

IN MY FATHER'S HOUSE

John 14:1-6

Message 8

Text: John 18:28-38

Word Count: 4180

INTRO: We have considered Jesus' words to Thomas, "I am the way..." We now want to look at His words, "I am the truth..." Only such words as the word 'love' have given me greater difficulty to define. Truth, like goodness and love, and such words have taken up much time in man's thinking. The universities have had their hands in such matters for a long time. I am very, very convinced of one thing: if you want to know such things you MUST know God!

Recently I watched a debate between various scholars who all hold that the Bible is the Word of God but they had different positions on how God created everything. Several, like Ken Ham, held strongly to a literal interpretation of the Word of God and that it is divinely inspired, and let that be their guiding rule. Others, though they would have said they did the same, let modern man's thinking weigh in on their decisions. I am committed to the divine inspiration of Scripture and that this book, rightly translated and rightly interpreted gives us all we need for life and godliness. I believe this book presents to us the truth!

When Jesus was called in before the law courts of man, the created, taking upon himself to judge the Creator, if you can imagine such a thing; he came before Pilate. And John 18:37 says, "Pilate therefore said to Him, 'Are You a king then?' Jesus answered, 'You say *rightly* that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.'" Verse 38 then says, "Pilate said to Him, 'What is truth?'" And when he had said this, he went out again to the Jews, and said to them, "I find no fault in Him at all."

Pilate asked the ago old question, "What is truth?" And in our text, Jesus said, "I am the truth." This is a most difficult clause to interpret. So, to help you understand how I will approach this proposition, let me share with you how I see these three major propositions. I believe that when Jesus said, "I am the way", He meant, "I am the way to God" as the words, "No man comes to the Father but by Me"

indicate. And thus I believe when He said, "I am the truth", He was saying, "I am the truth about God" or "revealing God". He was the true revelation of God. And when He said, "I am the life" He was saying, "I am the life from God."

Now to stay from confusing matters let me just say that I am dealing only with that which is called objective truth. You see, one may argue that truth is subjective or relative but that is not our topic here. Our topic is objective truth and I want to tell you in absolutely no uncertain terms that there is objective truth. I would not know how to live if that were not the case, and those who argue there is no truth would not know how to live then either. Today many argue that there is no such a thing as truth. My daughter listened to Ravi Zacharias this past week and he was speaking at a faculty luncheon. And a professor said to Ravi in the middle of his talk, "You are antiquated, you're an anachronism (i.e., that is old fashioned and out of touch). You believe in the concept of truth." And Ravi Zacharias said, "How did you arrive at that?" If there is no truth, you cannot say something like that. You see, if there is no truth you cannot know there is no truth, for then, the fact that there is no truth would become the truth.

## 2. I Am The Truth (6b) **about God the Father**

So, our first task at hand is to define truth. If you want to make your head spin, if you want to tax your mental capacities, study truth in the writings and thinking of man. Take just simply Wikipedia's article on truth and think it through until you understand what they are saying, and you will probably have little hair left. Try to comprehend Hegelian dialectics. Try to comprehend the major views of truth and you have a study on your hands that will tax you to the utmost.

But one of the major definitions of truth which presents a view that has been, and is still held by many, is a very simple definition. It is this, and I have told it to you before, "Truth is that which corresponds to reality." So, to have truth you must have two things. You have one thing that has reality and another that corresponds to that reality.

Let me give you an example. If you put down the number one and that is all you have it is not truth. If you make this statement, "This is the number one", now your statement corresponds to the number that is put down and now you have a truth. So, if you just have the number one. That is not a truth. Now if you write down  $1+1$ , that is not a truth. If you write down  $1+1=$  \_\_\_\_\_ that is not a truth. But if you write down  $1+1=2$ , the answer corresponds to the mathematical question and now you have a truth.

As I have pondered this matter of truth, I believe that that which corresponds to reality is something that is conceived in the mind. It is the mental perception or understanding or knowledge of that which corresponds to reality. And that which is correctly conceived in the mind is capable of being put into propositions.

It has been said that, "Beauty is in the eyes of the beholder." I would say that "Truth is in the heart, or mind of the beholder." It is correctly putting together two or more things that correspond to reality. And when I have come to understand the truth, it demands a response. You cannot get away from a response. You will respond, but it will be either for good or for bad. Many people, like the devil, hate the truth. Atheists hate the truth. Richard Dawkins hates the truth.

Now listen carefully as I read John 3:16-21, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come

to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God."

So, truth is perceived by the mind. Truth is understandable. With that, let me say that coming to truth is a process. To come to truth, we must learn to put into understandable terms those things that correspond. So there are mathematical truths, truths related to shapes, truth regarding colors and a whole host of other things that are objective truth.

Now, we learn what mental perceptions correspond to what reality by observing data. For example, as a child, we begin to learn from the day we are born, or possibly even sooner. But we begin by learning very elementary things. As the child grows we may point to our ear and say the word 'ear'. After some time the child, by observing the data, learns to put together the sound 'ear' with the physical ear. To learn the answer to the math problem  $1+1 = ?$ , the child must learn certain mathematical laws. This is a process as well, as all teachers know.

Now let me explain the process of coming to truth from the Scriptures. The NT word for the observation of data is *eido* in the aorist tense. Here is an example. Jesus had been crucified and buried. And now the disciples had been told that He was risen from the dead. That, of course is hard to believe without some evidence. So, the way to verify this is to go to the tomb and see if He is still there. So Peter and John ran to the tomb and John 20:8 says, "Then the other disciple, who came to the tomb first, went in also; and he saw (1492 *eido+aor.*) and believed." Now there are at least 12 words translated 'to see' and this is one of them. It does not only mean he 'saw'. It means he beheld, or considered, or he processed the data that he saw. He considered the data, computed its significance, and believed. You see, what he saw corresponded to what he had heard. And so he believed that Jesus had been raised from the dead because of

the data he had just processed. (See also John 1:39 2xs; John 8:19 is of interest, all eido).

So, first is observation, and then second is understanding the truth the data communicates. You see, the disciples had been told that Jesus was risen from the dead. Now they ran to the tomb and what they saw corresponded to the message they had been given. Putting those two things together gave them the understanding that Jesus had in fact risen from the dead.

So, with regard to understanding, or putting things together that correspond, consider Mark 4:11-13, "And He said to them, "To you it has been given to know (1097 ginwskw, begin to know) the mystery of the kingdom of God; but to those who are outside, all things come in parables, so that 'Seeing (991 blepw, with the eyes) they may see (991 blepw, with the eyes) and not perceive (1492 eidw+aor tense, not consider or observe correctly), And hearing (lit. with ear) they may hear (lit. with ear) and not understand (4920 suneimi); Lest they should turn, (be converted) And *their* sins be forgiven them.'"13 And He said to them, "Do you not understand (1492 eido, perf. tense) this parable? How then will you understand (1097 ginwsko, know fut.) all the parables?"

Now there is a lot of information here. But I view 'understanding' as the second thing in line after observation. The word to *understand* is *suneimi*, which means to place together, to put together. When Peter and John saw the empty tomb and put that together with what they had been told, they believed. It corresponded. So, notice now first that these people saw, blepw, not eidw all that Jesus did. From seeing with their eyes they should have been able to consider and compute and put together the data and come to the truth, about Christ, but they did not 'percieve', eidw. They did not draw the correct conclusion. The synonymous line that *hearing they did not hear* concludes that they did not understand, and there is our word. It is the word 'suneimi'. If they had seen and observed and correctly computed the data, they would have understood. The word

'to understand' is *suneimi*. It means 'to put together'.

So the first step is observing the data. The second is putting the data together with that which corresponds. The third thing is to know. When you teach a child what the eyes are you point to the eye and make the sound 'eye'. If they can put those two things together, they understand. Once they understand, they now know the one simple truth that the sound 'eye' stands for the physical eye. Now they begin to recognize or know what the eye is. This is a truth that they have learned.

So the third step is to know. This third step, to know could be further divided as the inception of knowledge, 'ginwskw' and 'eido' when that truth becomes cemented in our minds or epiginwskw, meaning fullness of knowledge. But basically this step is to know, knowledge; truths stored in the mind.

So we have first observation. Then we have understanding or putting together of a reality with the correct mental perception, then comes knowing. But with regard to spiritual truth, knowing is not yet the last step. The last step is to believe, or believe in. Let us consider John 20:8 again, "Then the other disciple, who came to the tomb first, went in also; and he saw (1492 eido+aor.) and believed (4100 pisteuw + aorist)." The word 'to believe' means to be persuaded. What John saw persuaded him of the truth of Jesus resurrection. So, he considered the data, computed it with what Jesus had said before He was crucified that He must rise again, and he put that data together and came to a knowledge of this truth and he believed the truth.

Now there is a very important matter to understand here. Because we believe something to be true, yet it may not do us a bit of good. As a matter of fact, it can make us afraid. James says in 2:19, "You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe and tremble!"

So, let us say you believe that Jesus died for your sins, but you also do not want to forsake those sins. You enjoy them. And you cannot stand for the truth before your friends. Now you believe the truth and tremble.

So, one must make one of two decisions when it comes to the truth that Jesus died for me. I can believe the truth about Jesus, or I can believe in Jesus. There is a vast difference. For example, if I believe Jesus died for my sins and I believe that if I repent and receive Him He will forgive me, but I only believe the truth about Jesus and do not receive Him, I will receive the greater judgment. If I repent and receive Him because I believe IN Him, I will be saved.

And now we are ready to look at our text. Jesus said, "I am the truth." I have pondered this proposition for a long time and have heard such things said as this: He is the truth personified. I have tried to define that and am not able to do so. It sounds impressive but I'm not sure it works. Now because my puny mind cannot do it does not mean it is not correct. But I believe what Jesus is saying in verse 6 is, "I am the way which leads to God, I am the truth which reveals God, and I am the life which comes from God."

I would put it like this: "Do you want to get to My Father? I am the way. Do you want to know My Father? I am the truth which reveals Him. Do you want the life which comes from the Father? I am that life which comes from God." And then He concludes like this, "No one comes to the Father but by Me." Now, what I think He means when He says "I am the truth" is, "Do you want to know God the Father? Look at Me and You will see Him." When you see Me, you will see that which exactly corresponds to God the Father. I am the truth that reveals God. So, when Jesus said, "I am the truth", you could picture it like this. Jesus = God the Father.

So, go to John 14 now and I will show you why I have come to this conclusion (read 14:5-11). As I

see it, Jesus is saying, "I am the truth which reveals the Father." If you see Me and the life I live, and you correctly put together the data you behold, you will recognize that you have seen God." So the angel told Joseph that Mary's Son would be called, "Gimmanuel", which means *God with us*. He was "God with us." So Jesus said to Thomas in verse 7, "If you had known Me, you would have known the Father also..." See, if Thomas had correctly observed the data of the life of Christ, that is His words and His works, He would have said, "My Lord and My God" before he saw the nail prints and the wound in His side. He would have seen that Jesus was His God all along. But he had not correctly processed the data and since he had not put it together right, he did not yet 'know' Him.

But later, when He put his hands in Jesus side and saw the nail prints in His hands, now the data was plain and he put it together right and he burst out, "My Lord and My God" or, "My Lord" equals, "My God!" What Thomas is saying there is His Lord, that is Jesus, is also His God. He had come to the truth! And that is what Jesus meant when He said, "I am the truth!"

If God Almighty would become flesh, and live in this world, and we could see Him live and walk and talk, what would He be like or look like? Well, read Matthew, Mark, Luke and John and you will know! Observe the life of Christ, and you will see God in Him. So Scripture says of Christ that His name would be "Gimmanuel", or "Emmanuel", that is "God with us". He was God manifest in the flesh. Jesus revealed the truth about God.

And what is the practical application of this? If you and I go to anything or anyone else for fulfillment other than Jesus Christ, we are idolaters. The greatest discovery you and I can come to is the one Thomas came to, and the greatest event that should happen to us is that we should burst out with the discovery, "My Lord and My God!" And if He becomes our Lord and our God, we will do what He says. We will obey Him. We won't say, "What's wrong with that?" We will



just ask Him to show us what is right or what is wrong and as soon as we know, we will do it. And if it is questionable, we will leave it out until He does show us.

I taped on my wall this little clip from A.W. Tozer. He said, "There is a great decision that every denomination has to make sometime in the development of its history. Every church also has to make it either at its beginning or a little later--usually a little later. Eventually every board is faced with the decision and has to keep making it, not by one great decision made once for all, but by a series of little decisions adding up to one great big one. Every pastor has to face it and keep renewing his decision on his knees before God. Finally, every church member, every evangelist, every Christian has to make this decision. It is a matter of judgment upon that denomination, that church, that board, that pastor, that leader and upon their descendants and spiritual children. The question is this: Shall we modify the truth in doctrine or practice to gain more adherents? Or shall we preserve the truth in doctrine and practice and take the consequences?"

Tozer then went on to say this, "A commitment to preserving the truth and practice of the church is what separates me from a great many people who are perhaps far greater than I am in ability. This is my conviction, long held and deeply confirmed by a knowledge of the fact that modern gospel churches, almost without exception, have decided to modify the truth and practice a little in order to have more adherents and get along better."

CONCL: So, in conclusion, what is truth? Answer: Truth is that which corresponds to reality. It is a mental perception that corresponds to that which has reality. And how could Jesus say He was the truth? By the fact that His life and conduct corresponded to who God is.

And so, let me ask us some questions as we close. Are you in business? Could you say with regard to your business what Tozer said of himself as a preacher: "A commitment to

preserving the truth and practice in my business is what separates me from a great many people who are perhaps far greater than I am in ability. This is my conviction, confirmed by a knowledge of the fact that modern Christian businessmen, almost without exception, have decided to modify the truth and practice a little in order to have a bigger business and get ahead faster."

With regard to your marriage, could you say what Tozer said of himself as a preacher: "A commitment to preserving the truth and practice in my marriage is what separates me from a great many people who are perhaps far greater than I am in ability. This is my conviction, confirmed by a knowledge of the fact that modern Christian marriages, almost without exception, have decided to modify the truth and practice a little in order to let the flesh fulfill a few other desires."

With regard to taking a wife or a husband, could you say what Tozer said of himself as a preacher: "A commitment to preserving the truth and practice in purity with regard to taking a life partner is what separates me from a great many people who are perhaps far better looking and more desirable than I. This is my conviction, deeply confirmed by a knowledge of the fact that modern Christian young people, almost without exception, have decided to modify the truth and practice a little in order to satisfy the flesh a little and get the person they want as well."

With regard to your children, could you say what Tozer said of himself as a preacher: "A commitment to preserving the truth and practice in my family is what separates me from a great many people who are perhaps getting ahead a lot faster than I am. This is my conviction, long held and deeply confirmed by a knowledge of the fact that modern Christian families, almost without exception, have decided to modify the truth and practice a little in order to do their own thing and have more time to themselves."

With regard to church life, could you say with regard to your church life what Tozer said of himself as a preacher: "A commitment to preserving the truth and practice in my church life is what separates me from a great many people who perhaps have far greater spiritual gifts than I have. This is my conviction, confirmed by a knowledge of the fact that modern Christian church goers, almost without

exception, have decided to modify the truth and practice a little in order to have both the church and the world."

With regard to family life, could you say with regard to your family life what Tozer said of himself as a preacher: "A commitment to preserving the truth and practice in family life is what separates me from a great many people who perhaps are much more appreciated in their families than I am. This is my conviction, confirmed by a knowledge of the fact that our community Christian families, almost without exception, have decided to modify the truth and practice, a little, in order to be accepted and get along in the family."

You see, it is this modification of truth that is the big question. What kind of pressure will it take for me to yield to modifying the truth. I believe in trying to get along with people as much as possible. Scripture says, "As much as lies within you, live at peace with all men." But if living at peace requires modifying the truth or not being able to live the truth, then living at peace is no longer an option.

Now truth should always be tempered by love, but truth is of utmost importance. There is truth in every realm, whether it be math, science, politics or religion. And when it comes to the truth about God Almighty, Jesus is that truth. He is God manifest in the flesh. There is no truth to any other god besides the God of the Bible, Jehovah God. He is the only God and we can get to know Him through Jesus Christ. When you read the Gospels, you will read the account of a life that revealed God the Father to perfection.