



## TRUTH

*Sermon script to go with the PowerPoint slides.*

What's the first thing that comes into your mind when I say the word 'truth'? Do you think about the opposite, lies? Or maybe you think of Jesus as the Truth, or God's Word as truth. Or maybe you think about different grades of truth and half-truths?

Truth is a much-debated topic today. Many teach that there is no such thing as absolute truth. Others say that everybody has a different truth and they are all of equal value. If you, like me, have heard the truth and fallen in love with the truth and seen how God's truth has totally transformed your life and the lives of others, then you will be incredibly grateful for the truth. And yet 'the world' will tell you that there's no such as truth and that you're just deluded.

So, where do we stand as followers of Jesus—the Way, the Truth and the Life? And if God's truth really is true, and if Jesus is the Truth, how are we, His disciples, called to be faithful protectors and sharers of that truth?

**SLIDE:** Well, we know that a disciple is someone who in every way is becoming more like Jesus Christ. So how did Jesus manage God's truth?

This is a tricky question because not only did Jesus speak and live God's truth, His Word, but Jesus is the Truth. Let's dig deeper.

**SLIDE:** There's a Great Controversy, a battle, going on in this world and no piece of ground is so earnestly fought over than that ground on which God's truth stands. God and Satan both know the power of truth.

- God boldly claims that He is Truth and He revealed His Truth in Jesus. Satan blatantly fights back with, "There is no such thing as absolute truth."
- God says that His word is truth, but Satan presents himself as more 'fair' and 'tolerant' by claiming that truth is a relative term, so each person can have their own truth. Satan suggests that all the great truths of the world will lead us to the same god.
- God knows that protecting the truth is important for the future salvation of people—and He has protected it for thousands of years. But Satan dilutes its value by claiming that one person's truth is no less true than the truth that I have from God, and he does all he can to destroy God's truth.
- God calls me to share His truth in love because it reveals His true character of love, but Satan says that, "Truth is less important than feelings", so just do what feels best, even if it doesn't align with God's truth.

It's a real battle isn't it? Ultimately it comes down to the simple question, "Can two opposing truths both be true?" We could argue for hours about the answer and become all philosophical about it, but deep in our hearts God's Spirit tells us that the answer is 'No'.

We either believe God and His Word to be true or we believe one of Satan's thousands of counterfeit 'truths'.

**SLIDE:** Many things that we see and hear today, in the media, online, in advertisements and even in scientific journals, appear to be true, but when we place the magnifying glass of God's Word and the Spirit of Prophecy over them, we see that they are nothing more than lies in truth's clothing.

**SLIDE:** In a world filled with photoshopped images, fake news and deepfake videos how can we know what's true?

**SLIDE:** Let's always remember this principle from God's Word, "TRUTH is TRUTH even if no one believes it, and a LIE is a LIE even if everyone believes it."

There's no safety in popularity. There's no security in following the crowd.

Let's look at some powerful Bible passages and Spirit of Prophecy statements as we seek to better understand truth, and the world we live in.

**SLIDE:** Jesus prayed for us, to the Father, with these words, "Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth." *John 17: 17 (NKJV)*

There it is from our Saviour, Jesus Christ Himself, "God's word is truth." And that's the truth that can transform our lives, it can set us apart and make us holy, like Jesus.

**SLIDE:** In one of Ellen White's earliest books be read, "There are many precious truths contained in the Word of God, but it is "present truth" that the flock needs now. I have seen the danger of the messengers running off from the important points of present truth, to dwell upon subjects that are not calculated to unite the flock and sanctify the soul. Satan will here take every possible advantage to injure the cause." *Ellen G. White, Early Writings, 64*

That's interesting. It seems that not all truth is 'present truth'. While all of God's Word is true, there are parts of it that are more powerful to save us today than other parts. I guess that makes sense. If Noah had preached the Three Angels' Messages for 120 years he would have been preaching truth but not the present truth that God called Him to preach. And so too with us, God has raised up the Seventh-day Adventist movement to share the present truth of the Three Angels' Messages for a world in great need of them, right now!

Present truth is rarely a comfortable message but it is the truth that is needed for the time.

**SLIDE:** As someone once said, "PRESENT TRUTH is not always PLEASANT TRUTH." But does that mean that it doesn't matter what tone and spirit we present the truth in?

**SLIDE:** Listen to this clear answer, "He who is the truth has made it possible for His servants, even in controversy, to make it manifest that the Spirit of truth is dwelling within them. ... If the manner and words of the speaker are under the influence of the Spirit of God, self will be hid in Christ. ... The truth is to be presented as it is in Jesus. Speak the truth in love. Let it

be manifest that the love of Christ is in the heart, expressed in the countenance and in the words." *Ellen G. White, Letter 9, para 9, 1894*

**SLIDE:** But what if we know that God's truth might hurt or challenge someone? Should we just hold back and maybe share it with them at some time in the future? Well, we need to be led by God's Spirit as to when, what and how we share God's truth, but the Spirit will usually answer, "Share God's truth in love, because the truth may hurt for a little while, but a lie can hurt forever."

So, we are called to know God's truth, as it is in His Bible, to know Truth Himself, as it is in Jesus, and to share God's truth wherever we can, in love.

How important is knowing the truths of the Bible in these last days of earth's history? Many of you will know very well the statement I am about to put on the screen.

**SLIDE:** "None but those who have fortified the mind with the truths of the Bible will stand through the last great conflict. To every soul will come the searching test: Shall I obey God rather than men? The decisive hour is even now at hand. Are our feet planted on the rock of God's immutable word? Are we prepared to stand firm in defense of the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus?" *Ellen G. White, The Great Controversy, 593*

Wow! Knowing the truths of the Bible is absolutely essential to being able to stand for God in today's world. By knowing the truth we can easily identify the counterfeit.

Aren't you grateful for God's truth?! How good is God?! He has prepared and protected His truth for us, to keep us safe and guide us by His Spirit through earth's final battle.

**SLIDE:** "Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." *John 14:6 (NKJV)*

Friends, how good is it that Jesus, our advocate, our defense, our High Priest, our brother!, is the Way, the Truth and the Life—the only way to God? Yes the way is narrow, it's only as wide as a Man's shoulders, but that Man is Jesus Christ, and His arms are open wide! Anyone, everyone, who seeks freedom Satan's lies can come to Jesus and know the truth and be set free. Hallelujah!

**SLIDE:** When we hear God's invitation to come to Jesus, He also reminds us to be serious about our search for, and our study of, the truth. Paul says, "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." *2 Timothy 2:15 (NKJV)*

Satan has every scheme of lies and doubt and counterfeits. He has all types of errors and heresies and falsehoods to try and deceive us, and they're often beautifully packaged and presented. We need to be alert and on our guard.

**SLIDE:** "In the days of the apostles the most foolish heresies were presented as truth. History has been and will be repeated. There will always be those who, though apparently

conscientious, will grasp at the shadow, preferring it to the substance. They take error in the place of truth, because error is clothed with a new garment, which they think covers something wonderful. But let the covering be removed, and nothingness appears." *Ellen G. White, The Review and Herald, February 5, 1901*

**SLIDE:** In Ephesians 4, the Apostle Paul describes our state very well. "We should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ." *Ephesians 4:14-15 (NKJV)*

**SLIDE:** Do you want to be free? Jesus has the answer, because Jesus is the Truth. He says, "You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." *John 8:32 (NKJV)*

Are you grateful for this heavenly and absolute truth? This truth that has set you free? I know I am. Jesus, the Truth, is all I need and all I desire.

**SLIDE:** I want to be a faithful steward of God's truth. I want to do what Jesus would do if He were present. I want to love, protect and share God's truth in my words, my body language, my tone of voice and my actions.

My prayer is that you too will do this and that you will know the truth, because the truth will set you free.