

**"ALL" By Faith Alone in Christ Alone!
Romans 1:16-17, Galatians 2:15-21**

All Scripture English Standard Version unless noted!

Romans 1:16-17 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. 17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith."

Galatians 2:15-21

Introduction

Two things we need!

1. Someone to pay our sin penalty
2. Someone else to do what we could never do, keep the law, be perfectly obedient to God and earn our righteousness

Two things that the work of Christ gives us

1. A right standing before God
2. The power to live a sanctified life

As we head toward next Saturday and the 503rd celebration of the Reformation it is a good time to talk about the 5 Sola's and in particular. "by faith alone"

By grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, according to Scripture alone, for God's glory alone
This is what many evangelicals share in common
Martin Luther says, "this is the article with and by which the church stands and without which it falls"
Luther also said, "the church cannot exist one hour without this doctrine"

This doctrine deals with the deepest problem that mankind has

How can a sinner, an unjust person, stand before a holy and just God?

Psalm 130:3 If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand?

All people must at some point in time stand in the presence of God and be judged

At that time God will either condemn or justify the person standing before Him

In order for an unjust person to stand in the presence of a just and holy God that person must be justified

That person must be counted righteous

The question then becomes, how does this person receive this needed righteousness?

How can a sinner be justified in the sight of God?

It can only happen when another does what no mere man could do

In His life, Christ offered Himself up in perfect and complete obedience

In His death, Christ suffered the penalty of the law and for our disobedience

That is what we will be looking at over the next 2 Sundays!

We will look at it from both a NT and OT perspective!

The righteousness of God revealed in the OT!

This week the way the OT saints at to see righteousness they needed

Next week the NT saints

Genesis 1:31 And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.
Proverbs 2:20 So you will walk in the way of the good and keep to the paths of the righteous.

So when God declared Adam "very good" He was declaring Adam righteous

But, this righteousness was conditional, it was untested

You remember the covenant, it had two parts

Genesis 1:28 And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

Genesis 2:15-17 The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. 16 And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, "You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, 17 but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."

This is referred to as the covenant of works,
If Adam had of been obedient that is what we all would have been

But you know what happened!

Adam and the woman sinned

And instead of immediate death they received mercy

Then we begin to see things change and God begins to speak of what He will do

God promised them that the seed of woman would conquer the devil and reverse the tragic consequences of the fall

Genesis 3:15 I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring;

he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.

Our confessionals tells us that by the fall man showed himself incapable of keeping the covenant of works

Then we see that ^{Adam} believes the promise of the seed of woman and names the woman "Eve", which means "the giver of life"

Genesis 3:20 The man called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living.

Adam did not know everything but He put his confidence in what "the seed of the woman" would do

We begin to see a real key here, Adam did not look within himself for the solution but Adam began to look for what "another" would do

Then we see another clue

Genesis 3:21 And the Lord God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them.

The blood of another had to be shed so man could be restored to God's presence and the man and His sinfulness had to be covered with the blood of another

Then we see the situation deteriorate again

Genesis 6:5 The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

God purposed to start over with this righteous man named Noah and his family

Genesis 6:7-8 So the Lord said, "I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens, for I am sorry that I have made them." 8 But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord.

Then God destroys the world with the flood

Genesis 8:15-17 Then God said to Noah, **16** "Go out from the ark, you and your wife, and your sons and your sons' wives with you. **17** Bring out with you every living thing that is with you of all flesh—birds and animals and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth—that they may swarm on the earth, and be fruitful and multiply on the earth."

Noah quickly fell into sin by drinking too much of the fruit of the vine

Then man removes all doubt that they will ever be able to live in obedience to God and righteousness

Genesis 11:1-9 Now the whole earth had one language and the same words. **2** And as people migrated from the east, they found a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there. **3** And they said to one another, "Come, let us make bricks, and burn them thoroughly." And they had brick for stone, and bitumen for mortar. **4** Then they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be dispersed over the face of the whole earth." **5** And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of man had built. **6** And the Lord said, "Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language, and this is only the beginning of what they will do. And nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them. **7** Come, let us go down and there confuse their language, so that they may not understand one another's speech." **8** So the Lord dispersed them from there over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city. **9** Therefore its name was called Babel, because there the Lord confused the language of all the earth. And from there the Lord dispersed them over the face of all the earth.

But what we saw hinted of in Genesis 3:15 and the "seed of the woman" and in the "garments of skin" we begin to see clearly in Genesis 12:1-3

Genesis 12:1-3 Now the Lord said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. 2 And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. 3 I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

Genesis 15 if we have time!

Jeremiah 31:31-33 "Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, 32 not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the Lord. 33 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

Ezekiel 36:24-27 I will take you from the nations and gather you from all the countries and bring you into your own land. 25 I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. 26 And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. 27 And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.

Jesus' Teaching and Our Culture, John MacArthur,
October 17, 2020

Most of Jesus' teaching is completely out of sync with the mores that dominate our culture.

I'm talking, of course, about the Jesus we encounter in Scripture, not the always-gentle, never-stern, uber-lenient coloring-book character who exists only in the popular imagination. The real Jesus was no domesticated clergyman with a starched collar and genteel manners; he was a bold, uncompromising Prophet who regularly challenged the canons of political correctness.

Consider the account of Jesus' public ministry given in the New Testament. The first word of his first sermon was "Repent!"—a theme that was no more welcome and no less strident-sounding than it is today. The first act of his public ministry touched off a small riot. He made a whip of cords and chased money-changers and animal merchants off the Temple grounds. That initiated a three-year-long conflict with society's most distinguished religious leaders. They ultimately handed him over to Roman authorities for crucifixion while crowds of lay people cheered them on.

Jesus was pointedly, deliberately, and dogmatically counter-cultural in almost every way. No wonder the religious and academic aristocracy of his generation were so hostile to him.

Would Jesus receive a warmer welcome from world religious leaders, the media elite, or the political gentry today? Anyone who has seriously considered the New Testament knows very well that he would not. Our culture is devoted to pluralism and tolerance; contemptuous of all absolute or exclusive truth-claims; convinced that self-love is the greatest love of all; satisfied that most people are fundamentally good; and desperately wanting to believe that each of us is endowed with a spark of divinity.

Against such a culture Jesus' message strikes every discordant note.

Check the biblical record. Jesus' words were full of hard demands and stern warnings. He said, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it. For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed or lost?" (Luke 9:23-25). "If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple" (Luke 14:26).

At one point an unthinkable Roman atrocity took the lives of many Galilean pilgrims who had come to worship in Jerusalem. Pilate, the Roman governor, ordered his men to murder some worshipers and then mingled their blood

with the sacrifices they were offering. While the city was still reeling from that awful disaster, a tower fell in the nearby district of Siloam and instantly snuffed out eighteen more lives.

Asked about those back-to-back tragedies, Jesus said, "Do you suppose that these Galileans were worse sinners than all other Galileans, because they suffered such things? I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish. Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them, do you think that they were worse sinners than all other men who dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish" (Luke 13:2-5).

Ignoring the normal rules of taste, tact, and diplomacy, Jesus in effect declared that all his listeners were sinners in need of redemption. He pointed out sin and condemned it. He knew very well that this would not win him any accolades. He had no such aspiration. He said, "The world . . . hates Me because I testify of it, that its deeds are evil" (John 7:7). Then, as now, that message was virtually guaranteed to offend many — perhaps most — of Jesus' audience, starting with the most pious religious folk.

Those with no sense of personal guilt — including the vast majority of the nation's spiritual leaders — were of course immediately offended. They were convinced they were good enough to merit God's favor. Who was this

man to summon them to repentance? They turned away in angry unbelief.

The only ones not offended were those who already sensed their guilt and were crushed under the weight of its burden. Unhindered by indignation or self-righteousness, they could hear the hope implicit in Jesus' words. For them, the repeated phrase "unless you repent" pointed the way to redemption.

Elsewhere, Jesus made the promise of life and forgiveness explicit: "He who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life" (John 5:24). "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand" (John 10:27-28).

That, of course, is the glorious message of the gospel — just as potent and just as relevant today as it was then. But the promise is for those who are weary of sin; those who hunger and thirst for righteousness (Matthew 5:6); those who come to Christ with repentant hearts — not those who are convinced they are fundamentally good.

Proud people — including lots of religious people who call themselves Christians — don't really believe Christ's message at all. He said, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I did not

come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance" (Mark 2:17).

So what would Jesus say to a pluralistic, tolerant, self-indulgent society like ours? I'm convinced his approach today would be the very same strategy we see in the New Testament. To smug, self-satisfied, arrogant sinners (including multitudes on church rolls) his words would sound harsh, shocking, provocative. But to "the poor in spirit" (Matthew 5:3) — those who are exhausted and spent by the ravages of sin; desperate for forgiveness and without any hope of atoning for their own sin — Jesus' call to repentant faith remains the very gateway to eternal life.

This is a particularly hard message in cultures like ours that elevate self-love, self-esteem, or self-righteousness, but Jesus was absolutely clear, and these words do still speak to us: "Everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted" (Luke 18:14).

The Real and Permanent Pandemic is the Rejection of Truth, By John MacArthur, 2020

Fact-checking Joe Biden leads to the undeniable conclusions that truth has no hold on him nor on many people today. And he's supported for highest responsibility in our nation by a populace of truth averse or veracity neutral sycophants. Truth has had its tongue cut out. It's only allowed to make indistinguishable grunts. This is the ultimate destruction of civilization, and the real and permanent pandemic. Truth matters more than anything. And it has to start with ultimate truth.

But ask anyone today "What is truth?" and you're sure to start a contentious conversation. Try it on a university campus and you're likely to receive laughter, scorn, and derision. The concept of truth has clearly fallen on hard times, and the consequences of rejecting it are ravaging human society. We are in a cultural battle not just for the application of truth to a political or cultural issue, but even more fundamentally to acknowledge truth itself exists.

Some might ask, why does truth matter? No one wants to be lied to, and no one wants a false response to a question that has real-world consequences. Yet many false answers instead of truth have invaded our cultural perception to the extent that the phrase "my truth" and "your truth" is commonly accepted as a correct answer.

But what happens when "my truth" clashes with "your truth?"

So let's go back to the starting point and answer the question: What is truth?

One of the most profound and eternally significant questions in the Bible was posed by an unbeliever. Pilate — the man who handed Jesus over to be crucified — turned to Jesus in His final hour, and asked, "What is truth?" It was a rhetorical question, a cynical response to what Jesus had just revealed: "I have come into the world, to testify to the truth."

Two thousand years later, the whole world breathes Pilate's cynicism. Some say truth is a power play, a metanarrative constructed by the elite for the purpose of controlling the ignorant masses. To some, truth is subjective, the individual world of preference and opinion. Others believe truth is a collective judgment, the product of cultural consensus, and still others flatly deny the concept of truth altogether.

So, what is truth? Here's a simple definition drawn from what the Bible teaches: Truth is that which is consistent with the mind, will, character, glory, and being of God. Even more to the point: Truth is the self-expression of God. That is the biblical meaning of truth. Because the definition of truth flows from God, truth is theological.

Truth is also ontological — which is a fancy way of saying it is the way things really are. Reality is what it is because God declared it so and made it so. Therefore God is the author, source, determiner, governor, arbiter, ultimate standard, and final judge of all truth.

The Old Testament refers to the Almighty as the "God of truth" (Deuteronomy 32:4; Psalm 31:5; Isaiah 65:16). When Jesus said of Himself, "I am...the truth" (John 14:6, emphasis added), He was thereby making a profound claim about His own deity. He was also making it clear that all truth must ultimately be defined in terms of God and His eternal glory. Jesus also said that the written Word of God is truth. It does not merely contain nuggets of truth; it is pure, unchangeable, and inviolable truth that (according to Jesus) "cannot be broken" (John 10:35). Of course, there cannot be any discord or difference of opinion between the written Word of God (Scripture) and the incarnate Word of God (Jesus). In the first place, truth by definition cannot contradict itself. Second, Scripture is called "the word of Christ" (Colossians 3:16). It is His message, His self-expression. In other words, the truth of Christ and the truth of the Bible are of the very same character.

Scripture also says God reveals basic truth about Himself in nature. The heavens declare His glory (Psalm 19:1). His other invisible attributes (such as His wisdom, power, and beauty) are on constant display in what He has created (Romans 1:20). Knowledge of Him is inborn in

the human heart (Romans 1:19), and a sense of the moral character and loftiness of His law is implicit in every human conscience (Romans 2:15).

Those things are universally self-evident truths.

According to Romans 1:20, denial of the spiritual truths we know innately always involves a deliberate and culpable unbelief. Note here that the phrase "self-evident truth" is how the American Founders recognized our individual rights. We cannot even decisively determine the universality of basic human rights apart from objective, self-evident truth. And for those who wonder whether basic truths about God and His moral standards really are stamped on the human heart, ample proof can be found in the long history of human law and religion.

Still, the only infallible interpreter of what we see in nature or know innately in our own consciences is the explicit revelation of Scripture. The Bible which gives us the way of salvation and an infallible account of Christ, is the touchstone to which all truth claims should be brought and by which all other truth must finally be measured.

An obvious corollary of what I am saying is that truth means nothing apart from God. Truth cannot be adequately explained, recognized, understood, or defined without God as the source. Since He alone is eternal and self-existent and He alone is the Creator of all else, He is the fountain of all truth.

If you don't believe that, try defining truth without reference to God, and see how quickly all such definitions fail. The moment you begin to ponder the essence of truth, you are brought face to face with the requirement of a universal absolute — the eternal reality of God. Conversely, the whole concept of truth instantly becomes nonsense (and every imagination of the human heart therefore turns to sheer foolishness) as soon as people attempt to remove the thought of God from their minds.

That, of course, is precisely how the apostle Paul traced the relentless decline of human ideas in Romans 1:21-22: "Although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools." There are serious moral implications too, whenever someone tries to dissociate truth from the knowledge of God. Paul went on to write, "Even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting" (Romans 1:28).

If you reflect on the subject with any degree of sobriety, you will soon see that even the most fundamental moral distinctions — good and evil, right and wrong, beauty and ugliness, or honor and dishonor — cannot possibly have any true or constant meaning apart from God. That is because truth and knowledge themselves simply have no coherent significance apart from a fixed source, namely, God.

Elaborate epistemologies have been proposed and methodically debunked one after another — like a long chain in which every previous link is broken. After thousands of years, the very best of human philosophers (Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Descartes, Locke, Kant, Hegel, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Marx, James, and others) have all utterly failed to account for truth and the origin of human knowledge apart from God.

In fact, the one most valuable lesson humanity ought to have learned from philosophy is that it is impossible to make sense of truth without acknowledging God as the necessary starting point.

Truth is not subjective, it is not a consensual cultural construct, and it is not an invalid, outdated, irrelevant concept. Truth is the self-expression of God. Truth is thus theological; it is the reality God has created and defined, and over which He rules. Truth is therefore a moral issue for every human being.

How each person responds to the truth God has revealed is an issue of eternal significance. How each person understands truth will naturally shape his or her views on political and cultural issues. It is not "my truth" or "your truth," but objective, self-evident, God-given truth. To reject and rebel against the truth of God results in darkness, folly, sin, judgment, and the never-ending wrath of God. To accept and submit to the truth of God is

to see clearly, to know with certainty, and to find life everlasting.