

Can You Handle The Truth When It Is About You?

Series: Understanding God Helps You To Understand You.

Can you handle the truth?

What about when the truth is about you?

What Does The Bible Say?

16 “Go and get your husband,” Jesus told her. 17 “I don’t have a husband,” the woman replied. Jesus said, “You’re right! You don’t have a husband—18 for you have had five husbands, and you aren’t even married to the man you’re living with now. You certainly spoke the truth!” (John 4:16–18 NLT)

When someone tells you the truth, are you offended, or do you listen?

29 “Come and see a man who told me everything I ever did! Could he possibly be the Messiah?” 30 So the people came streaming from the village to see him. (John 4:28–30 NLT)

When you can handle the truth about yourself, you can influence others.

Transparency and honesty are traits that allow others to believe you.

We all have traits or habits that we need to improve or eliminate.

They do not practice what they preach. (Matthew 23:3)

They love the place of honor at banquets and the most important seats in the synagogues. (Matthew 23:6)

Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites!

You shut the door of the kingdom of heaven in people's faces.

You yourselves do not enter, nor will you let those enter who are trying to. (Matthew 23:13)

You clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. (Matthew 23:25)

You are like whitewashed tombs, which look beautiful on the outside but on the inside are full of the bones of the dead and everything unclean. (Matthew 23:27)

On the outside you appear to people as righteous but on the inside you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness. (Matthew 23:28)

You snakes! You brood of vipers! How will you escape being condemned to hell? (Matthew 23:33)

Many people can't handle the truth about themselves. Does that include you?

7 But in fact, it is best for you that I go away, because if I don't, the Advocate won't come. If I do go away, then I will send him to you. 8 And when he comes, he will convict the world of its sin, and of God's righteousness, and of the coming judgment.

9 The world's sin is that it refuses to believe in me.

10 Righteousness is available because I go to the Father, and you

will see me no more. 11 Judgment will come because the ruler of this world has already been judged.

12 “There is so much more I want to tell you, but you can’t bear it now. 13 When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own but will tell you what he has heard. He will tell you about the future. (John 16:7–13 NLT)

The Holy Spirit guides you in truth.

How Can You Obey?

The Holy Spirit influences you through:

Scripture.

Others.

Directly.

22 “And now I am bound by the Spirit to go to Jerusalem. I don’t know what awaits me, 23 except that the Holy Spirit tells me in city after city that jail and suffering lie ahead. 24 But my life is

worth nothing to me unless I use it for finishing the work assigned me by the Lord Jesus—the work of telling others the Good News about the wonderful grace of God. (Acts 20:22–24 NLT)

So how do you handle the truth when it is about you?

Additional Notes:

If you would like to use your home to disciple others, check out our training at www.crosswaveschurch.com/host. Cross Waves has produced short videos to train you how to use your home to reach others for Christ. So please check it out.

Notes:

This series is originated from the book, Thurman, C. (2017).
The Lies We Believe About God: Knowing God For Who He
Really Is. Colorado Springs, CO: David C Cook.

Notes:

Today's Bible and Science segment comes from Ken Ham &
Bodie Hodge, The New Answers Book 1, (Green Forest Rapids,
AR: Master Books, 2006.

Explore:

For three years, Jesus had been with them to protect them from
attack; but now He was about to leave them. He had told them
this earlier in the evening (John 13:33), and Peter had asked Him
where He was going (John 13:36). However, Peter's question
revealed more concern about himself than about the Lord Jesus!
Also, his question centered on the immediate, not the ultimate. It

was necessary for Jesus to explain why it was important for them that He return to the Father.

The major reason, of course, is that the Holy Spirit might come to empower the church for life and witness. Also, the ascended Saviour would be able to intercede for His people at the heavenly throne of grace. With all of their faults, the disciples dearly loved their Master; and it was difficult for them to grasp these new truths.

It is important to note that the Spirit comes to the church and not to the world. This means that He works in and through the church. The Holy Spirit does not minister in a vacuum. Just as the Son of God had to have a body in order to do His work on earth, so the Spirit of God needs a body to accomplish His ministries; and that body is the church. Our bodies are His tools and temples, and He wants to use us to glorify Christ and to witness to a lost world.

Sometimes we hear people pray, “Lord, send Your Spirit to speak to the lost! May the Spirit go from heart to heart.” Such praying is no doubt sincere, but is it biblical? The Spirit does not “float” in some ghostly way up and down the rows of a church building, seeking to win the lost. The Holy Spirit works through the people in whom He lives. When the Holy Spirit came at Pentecost, He empowered Peter to preach; and the preaching of the Word brought conviction to those who heard.

The key word here is reprove (John 16:8). It is a legal word that means “to bring to light, to expose, to refute, to convict and convince.” It could be translated “pronounce the verdict.” The world may think that it is judging Christians, but it is the Christians who are passing judgment on the world as they witness to Jesus Christ! Believers are the witnesses, the Holy Spirit is the “prosecuting attorney,” and the unsaved are the guilty prisoners. However, the purpose of this indictment is not to condemn but to bring salvation.

The Holy Spirit convicts the world of one particular sin, the sin of unbelief. The law of God and the conscience of man will convict the sinner of his sins (plural) specifically; but it is the work of the Spirit, through the witness of the believers, to expose the unbelief of the lost world. After all, it is unbelief that condemns the lost sinner (John 3:18–21), not the committing of individual sins. A person could “clean up his life” and quit his or her bad habits and still be lost and go to hell.

The Spirit also convicts the sinner of righteousness, not unrighteousness. Whose righteousness? The righteousness of Jesus Christ, the perfect Lamb of God. The world would not receive the Son of God (John 1:10), so He has returned to the Father. When He was here on earth, He was accused by men of being a blasphemer, a lawbreaker, a deceiver, and even a demoniac. The Spirit of God reveals the Saviour in the Word and in this way glorifies Him (John 16:13–14). The Spirit also reveals Christ in the lives of believers. The world cannot receive

or see the Spirit of God, but they can see what He does as they watch the lives of dedicated believers.

The Spirit convicts the lost sinner of judgment. Do not confuse this statement with Acts 24:25 (“of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come”). Jesus was referring to His judgment of Satan that was effected by His death on the cross (John 12:31).

Satan is the prince of this world, but he is a defeated prince.

Satan has already been judged and the verdict announced. All that must take place is the executing of the sentence, and that will occur when Jesus returns.

When a lost sinner is truly under conviction, he will see the folly and evil of unbelief; he will confess that he does not measure up to the righteousness of Christ; and he will realize that he is under condemnation because he belongs to the world and the devil (Eph. 2:1–3). The only person who can rescue him from such a horrible situation is Jesus Christ, the Son of God. There

can be no conversion without conviction, and there can be no conviction apart from the Spirit of God using the Word of God and the witness of the child of God.

Witnessing is a great privilege, but it is also a serious responsibility. It is a matter of life or death! How we need to depend on the Holy Spirit to guide us to the right persons, give us the right words, and enable us patiently to glorify Jesus Christ.

Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 361–362.

Explore:

Jesus' popularity is attracting official hostility. He withdraws to Galilee. There are two or three occasions in this Gospel when Jesus decides it is not the right time to be killed or put in prison!

Taking the direct route north, Jesus passes through Samaria.

Here he meets a woman at Jacob's well.

It is noon, the hottest part of the day. There is no one else around. There are several reasons why Jesus and the woman should not speak to each other. Jesus is a man and she is a woman; he is a Jew and she a Samaritan.

The Samaritans are not pure Jews by race or religion. They accept only the first five books of the Bible (the Pentateuch, or books of Moses) and once built their own temple on Mount Gerizim. But Jesus, who has no time for racial feuds and social taboos, simply asks the woman for a drink.

The Samaritan woman comes to the well alone and in the heat of the day because her neighbors despise her. She has had a succession of husbands and is now living with someone else. As they talk beside the well, Jesus introduces himself as one who gives 'living water'—the gift of eternal life.

The woman is intrigued, and soon realizes that Jesus knows all about her. She asks him what he thinks about the old argument

over the two temples, and Jesus tells her that the Jews have been right. But it isn't the place that makes worship genuine, it is the Spirit and truth of God. When the woman says that the Messiah will explain it all, Jesus tells her she is already looking at him!

The disciples are shocked to find Jesus alone with the Samaritan woman. The writer remembers how she left her water jar in her haste to fetch her neighbours to see the Christ. As the people come swarming across the fields towards them, Jesus urges his disciples to become labourers in this human harvest.

Andrew Knowles, *The Bible Guide*, 1st Augsburg books ed. (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg, 2001), 510.

Explore:

This scathing denunciation of the scribes and Pharisees arose out of the incidents described in the preceding chapters. The religious leaders of Israel were presented as professional

hypocrites. By saying “the official interpreters of the Scriptures” (23:2), Jesus was implying that the Pharisees were assuming Mosaic authority for their petty laws and traditions. The “prayer boxes” (23:5, also known as “phylacteries”) were small boxes containing portions of Scripture (cf. Exod. 13:2–10; Deut. 6:4–9) that were strapped on the forehead and fore-arm during prayer (cf. Exod. 13:9, 16; Deut. 11:18). The “tassels” (Matt. 23:5; cf. Deut. 22:12) served as reminders to keep the law.

The term “Rabbi” (Matt. 23:7), from the Hebrew *rab* (meaning “great”), was a reverential form of address and title of respect.

Note the threefold use of “for” in 23:8–10. Jesus called the Pharisees to give up their religion of human deeds and short-lived glory (23:5–7) and to seek God in humble repentance.

Humility (23:12) was the key concept in Matthew 21–23.

Jesus gave seven woes (23:13–36). For tithing (23:23), see Deuteronomy 14:22–29. The leaders did not understand the true

meaning of the law. They debated the outer and inner cleanness of utensils while the law really was concerned with people and their moral purity (Matt. 23:25–26). “Whitewashed tombs” (23:27) were clean on the outside but were full of hidden death and decay. Inner purity (23:27–28) was demanded in order to escape destruction (23:29–36).

Robert B. Hughes and J. Carl Laney, Tyndale Concise Bible Commentary, The Tyndale reference library (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2001), 418.

Explore:

Acts 20:22–23 Having reminded the Ephesian leaders of his example during his presence with them, Paul now prepared them for his absence. Paul was leaving them and was on his way to Jerusalem, not knowing what would happen to him there (v. 22). He evidently had first decided to take this course while still in Ephesus (cf. 19:21). He was going to Jerusalem with the

collection, and he did indeed have serious misgivings about how it would be received there and was fully aware that the enterprise involved some personal risk (cf. Rom 15:31). Under the compulsion of the Spirit, Paul was going to Jerusalem. On the other hand, the Spirit was warning him that “in every city” hardships, even imprisonment, awaited him (v. 23). Some of these warnings were given through other Christians and are related in the subsequent narrative (cf. 21:4, 11). The activity of the Spirit could be seen as contradictory here. On the one hand, Paul was driven on to Jerusalem. On the other hand, he was warned of the extreme risk in going there. These messages of the Spirit were not at odds. Paul was indeed being led to Jerusalem. God had a purpose for his going there. The warnings prepared him for what awaited him in Jerusalem and assured him that whatever happened, God was in it. Paul would undergo severe trials in Jerusalem, but through them he would ultimately bear

his witness in Rome, which was his own heart's desire (cf. 19:21; Rom 1:9f.).

20:24 In v. 24 Paul stated the reason he was willing to face the dangers in Jerusalem. He was ready to surrender his life for the gospel. In his epistles Paul often stated his readiness to suffer, even to die, for Christ. The description of his ministry as running a footrace is also common in his letters.⁸⁰ The most striking parallel is with 2 Tim 4:7, where the phrase “finished the race” also appears. The race that Paul was running was the ministry he had received from Jesus. That ministry is described as his testimony to the “gospel of God’s grace.” Oddly, that exact phrase never occurs in the epistles of Paul. One could scarcely summarize the heart of Paul’s message better than the “good news of God’s grace.”

John B. Polhill, Acts, vol. 26, The New American Commentary
(Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 425.

Question 1 of 5

How do you view the origins of the world? Are you an evolutionist or believe God created everything in six days?

Question 2 of 5

Do you think there is any possibility that birds evolved from dinosaurs? Would you please explain your answer?

Question 3 of 5

Is there anyone in your life whom you allow God to use to speak truth to you when you are out of line?

Question 4 of 5

How angry and defensive do you get when someone challenges you about a defect in your character or an immoral act you have done?

Question 5 of 5

How active of a role do you allow the Holy Spirit to play in guiding you to truth, directing your steps, and convicting you of the things you need to improve?