

“Truly, Truly I Say to You ...”

Introduction:

1. We live in an age that has mounted an assault upon the notion of absolute truth. We see moral relativism, historical revisionism, situation ethics, emphasis upon feelings and other attacks against objective standards.
2. But the things that lay at the heart of human essence do not change. Man's basic nature remains unchanged regardless of the culture that surrounds him. Also, the basic features of relationship with God do not change. *Some things are **always** true.*
3. God's word acknowledges these unalterable truths. We can affirm them to our advantage or deny them to our demise.

1. Eternal Truths About Attitudes

A. *“God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble”* (1 Pet 5:5; Jas 4:6).

1. Pride distorts reality. It makes us bigger than we are; it makes others (even God) less significant than they are. Pride serves self, measures everything by self, judges everything according to self.
2. Pride leads to overconfidence and thus failure: *“Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall”* (1 Cor 10:12); *“Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall”* (Pr 16:18).
3. God rewards humility. Jesus: *“But many who are first will be last, and the last first”* (Mt 19:30; 20:16); *“And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave – just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve”* (20:28).

B. *“But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare ...”* (1 Tim 6:9).

1. There is no more denied truth among Christians than this. Our words may agree but our actions often betray our true desires. Materialism and prosperity has warped our sense of “need” and “want.”
2. *“Then Jesus said to His disciples, ‘**Assuredly I say to you,** it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven ...’* (Mt 19:23-24). For emphasis, Jesus repeats the maxim with an illustration.
3. The proper attitude: contentedness with what one has. *“But godliness with con-*

tentment is great gain” (1 Tim 6:6); “*Not that I speak in regard to need, for I **have learned** in whatever state I am, to be content ...*” (Ph 4:11).

2. Eternal Truths About Behavior

A. “*Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also for them, for this is the Law and the Prophets*” (Mt 7:12).

1. To many people goodness is merely the absence of doing “bad” things. But God’s standards are much higher than that. He expects us to *actively* seek the betterment of others. “*Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin*” (Jas 4:17).
2. This principle alleviates despondency, provides meaning and fulfillment, promotes the well-being of humanity and reflects the very nature of God.
3. This is not only the summarization of the Law of Moses but of the gospel as well: “*Let no one seek his own, but each one the other’s well-being*” (1 Cor 10:24); “*Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others*” (Ph 2:4).

B. “*Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap*” (Gal 6:7).

1. Variations of the principle: “*Put your sword in its place, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword*” (Mt 26:52); “*For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the same measure you use, it will be measured back to you*” (Mt 7:2); “*For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses*” (Mt 6:14-15).
2. There is often a direct correlation between the choices we make and the quality of life we experience. While random misfortunes do occur, most of the tragedy, misery and heartache can be traced to *sinful choices* (divorce, fornication, greed, drunkenness, rebellion, etc.).
3. The story of David Duren, a Christian recently executed in Alabama for murder.

3. Eternal Truths About Existence

A. “*He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life*” (Jn 12:25).

1. Corollaries: “*He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake*

will find it” (Mt 10:39); “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for My sake will find it” (Mt 16:24-25).

2. So many trying to “find themselves,” to discover true meaning and purpose. They are looking in the wrong place – inside themselves. They search through indulgence, excess, vainglory and other self-directed riches. But the “secret” of gaining life is to sacrifice it unto the service of Jesus.
3. Paul’s response to the uncertainties of the future: *“But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy ...”* (Ac 20:24).

B. *“... it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment ...”* (Heb 9:27).

1. Our relatively short, earthly phase of existence is the determining factor of where we spend eternity. Man will be judged upon *“the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad”* (2 Cor 5:10; cf. Rom 2:6; 1 Pet 1:17).
2. Some find this truth so disturbing that they concoct myths and fables to ease their minds. Belief in reincarnation, the denial of hell, the notion of purgatory and other “second chance” doctrines only serve to conceal the true issue.
3. The fact that earthly life is our “proving ground” brings profound meaning and importance to every decision, action and word. *“But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment”* (Mt 12:36-37).

Conclusion: There are so many self-evident and eternal truths about God, relationships, motivations, attitudes and behavior, the human condition and other issues of life contained in God’s word. Are we listening? Studying? Receptive? One other eternal truth: *“Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God”* (Jn 3:5).