

Selected Scriptures
The Legacy of Absolute Truth
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Well, this summer as we are taking a little break from our study of 1 John, Lord willing we'll come back there in early September. But we are considering the Legacy of Knowledge and Practice that was handed down to us as God's people from the past, but sadly that the Christian church in our day has lost, particularly over the last 150 years. So, we're looking at those things that we've lost, much like the knowledge that was lost when the great library of Alexandria was destroyed, and generations of knowledge just disappeared. Sadly, that's happened in the Christian church.

We're looking at what are some of those key things that the Christian church has lost? First, we considered the Legacy of Expository Preaching. The last couple of weeks we've focused on the Legacy of Music in Worship, or worship in music might be a more accurate way to say it.

Today I want us to consider The Legacy of Absolute Truth. God's word is true, but clearly you understand that the Bible, as God's truth, is under attack today. I think the most intimidating attack for me, and many believers, comes from skeptics, atheists and false teachers in academic robes who refer to themselves as biblical scholars. For example, one of the best known is a man named Bart Ehrman. Ehrman teaches at the University of North Carolina in religious studies.

By the way, beware parents, if you send your kids to a school that has any semblance of religious studies, or a religious past, you are sending them to predators who will prey on their faith today. It is not the school you once knew about. They's meet men like this man. He was originally Episcopalian, but as a teenager, he made a profession of faith in the biblical gospel. He later attended Moody Bible Institute, and Wheaton College. Sadly, in his doctrinal studies at Princeton, he was indoctrinated with liberalism and lost his faith.

Eventually, and he became, and today is, something between an agnostic and an atheist. But he still presents himself as an expert and a scholar on the Bible. He has written 30 books. He teaches internet courses. And all of that is designed to attack the historic Christian faith that he personally hates, and to do so under the guise of genuine academic scholarship.

Not surprisingly, Erhman centers his attacks on the Scripture. This is what he writes,

The Bible is filled with discrepancies, many of them irreconcilable contradictions. Moses did not write the Pentateuch, and Matthew, Mark, Luke and John did not write the gospels. The gospels are at odds on numerous points and contain non-historical material. It's hard to know whether Moses ever existed, and what exactly the historical Jesus taught. Many of the books of the New Testament are written, not by the apostles, but by later writers claiming to be apostles. [And then he says this:] The Bible at the end of the day is a very human book.

Now, he rejects the resurrection of Christ, he rejects all the miracles of Scripture, and on and on it goes. What you need to understand, is that is actually tired, old last century liberalism spewed out by an angry apostate atheist, who happens to have several degrees behind his name. He desperately wants others to reject the Bible as he has. He uses old arguments that had been answered, ironically, answered by former professors at Princeton, the very place he learned this stuff. As well as, he misrepresents the Bible many times in many cases and at times, frankly, it's hard not to think that he just lied.

He says things like this, "none of the apostles claimed that Jesus was fully God and fully man. Jesus' divinity was part of John's theology not a part of Jesus' own teaching."

Now, whether it's from Bart Erhman or many others that are out there that you can hear and hear about, today's attempts to discredit the Scripture really come in three main attacks. Let me give them to you briefly.

First of all, attacks on the Scripture come from anti-supernaturalism which says there is no God, or if there is, He never intervenes in the world. So, there is nothing supernatural, nothing miraculous. So, when you come to the Bible, you see things that may appear to be, they can't be real because there is no miraculous. God never intervenes in His world if He exists at all. Now, I hope you recognize that this is, on the face of it, a logical fallacy. It rests on unproven premises that there is no God and that miracles are therefore impossible. But nevertheless, it's presented in many universities, colleges and by many biblical scholars.

A second attack comes from higher textual criticism. This argument says the biblical texts are not historically reliable. We don't even know that's what Jesus said. We don't know if that's what the Bible really is. Now, skeptics love this argument, but frankly it contradicts the clear

evidence that you can research on your own. The truth is we have more manuscript copies of the Bible than we do of any other ancient document. But nobody is saying, “I don’t think Aristotle said that. I don’t think Plato said that.” Because they don’t like what the Bible teaches. They don’t like its claims.

In addition to that, the biblical manuscripts that we have date closer to the original autographs and the events themselves than any other ancient document. In other words, the gap between when the documents we possess were written and the events themselves is much closer than any other ancient document.

If you’ve been tempted by this argument, or you are interacting with someone who has, let me encourage you to read Michael Kruger’s very helpful book called, *The Question of Canon*. He will show you that the canon of Scripture, the New Testament for example is where he really concentrates. It was not something that 300 years after Christ that a group of church leaders got together and said, we think these books are inspired. He proves that in the first century there is clear evidence that the church was embracing the books that were written as the Scripture and equal to the Scripture.

A third attack against Scripture today is postmodernism. Postmodernism says there is no absolute truth, or if there is, it cannot be known. Now this is a relatively new attack, just a few decades old. But it has become, in many ways, the primary attack on Scripture today. And it, at times, those who are postmodern, will use the other two attacks as part of their arsenal, but the foundation of their argument is really postmodernism.

So, I want to focus the rest of our time this morning on this new but virulent attack against the truth of Scripture. Now, as I have done in the series, I want to start by giving you a little bit of historical background. We are going to start with a brief historical overview of what academics call epistemology or the study of knowledge. So, let’s begin then with a brief history of knowledge.

Epistemology primarily answers two questions. What is knowledge? And how do we know what we know? Or in other words, what is the truth, and how do we come to know it? Now, when you look back through human history, historically there have been three primary views of epistemology.

First of all, there is premodern epistemology. This says that truth comes to us through divine revelation. From creation through even the times of the Greek philosophers and until about 400 years ago, as we will see, there was nearly universal agreement on this. Our knowledge as human beings depends on divine revelation. Of course, there were many who didn't believe in the true God, but they believed that revelation was from false gods in nature, or the false gods who made up their pantheon. Others, of course, believed in the true God, believed in the revelation in His creation and in the Scriptures. But regardless, there was nearly universal agreement that what we knew for sure, the truth we knew came to us through divine revelation.

That brings us to a second historical view, and that is to modern epistemology. Modern epistemology teaches that truth comes to us not through revelation but through reason and the senses. Beginning in the seventeenth century at the beginning of the seventeenth century there was an increasing number of intellectuals who rejected the idea premodern epistemology, the idea of authority, the idea of revelation as the source of knowledge.

But really, modern epistemology was born on a cold day in 1610. That was the day that a French mathematician named Rene Descartes had been wrestling for weeks in search of a cohesive philosophical system. After reflecting for hours, he determined that there was only one thing that he could not doubt, and that was the fact that he doubted. With this his conclusion was, "therefore I think, therefore I am." And with that observation, the human mind and human reason became, for a long period of time, the only trustworthy foundation for all knowledge. The period we call "the enlightenment" began with this observation and this conclusion by Descartes. Now, it lasted from the early 1600s until the early 1970s.

Let me just give you a little more insight into this. As I mentioned, it was birthed out of the concept of Rene Descartes, and he taught that we come to the truth not through revelation but through human reason. This is rationalism. One starts with a few self-evident foundational truths, and then builds the rest of knowledge on that foundation through the use of reason.

John Locke, another major contributor to this worldview says, we acquire knowledge of what is true only through the senses and observation. This is empiricism.

And then Emmanuel Kant brought it all together, and he combined rationalism and empiricism so that then modern epistemology, or we could say modernity, is the belief that truth exists, but

the only reliable way to know it is through the scientific method, the use of reason and the senses. That reigned from the early 1600s to the early 1970s.

That brings us to the third era of epistemology that's called postmodern epistemology. Postmodern epistemology says there is no certain truth. Now, postmodernism is really just a label for the prevailing intellectual mood and perspective in western society today. It's a perspective that began in the early 1970s.

Let me just say if you are younger than forty years of age in this room, you have been immersed in postmodernism, and you need to know it. You need to know what you are being sold and what these men came to teach. Now, postmodernism was shaped by several men. Let me just briefly give you their names.

The first was Michel Foucault. He embraced a fragmented view of reality. He believed that there's not a single correct view of the world. Rather there are countless views, and each of them is correct in its own way. You are going recognize these ideas as I go along.

The next man that's important to know is Jacques Derrida. Jacques Derrida argued that words are unpredictable because they change in meaning and therefore are ineffective in communication. Essentially real communication of one mind to another mind is impossible because we can never truly understand because of the inadequacy of words. He also raised doubts about the reliability of the laws of logic.

Richard Rorty and Stanley Fish argued, and this is really important, you see it every day, that the meaning of a text, whatever that text is, depends entirely on the community's interpretation. This is going on right now with our constitution. It's not about what the writers intended, it's what the community intends and invests into that document.

The final plank in the demolition of modernism and the construction of postmodernism came from a man named Jean Francois Lyotard. He was a French philosopher who rejected all metanarratives as he called them. What he meant was all universal theories of meaning, all overarching explanations of life, he said, are not the truth, but they grow out of things like religion, conventional philosophy, capitalism and gender.

So, you say, what does postmodernism teach? Here it is. Postmodernism can be reduced to two simple affirmations. First of all, truth does not exist. And if it does, you can never be certain of what is truth. It denies that there are any objective propositions or truth claims that are universally, eternally true. So, if anything can even be said to be true, it's only true in a particular place at a particular time, for a particular person.

Secondly, there is no universal explanation or metanarrative of meaning that explains the world, that explains reality. It simply doesn't exist. Now, if you don't recognize it, let me just say to you that this philosophy dominates the world's thinking, discussions, certainly its education, its ethics, its art, and by art, I mean all expressions of art whether it is music or art itself. At its heart postmodernism is a rejection of certainty about anything. It's simply: there is no truth, and we certainly can't be sure of that truth even if it exists.

Now, sadly, these same postmodern ideas entered the church through the writings of scholars who have been influenced by it in their studies. For example, in 2001 Stanley Grenz and John Franke wrote *Beyond Foundationalism, Shaping Theology in a Postmodern World*. And in that book, they argued that Christian theology, Christian doctrine is in a constant state of change and that no issue should ever be considered as finally settled. In fact, their major target was certitude, the truth, and being certain about the truth.

Now, when this academic idea filtered down into the churches and through the churches, it produced these theological conclusions. This is how you know you are hearing postmodernism. When somebody says truth is not absolute; the Bible is not about propositional truth. It's a narrative. It's a story. No one can claim that any interpretation of any truth is certain.

How proud of you to think that you can know what the Bible teaches. We need to approach the Bible with the hermeneutics of humility. And we need to admit that we can just never know what it really says. Sin is subjective, therefore let's not be too quick to call those things that the Bible historically has called sin, sin.

And then, and this one is really important, there is no body of doctrine that must be believed in order to be a Christian. There is no fence inside which is Christianity and outside of which is not. These are all the fruit of postmodernism in the church. So that's a brief history of knowledge. And that's how we got where we are.

The folks, standing against the testimony of the culture, and standing against all of the scholarly skeptics is the testimony of Jesus Christ. And that's where I want us to spend the rest of our time, the testimony of Jesus Christ. You see, ultimately the truth of God was revealed and manifested in a person, His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. That's why Jesus said in John 14:6, "I am the truth." I am the truth. In other words, in a world like ours, adrift in a sea of relativism and uncertainty, Jesus claims that everything He is, everything He says, and everything He does is absolutely, unequivocally true. And everything else is false.

You see, when you examine the ministry of Jesus Christ, you discover that He repeatedly made several foundational affirmations about truth that flatly contradict the tenants of postmodernism. And that's what I want you to see this morning. Again, we live in this world. You know, I've used this illustration before. It's just like a fish doesn't know it's wet because it's surrounded with water. We don't know how much we've been influenced with this mindset. It's everywhere. It's pervasive. So, let's look and see what our Lord taught.

The first affirmation about truth that He makes that flatly contradicts the tenant of postmodernism is this. The physical senses and the laws of logic are valid tools for discovering knowledge. Now, that shouldn't need to be said, but in a postmodern world it needs to be said and proved. Let me show you that Jesus taught exactly this.

First of all, He taught the basic reliability of sense perception. I'll explain why this matters in just a moment, but turn to Luke 24, Luke 24:36, it's after the resurrection. This is one of Jesus' post resurrection appearances. The Emmaus road disciples. This is actually the Sunday night of the resurrection itself. The Emmaus road disciples are reporting to the other disciples what they experienced, verse 36,

While they were telling these things, ... [He] Himself stood in their midst, ... But they were startled and frightened and thought they were seeing a Spirit. And He said to them, "Why are you doubting, and why do doubts arise in your hearts?" [You see they were doubting their senses. They were doubting the reality of what they were observing and noting. And Jesus says, "Don't." Notice what He says in verse 39.] "See My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself; touch Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have." And when He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet. While they still could not

believe *it* because of their joy and amazement, He said to them, “Have you anything here to eat?” They gave Him a piece of a broiled fish; and He took it and ate *it* before them.

You see what Jesus is saying is, certainly any individual can lose touch with reality, but normal human beings in the normal function of life, Jesus says, can trust their senses and their observations; their touch, what they see, what they hear. Now, why is this important? Because it means that normally when you read the Scripture and the words you read in Scripture, you are not imagining, you don't have to distrust your senses. You are reading the words you think you are reading. Again, that seems obvious, but not with postmodernism. Jesus affirms the basic reliability of sense perception. He also affirms the foundational rules of logic.

Robert Raymond writes, “Christians believe that their God is rational, that is He is logical. This means that He speaks in a way that indicates that the laws of logic are laws of thought, [listen to this] original with and intrinsic to Himself. God is not irrational.”

So, let me just give you two laws of logic that Jesus clearly affirms in the face of postmodernism.

First of all, Jesus affirms the law of noncontradiction. That is that a proposition and its denial cannot both be true. You can't have this proposition and its denial and say, “Well, it's all true.” Formally, it's stated like this. A cannot be A and non-A at the same time and in the same relationship. Jesus said in John 14:6, “I am the truth, ... no one comes to the Father but through Me.” Put even more succinctly, 1 John 2:21 says, “... no lie is of the truth.” In other words, contradictory propositions can't both be true. That's what the world tells us. But Jesus affirms that's not possible.

He also affirms the law of the excluded middle. A proposition is either true or false. A moral proposition cannot be both true and false, and there is no middle between true and false. John 8:44, Jesus expresses it this way. “The devil ... does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks ... of his own *nature*, for he is a liar and the father of lies.” The point is, it's true, or it's error. It's truth or error. It's true, or it's a lie. He denies that middle between the two. Now again, those seem like they should be obvious, and for most of us we work in a real world where we affirm those things, but the philosophers deny them. Jesus affirms them. Let's move on.

Secondly, Jesus affirms that language is fully capable of expressing truth from one mind to another. John 8:26, the things which I heard from ... [God], these I speak to the world.” He says, I heard what God communicated to me, and I have now spoken that to you. John 12:49, “... I did not speak on My own initiative, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me a commandment *as to* what to say and what to speak.” And Jesus is implying, that’s what I have spoken; You heard Me; you understood that. Language can, in fact, express truth from one mind to another, whether it’s from the mind of God to Christ, or whether it’s from Christ to those who heard Him. Robert Raymond writes this,

Every theory that would endorse the idea that literal truth cannot be revealed or communicated propositionally from God to man, because language per se is incapable of such, is ultimately an attack against Jesus Christ. For in the days of His flesh, Jesus Christ taught the multitudes using the known languages of Aramaic and Greek, claiming as He did so that He was imparting eternal truth.

Number three, Jesus affirms that God has revealed His absolute truth to us through human agents, language and propositions. You see, the Old Testament clearly stated about the word of God, points such as this: Psalm 119:89, Forever, O LORD, Your word is settled in heaven. Psalm 119:160, The sum of Your word is truth, [When you look at all of scripture it is truth] and every one of your righteous ordinances is everlasting.

So, whether you are looking at a specific ordinance of God, a specific statement of God, or whether you are looking at the sum total of them, it’s truth. That’s what Jesus affirmed. He affirmed that of the Old Testament Scripture. One of my favorite passages is Matthew 5 where in the sermon on the mount, Jesus talks about the Old Testament in verses 17 and 18, He says,

“Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill. For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest [Hebrew] letter ... [not the smallest pen] stroke] shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished.”

The Law and the Prophets was Jewish shorthand for the entire Hebrew Scriptures, what we call the Old Testament, the thirty-nine books that make up our Old Testament. And Jesus said that body of writing will be accomplished. It’s entirety true to the smallest Hebrew letter that looks

like our apostrophe, and to the smallest pen stroke that distinguishes one letter from another. Think of our capital O in English and our capital Q. Those are distinguished by just a little squiggly line at the bottom. That's the kind of thing He's talking about in Hebrew. It's entirely true down to the last pen stroke.

Christ often affirmed the Old Testament canon's truth claims. He always called the Old Testament the word of God. In John 10:35, He says the Scripture, the holy writings, cannot be broken. By the way, in context, His argument there is based on one word from the Hebrew Old Testament for God. The Scripture cannot be broken. Twenty-four times in the gospel we read something like this, "It is written." Followed by an Old Testament quotation. Jesus absolutely affirmed what we call the Old Testament as the word of the living God.

God is also revealed as truth, Jesus taught, in Jesus's own teachings, in Jesus's own teachings. In John 7:16, ... Jesus answered them and said, "My teaching is not Mine, but His who sent Me. John 8:40, "You are seeking to kill Me, [listen to this] a man who has told you the truth which I heard from God." John 17:14, Jesus is praying His high priestly prayer, and He says, [Father] "I have given My disciples Your word." And I love John 18:37 ... "For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice." Jesus affirmed that God had revealed Himself through His Own teaching.

Thirdly, also in the apostle's writings. Jesus pre-authenticated the truth of the New Testament by choosing those who would write it. And He explained how the authors, the apostles, would be protected and guided in their writings. In John 14:26, He says to His disciples, "... the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you."

It is not a promise to you. It's not a promise when you take your next test in school. That's a promise to the apostles that when it came time for them to write, the Holy Spirit would teach them what Christ had not had time to teach them and that He would bring to their remembrance all that happened. So, when John writes 50 or 60 years later, writes his gospel, how did he remember all that, you say? I can't even remember what I did yesterday. The answer is, Christ said, "I will make sure you remember through My Holy Spirit."

Folks, Christ could not have been clearer or more direct about His confidence in the truth of the Scripture. Both the Old Testament and the New Testament, both the Old Testament, what He Himself taught and what He would teach through His apostles whom He chose as His proxies. To reject the truthfulness of Scripture is to reject the testimony of Christ Himself.

There's a fourth affirmation Jesus made about truth, and that is truth can be rationally comprehended by the mind. Again, that seems pretty obvious to us. But it's not obvious in a postmodern world. Jesus affirmed this. In Matthew 12:3 and 5 He says to the religious leaders of Israel, "Have you not read..." He uses that same expression seven times in the gospels, rebuking them. Jesus, in saying that, is calling for a straightforward, rational, grammatical, historical interpretation of the Scripture. He says, you can understand this. Read it, you should be able to get it.

In Luke 24:25, He said to His disciples, particularly to the Emmaus road disciples, "O foolish men and slow of heart to believe in all the prophets have spoken!" Jesus said the problem is not what you understand. The problem is not believing what you understand. So, the truth of God's word can be comprehended and understood by the use of the mind.

Number five, the truth propositions in Scripture have only one meaning, the author's intended meaning. Matthew 22:29, ... Jesus ... said ... "You are mistaken, not understanding the Scriptures..." Jesus said you have misunderstood what the Scripture writer intended to communicate. In saying that, He was affirming that a passage has one meaning, that meaning is the author's, and that that single truth can be understood. In John 5:39, He says, "You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me." Jesus told them, listen in your search of the Scriptures, you have missed the intention of the biblical authors, and in so doing you have missed the Scripture itself. He was affirming that the meaning was the author's meaning. In John 20:30 and 31, John says,

... [there are a lot things Jesus said I didn't write about.] ... but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the ... [Messiah], the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.

John says, I've selected this material with one purpose in mind, and I expect you to be able to understand and get that purpose. Now where did John the apostle get such a non-postmodern

idea of truth? The answer is from our Lord Himself. There are a lot of other Scriptures I would like to call your attention, but in the interest of time go to 2 Peter 3, 2 Peter 3:15 and 16, Peter says this, notice what he writes.

... in all of [Paul's] ... letters, ... are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and [the] unstable distort, as *they do* also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction.

Do you see what Peter is arguing there? He's arguing that Paul's letters are to be interpreted in keeping with authorial intent. The community doesn't decide what Paul means. You don't decide what Paul means. Our job is to figure out what Paul means. To come any conclusion other than what Paul intended is to distort the Scripture and to invite the destruction of our souls. So, folks, the truth propositions in Scripture have only one meaning, and that meaning flows from authorial intent.

Number six, we can be certain of the one true meaning God intended to communicate. But again, this flies in the face of postmodernism. You don't have to wonder; you don't have to guess. We can be certain of the one true meaning of a given passage especially when it comes to the essential doctrines of the Christian faith. Jesus made it clear that we can be certain about the meaning of propositional truth. Turn to John 7, John 7:14,

But when it was now the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the temple, and *began to teach*. The Jews then were astonished, saying, "How has this man become learned, having never been [formally] educated [in the schools of the rabbis]?" ... Jesus answered them and said, "My teaching is not Mine, but His who sent Me. [That's the source of My teaching. And then notice what He says in verse 17] If anyone is willing to do ... God's will, [in other words, if someone is morally willing to do whatever God says] he will know of the teaching, whether it is of God or *whether* I speak from Myself.

You know what Jesus is saying, He's saying, that unbelievers don't believe because they are morally unwilling to do God's will, so they reject His truth claims. Those who are morally willing are guided in the affirmation of the truth. That's what Jesus is saying.

Let me say to you, if you are rejecting the truth of the Scripture because you think you are making an intellectual decision, let me just confront you and say, your decision is not intellectual, it is moral. That's what Jesus said. Look at chapter 8, 8:43, Jesus says,

“Why do you not understand what I am saying?” [There's a great question. What's the answer? *It's* because you cannot. The Greek word is “dunamai.” You don't have the power. You don't have the capacity to] hear My word. [that is to hear, receive, and understand and believe. You don't have the capacity. Why?] Verse 44, ... because you are of *your* father the devil, [and] ... he's a liar, [and he loves lies. That's where you live. That's what you want. You don't want the truth.] Verse 45, “But because I speak the truth, [why] you do not believe Me. Which one of you convicts me of sin? If I speak [the] truth, why do you not believe Me?” [And the answer is in verse 47.] “He who is of God hears the words of God; for this reason you do not hear *them*, because you are not of God.”

So, in chapter 7 we learn that the reason people don't believe is because they are morally unwilling to do what God commands. And here we learn that they are morally unable to understand and accept Jesus' teaching because of their nature. They are children of the devil. They love lies. Believers, on the other hand, understand and believe. Jesus said that His disciples were able to fully understand the propositional truths that He had taught unlike unbelievers.

Now, let me just wrap it up this way. Postmodernism's approach to truth, as I've surveyed it with you, as I've looked at what Jesus has taught, postmodernism's approach to truth has four huge problems.

Number one, its contrary to the clear teaching of Christ and the rest of the Scripture. I've shown you the teaching of Christ. I can go anywhere else in Scripture and show you the same points.

Secondly, and this is ironic, postmodernists have to use propositional truth statements to argue for their position. The very thing they say doesn't exist. It's an irrational system because they have to say, this is true even while they say there is no truth. And this is universally true.

Thirdly, the argument that there is no metanarrative; there's no overarching explanation of reality, is itself a metanarrative, an overarching explanation of truth, is a logically inconsistent system.

And here's a big one, number four. Postmodernism cannot be consistently practiced in the real world. No postmodernist wants his employment contract to be interpreted by the reader or by the community. He wants it to mean what it means. He believes in authorial intent when it comes to his contract. You see postmodernism doesn't work in the real world. You can't live by postmodernism. It only works if you are talking about the Bible, and you want to destroy it. It only works if you want to throw it out.

When you believe what Jesus taught about the truth, the tragic consequences of postmodernism in the church are reversed. And you come to believe, that, like Jesus believed, that truth is absolute, revealed in God's eternal word. You believe that the Bible is filled not just with stories but with truth propositions. You believe that we can be certain about the interpretation of all essential truths. You believe that sin is not subjective, defined by the community, but it is objective, revealed by the God, Who created us and has a right to tell us what to do. There are lists of sins in the Bible. And, maybe most importantly of all, you believe that there is a distinct body of necessary doctrine that must be taught, believed, defended, and passed on to the next generation to be a Christian.

Turn to Jude. Jude, our Lord's half-brother, makes this so clear. Jude 3,

Beloved, while I was making every effort to write to you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly [fight] for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints. [There is a body of doctrine that must be believed to be a Christian. Fight for it. Defend it, and don't be surprised when there are people that attack even who claim to be Christian or claim to be biblical scholars.] Verse 4, For certain persons have crept in unnoticed, those who were long beforehand marked out for this condemnation, ungodly persons who turn the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.

Beware! Postmodernism, and so many other "isms" that exist, are out to undermine the truth of God because they come from Satan, the archenemy of God, and they want to do everything they can to undermine your faith. So, here's the question. Are you going to believe some scholar on the internet, some guy who wrote a book who can't get his own life together? Are you going to put your life in eternity in the hands of Jesus Christ, the only person in the history of humanity

who is worthy of the trust? That's what it comes down to. I hope your affirmation is of Christ the Lord.

Let's pray together. (ended)

