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The Blunt Sermons: The Foundation

I think everybody knows that I have really enjoyed The Truth Project. When I think of The Truth Project that first lesson just keeps coming to mind because Del Tackett asks a very challenging question, "Why did Jesus come into the world?" Those who have been through The Truth Project know the dialogue that went on between Del Tackett and his class. When he asked that question he got many answers one individual answered, "To seek and to save the lost." Another said, "To redeem mankind." Yet another said, "To set captives free." To each one of those answers Del Tackett stopped talked about the beauty of the answer and then looked at the person and said, "But no." He then told the people that Jesus himself had actually told us exactly why he came and that answer is found in John 18:37 Jesus is before Pilot and Jesus says to Pilot, "For this reason I was born and for this I came into the world to testify to the truth." Jesus continued, "Everyone on the side of truth listens to me." "For this reason I was born and for this I came into the world to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me." When Jesus says this there are two distinct truths that we can take from his statements.

Truth number one the truth is being questioned or put on trial hence he came to testify to give his authoritative and definitive testimony to what the truth is. If you look through the Gospels you will find that Jesus says seventy nine times, "I tell you the truth." This is the most repeated phrase in the Gospels. Jesus was testifying to the truth and throughout he was clearly speaking about the truth because the truth is on trial. The second truth is there are sides. Jesus said, "everyone on the side of truth listens to me." Well if there is the side of truth what is the other side? I think Jesus made it very clear in John 8:44 when dealing with the Pharisees who claimed to know the truth he said, "You belong to your father the devil and you want to carry out your father's desire. When he lies he speaks his native language for he is a liar and the father of lies." Jesus is pretty blunt either you're on the side of truth and you listen to Him for He is the way, the truth and the life or you listen to Satan the father of lies. John sums up the application of this in our lives in 1 John 2:6 when he says, "Whoever claims to live in Him (that is Jesus) must walk in as Jesus did." Jesus is very unique in that He walked His talk in other words what He said is how He also lived. You compare Him for instance Mohammed and you find a vast

difference. Mohammed said that man may have one wife but Mohammed had eleven. Mohammed said that the wife must be Islamic yet Mohammed himself had Jewish and Christian wives. You cannot find one such contradiction in Jesus He lived what He spoke He did this because He is God and, as God He could do nothing else. He could only speak the truth and He could only live the truth for He is perfect.

John also addresses the other side he says, "The man who says I know Him but does not do what He commands is a liar and the truth is not in him." There it is again truth and lies. Someone may ask if it is so black and white why do we have so many different beliefs? Paul answers quite plainly in Romans 1:25 he says, "They exchange the truth of God for a lie." What is the result of this? Colossians 2:8, "See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ." The truth of God is exchanged for a lie, a lie made by man, a lie that is based on the principles of this world or society, a lie that takes people captive, but a lie that when compared to the scriptures is seen as hollow and deceptive. Isaiah speaks about just such a lie and how hollow and how deceptive it is. I first heard this on The Truth Project so some of you know where I'm going with this. In Isaiah 44 he writes, "This is what the Lord says, 'He cut down cedars or perhaps took a Cyprus or oak he let it grow among the trees of the forest or planted a pine and the rain made it grow. It is man's fuel for burning. Some of it he takes and warms himself he kindles a fire and bakes bread but he also fashions a god and worships it. He makes an idol and bows down to it. Half of the wood he burns in the fire over it he prepares his meal. He roasts his meat and eats his fill. He also warms himself and says ah I am warm I see the fire. From the rest he makes a god his idol. He bows down to it and worships he prays to it and says save me you are my god they know nothing they understand nothing they're eyes are plastered over so that cannot see and their minds are closed so that they cannot understand. No one stops to think no one has the knowledge or understanding to say half of it I used for fuel I even baked bread over it's coals I roasted meat and I ate. Shall I make a detestable thing from what is left? Shall I bow down to a block of wood? He feeds on ashes a diluted heart misleads him. He cannot save himself or say is not this thing in my right hand a lie?" God is speaking and saying look at how we are as humans. We will take a piece of wood we will burn it for fuel, cook with it, heat our selves with it and yet we'll take that same wood and we'll make up an idol and say save me. Man has the capacity to be diluted man has the capacity to follow what Satan wants them to follow to

exchange the truth of God for a lie, to replace it with hollow and deceptive philosophy which depends on our tradition and the basic principles of our world. The result is they're lost we're lost.

So this is a journey we are now embarking on over the next several weeks. It's a journey of the basic truths of the Bible. A journey that will explore the truth claims of Jesus himself that will explore some of the basic truth claims of God's word and when we do it will be pretty blunt at times because God's word can be that way. This is the truth end of story. It is here that I would like to start, God's word, the Bible. I guess the big question is and the reasons for not coming to church for the next couple of weeks very bluntly do you believe that God's word is trustworthy? Do you believe that it is the truth? To answer that question and to lay the foundation for our upcoming scriptures we really have to go back to the question about Jesus. Is Jesus really the Son of God? Is Jesus, as he said, the truth because it is Jesus himself who again gives us the answer. It was on the night of his betrayal between the time of the Passover feast and his arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane that Jesus gave what we call his high priestly prayer. He prayed for his disciples and said, "Sanctify them by the truth." Sanctify that means set them apart for service. How would they be set apart? By knowing the truth so what is the truth? Let me read the whole verse John 17:17, "Sanctify them by the truth your word is truth." Jesus taught that he is the truth, he taught that God's word is the truth or as John so beautifully says it in John 1:14, "the word became flesh and dwelt among us full of grace and truth we have beheld his glory. Glory is of the only Son from the Father." So Jesus, the word, the truth he says in John 8:31-32, "If you hold to my teaching you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth and the truth will set you free."

This is where we're going; a journey into the truth, but if you do not believe that Jesus is the Son of God that he is the word of God, that he is the truth then you're not going to believe his claim that God's word is truth. And if you're not going to believe that God's word is truth then the next several sermons will be meaningless to you. But if we accept that Jesus is the word, he is the Son of God, he is the truth and therefore his claim that God's word is truth if we accept that as the truth we are going to see that the world has been diluted, it has been taken captive by hollow and deceptive philosophies which depend on the human tradition. We are going to see clearly what we, as Christians need to stand on, what we need to uphold, what we need to proclaim. We will see what gives us hope for we will see the truth.