



St John's Hartford

walking in truth, living in love

week 2: walking in truth

walking in truth, living in love



- Three weeks to say welcome to St John's

1. walking in truth, living in love

- *Exodus 32-34, John 1.14-18: the God we know in Jesus Christ is love and faithfulness, grace and truth.*

2. walking in truth ...

- *God as Trinitarian truth – and our faithful response.*

3. ... living in love

- *God is love – we are called to love him with heart, soul, mind and strength.*

walking in truth



- What is truth?
 - *‘Jesus said [to Pilate], “My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jewish leaders. But now my kingdom is from another place.” “You are a king, then!” said Pilate. Jesus answered, “You are right in saying I am a king. In fact, 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.” “What is truth?” Pilate asked. With this he went out again ...’ (John 18.36-38a)*
- We find truth by receiving Jesus as the king, and listening to him.
 - *“Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice.” (v37, ESV)*
 - *Pilate illustrates the unbelieving response: “With this he went out again ...”*

walking in truth



- The choice we all make – Psalm 1:
 - *V1: “Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers.”*
 - *thinking, behaving, belonging*
 - *V2: “But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night.”*
 - “He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers.” (v3)
- John wrote his gospel so that we might believe and live:
 - *“... these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.” (20.31)*

Trinitarian truth



- Trinitarian Truth in John's gospel:
 - *Jesus prays to his Father, "your word is truth" (17.17)*
 - *Jesus says of himself, "I am the truth" (14.6)*
 - *Jesus promises "when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth." (16.5)*
- In other words, according to Jesus, truth is found in:
 - *Scripture, as the Father's word*
 - *the Saviour himself, who alone brings us to the Father, and*
 - *the Holy Spirit who convicts us of our guilt, and brings us to new birth in God's kingdom through faith in Jesus.*

Scripture: the Father's word



- Scripture: the Father's word
 - *“God is not a man, that he should lie ...” (Num 23.19; cf Tit 1.2, Heb 6.18)*
- *“All Scripture is God-breathed” (2 Tim 3.16)*
 - *The Old Testament:*
 - *“the Scripture cannot be broken” (John 10.35; cf. Mat 5.17, Luke 24.44-47, etc)*
 - *The New Testament:*
 - *Jesus promises his apostles, “when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you. All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will take from what is mine and make it known to you.” (John 16.13-15)*

Scripture: the Father's word



- Therefore, we are Bible people:
 - *We receive it as God's word:*
 - *“And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is at work in you who believe.” (1 Thes 2.13)*
 - *We humble ourselves before it as God's word:*
 - *“This is the one I esteem,” says the Lord, “he who is humble and contrite in spirit, and trembles at my word.” (Isaiah 66.2)*
 - *We trust it as God's word:*
 - *“When I am afraid, I will trust in you. In God, whose word I praise, in God I trust; I will not be afraid.” (Psalm 56.3)*
 - *“Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.” (John 17.17)*

Scripture: the Father's word



- *We obey it as God's word:*
 - *“get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent, and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you. Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it 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.” (1 John 2.4)*
- *We proclaim it as God's word:*
 - *“... so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe as you hold out the word of life ...” (Phil 2.15-16)*
- *We defend it as God's word:*
 - *“I had to write and urge you to contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints.” (Jude 3)*

The Saviour: “I am the truth”



- The Saviour said “I am the truth” – we are gospel people:
 - *“I am the way and the truth and the life. No-one comes to the Father except through me.” (John 14.6)*
 - “the” not “a”: Jesus is the only Saviour
 - “through me”: Jesus is the sure Saviour
 - *“Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. In my Father’s house are many rooms ...” (John 14.1-2)*
 - *“Without the Way, there is no going. Without the Truth, there is no knowing. Without the Life, there is no living. I am the Way which you must follow, the Truth which you must believe, the Life for which you must hope. I am the inviolable Way, the infallible Truth, the unending Life. ... If you abide in My Way you shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall make you free, and you shall attain life everlasting.” (Thomas à Kempis)*

The Saviour: “I am the truth”



- Only the one from heaven can reveal heaven; only the one on the cross can save us:
 - *“No-one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven – the Son of Man. Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life.” (John 3.13-15)*
- The gospel presents a stark choice:
 - *“Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God’s wrath remains on him.” (John 3.36)*

The Saviour: “I am the truth”



- Only the gospel has the power to save:
 - *“I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: ‘The righteous will live by faith.’” (Romans 1.16-17)*
- So we must proclaim it!
 - *“How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!’” (Romans 10.14-15)*

The Spirit of truth



- The “Spirit of truth”: we are Spirit-baptised people (1.33)
 - *Two equal and opposite errors:*
 - *The Spirit worked only then, giving us Scripture. But Jesus hasn’t taken him away!*
 - *“I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counsellor to be with you for ever – the Spirit of truth.” (14.16-17)*
 - *The Spirit works identically today, giving us new revelations. But Jesus is God’s last word (cf. Heb 1.1-3):*
 - *“That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched – this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.” (1 John 1.1-3; cf Eph 2.20)*

The Spirit of truth



- *A better way :*
 - *The Spirit's foundational work then ...*
 - *Scripture: "But the Counsellor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you." (14.26; cf. 15.26, 16.13-15)*
 - *Gospel: "... he breathed on them and said, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.'" (20.22-23)*
 - *... is the basis of his continuing work today:*
 - *"he will **convict the world of guilt** in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment" (16.8)*
 - *"no-one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is **born of water and the Spirit.**" (3.5)*
 - *"God is spirit, and his worshippers must **worship in spirit and in truth.**" (4.24)*
 - *"Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, **streams of living water** will flow from within him. By this he meant the Spirit ..." (7.38-39)*

The Spirit of truth



- “If you love me, you will obey what I command.” (14.15)
 - *“the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.” (Galatians 5.22-25)*

walking in truth



- “walking in truth” means
 - *knowing the God who has revealed himself as Father, Son and Holy Spirit*
- That is, we are:
 - *Bible people, because Scripture is the Father’s testimony to his Son;*
 - *Gospel people, because Jesus is the unique, divine Saviour; and*
 - *Spirit-baptised people, because “no-one can say, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ except by the Holy Spirit.” (1 Cor 12.3)*
- Jesus promised, “you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”
(John 8.32 NIBO)