but the reality is that God's power and intelligence are clearly evident and seen when we simply look at the creation that surrounds us.
3. Any honest person would have to look around at the incredible complexity of the creation and come away admitting that there is clearly power and intelligence in what is seen all around us. There is simply no logical way in which everything that encompasses this creation could have happened by chance. None of us would admit such a thing when we pass by some sort of structure or we examine a machine of some sort. We would all admit that something possessing real intelligence and power was behind the creation of the structure or machine.
4. The exact same thing is true when we consider the creation all around us. There is no way that we can deny the existence of God...unless we simply want to. But why would someone want to? Notice what these suppressors of truth are highlighted as not doing even though the

knowledge of God is clearly seen around them. They are seen as not glorifying God and not giving thanks to Him. Why would they do whatever they can in order to not glorify Him or give thanks to Him? They would avoid this at all cost because glorifying God would demand acknowledging His superiority over us, and if we acknowledge that then we would be indebted to offer devotion to Him. The same thing would be true for giving thanks to Him. If we acknowledge that He is worthy of appreciation then we would have to also admit that He is worthy of devotion, and these types of people simply can't have that happening.

5. Therefore, they would rather simply ignore and suppress the truth of God's creating and sustaining of the world, and they would rather instead praise and glorify the creation which is simply a slap in the face to the Creator. Men tend to think and believe that they are incredibly intelligent when they come up with some crazy theory to explain the origins of the world, but the reality, as Paul states, is they are only being come fools through their worthless, senseless, and darkened hearts. They would rather live in that state of denial of the truth than embrace the truth of God and everything that comes with that.

C. God Delivers Them Over (Romans 1:24-32)

1. How will God respond when people make the decision to live in such a way? Paul seems to answer this question the same way three times. In **vv. 24, 26, & 28**, the Apostle states that **"God delivered them over too..."** I can't think of a logical way of understanding what Paul is stating here than to say that God is allowing the free moral agency of mankind to be just that. He is allowing them to make their own choice, but in doing so they are setting themselves up for failure and disaster because God is going to allow them fully pursue the desires of their hearts (**v.24**), their disgraceful passions(**v.26**), and their corrupt minds. (**v.28**)
2. As God allows them to do this, what is it that mankind finds themselves involved in? Paul states firstly that they will find themselves engrossed in all sorts of sexual immorality. Why is this the case? One of the most steadfast truths in all of creation is that God made them male and female. We can find this reality in the **first three chapters of Genesis** and we can also see Jesus reaffirming these truths in **Matthew 19**. Yet, when God's truths are denied and even suppressed...then the most basic truths will certainly become twisted. Though God made woman for man, those who deny God's truths will say that it is perfectly acceptable for men to be with men and women with women. Even though again...this simply doesn't make sense even from the most basic and foundational biological standpoints! Yet, this is the first place that men and women will go in their dive into the depths of depravity. Those things that are the most basic and foundational are the ones that must go first. In doing so, surely these men and women are truly worshipping the creature rather than the Creator.
3. Of course the depravity doesn't stop there. Other basic common sense and logical aspects of life will also be twisted and turned onto their hearts. All sorts of unrighteousness, evil, and wickedness in the form of greed, envy, murder, quarrels, deceit, malice, gossip, slander, God-hating, arrogance, pride, boasting, and disobedience to parents along with being senseless, untrustworthy, unloving, and unmerciful. The basic and common sense logical laws of treating others as you would want to be treated, respecting Creator God, and respecting one's parents are simply not seen as all that logical or needed. These basic truths are not seen as such at all.
4. While we might be frustrated by these truths being blatantly ignored and suppressed, the reality is that these deniers of truth will eventually reap the consequences of death as punishment for their rebellion. Not only will those who practice such things be condemned, but those who also give approval and support those who do such things stand condemned. Denying God's truth doesn't change truth, but it will only lead to greater depravity and sin which will lead to condemnation and death.

What We Learn

- A. God has given us every opportunity to know of His existence so that we might seek out Him and His will.
1. We must remember that we serve a righteous God who greatly desires for all people to repent and be restored back to Him in faithfulness. **(II Peter 3:9)** This is why He has given us every opportunity to know of Him so that we might seek Him out in order to come to know Him, His will, and His desires for us. This is actually something that Paul said in **Acts 17:22-27** to the people of Athens. Paul makes the clear claim that God created the world in such a way that men might seek Him out.
 2. If we're willing to see the incomparable power and intelligence that was needed in order to bring what is all around us into existence, then we will have every opportunity to know the truth of God's existence and seek Him out. He has not hidden Himself from us because He does not want us to find Him. He has clearly revealed Himself through the creation, but it is only those who are willing to humble themselves to consider the truth that they are not the top dog of all existence who will be willing to see His power and intelligence in the creation.
 3. Again, why has God done this? He has done this so that we might know the truth of our fallen condition and seek out restoration through the means that He has given...The Gospel of Jesus Christ who gave His life so that we might have be forgiven of our sins and granted hope of eternal life with Him.
- B. If we reject the truths of God then there is no end to the depths of depravity to which we can fall.
1. Yet, if we reject these truths and the basic truths of life as designed by God from the beginning...then we have no where else to turn than to the lies that have been conjured up by the deceitful hearts of mankind. If we reject the truth then we only have lies left to accept. When we have only lies to accept then it shouldn't surprise us when we see the wickedness of mankind compounding and leading to greater and greater wickedness and evil.
 2. Again, this is playing out before our very eyes. The foundational truths of this life are being perverted and distorted in our society to the point that our speaking out against such perversions and distortions is actually seen as the wrong thing to do! The words of the prophet Isaiah echo true today just as they did in his own day. ***"Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness, who substitute bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter."*** **(Isaiah 5:20)** But this is exactly what we can look forward to when the truths of God are rejected in order to embrace the lies of the evil one.

Main Point/Conclusion: *When we reject the truth that leads to life...we are only left with lies that lead to death.*

We know what the world seeks to do when it comes to the truths of God for we have clearly seen that even within Scripture this morning. The world desires to suppress God's truths in order to establish what they believe are their own truths. And yet, we have seen that such efforts will only lead to death and destruction on their parts.

The question that remains is whether or not we are willing to go counter-culture and against the grain of the world in order to embrace the truths that have been established by God. If we have any desire for eternal salvation then this must be our goal. We must begin with the truths that our sins cause us to be in great need of a Savior and that Savior was given by God. His name is Jesus, and He seeks to save us. If we will acknowledge these truths and the other foundational truths that are present in this world then we can live for God now and have the hope of living with Him for eternity. May we always embrace His truths even when the world around us has clearly embraced the lies.