

**Open: 2 Corinthians 4:16-18**

The world is a mess. Can we all agree on that point?

In just the past year, we've witnessed bombings, shootings, rioting, and violence across the country and the world. That's on top of a deeply divisive election cycle, amid daily reports of corruption and scandal – which of course have not ended with the election and certainly will not end with the inauguration. And all of it comes in a world living under the constant threat of more terrorist attacks or another financial collapse.

As believers, we see that constant upheaval and turmoil as evidence of this world's corruption. Sin has ruined this place, and the daily reminders of its depravity frequently distract, dishearten, and disturb us, as they should. But more than that, the worries of this world—from global, political problems to fears over personal safety and well-being—can dominate our minds and burden our hearts.

If we're going to endure life in this ruined world, we need to follow Paul's example and fix our eyes on eternal matters. We need to put our energy and effort to work not merely for temporal good, but for the sake and glory of God's kingdom. And this too is part of the *Wonder and Mystery of Sanctification*.

So in the midst of our break from completing our journey through the book of Luke, and in the midst of Blair's short study on Sanctification, I thought it would be helpful to be reminded of our absolutely confident trust in the Scriptures for all things pertaining to life and godliness.

Early in my Christian walk, because I had been challenged by the secular worldviews imposed within college and my technical, engineering background, I became heavily focused on the subject of **Christian apologetics – the defense of the faith**. Now this is a fine undertaking which has been pursued by some of the most brilliant Christian minds over the centuries, and they have added immensely to the assurance of our Faith. Sadly though, many times for me in those early years it became more about winning a particular argument than the much more weighty eternal matters that deal with human souls – and most importantly my own. I could intellectually defend the most controversial aspects

of the Christian worldview, yet not even take a second look at how I applied the profound truth of God's Word in my own life. Now hopefully, by God's grace, I have grown from that point, and although we will bring forth these apologetic issues which defend the Faith, my intent today is to **demonstrate the validity of Scripture only to proclaim the message of Scripture**, which is the message of salvation, sanctification, and eternal glory found only in the Lord, Jesus Christ.

So why is this important?

### **Romans 1:18-23 ... 28**

We live in a world for the most part that has no absolute standard for life and for behavior. We are under a fluctuating morality. Morality shifts with the whim of the people. The basic standard for behavior is whatever feels right. Worse, in recent years this standard has become increasingly sinister – indoctrinating the masses and now legislating that these moral whims by a few be forced upon everyone else. But have you really ever thought about philosophy, which is now deeply pervasive in our society – to do whatever feels right, whatever is right for you, whatever you really want to do, and don't let anyone else say that it is wrong -- runs contrary to everything we know about in our world. Stated briefly: **A relative philosophy of life is contrary to the absolute world in which we live.**

In our world, for example, science is based on absolutes. Our entire universe is built on fixed laws, invariable laws, laws that cannot be violated without tremendous and far-reaching and often fatal consequences.

We can send rockets, satellites, and people into space and we can accurately predict the sequence of events that will take place, the trajectory of the rocket, the space occupied by the satellite or the space station or deep space probe. We can predict exactly how, when, and where it will go, because everything is built on unchanging mathematical principles.

The entire universe is mathematically consistent. It is absolute in its scientific definitions. Whether you're talking about biology or botany or physiology or astronomy or mathematics or engineering, it is controlled by unalterable and often very limiting laws.

Can you imagine, for my own example, if the laws of engineering were variable? What would happen? You would build a great skyscraper based upon laws that a week later changed. You'd have an unbelievable disaster. If the melting point of metal alloys changed by just a few degrees at the time we test large rocket engines at Stennis just down the road from here, there would be a very violent "unplanned rapid disassembly" – otherwise known as an explosion – literally within a few milliseconds... But God has established that these laws never change, at least in this age.

We live then in a real world of fixed laws and yet strange to say many want to live in an ever-more concocted world of relative moral laws. They want to live morally as if there were no laws, as if there were no rules. They want to determine our point of reference in their own mind. But for Christians it is not to be so. Remember Paul's words to the Ephesians:

### **Ephesians 4:14**

So in the physical world we're very reliant and comfortable with fixed laws; but as soon as we move into the spiritual realm, we want to abandon fixed laws. Believe me they still exist, you cannot exist without laws in the moral and spiritual dimension any more than you can exist without laws in the physical dimension.

Our Creator, who made the universe, made it in terms of its physical identity and its moral and ethical identity as well, and he built morality into life. And just as there are physical laws, there are laws in the spiritual realm as well.

Let me give you an illustration, people have asked whether AIDS is the judgment of God. And the response should be yes, AIDS is the judgment of God ... in the same sense as cirrhosis of the liver is the judgment of God, in the same sense as emphysema is the judgment of God. You say, "What do you mean?" If you drink alcohol you're liable to get cirrhosis of the liver. If you smoke cigarettes you're liable to get emphysema and if you chose to violate God's standard for sexual purity, you're likely to contract venereal disease such as AIDS. It is a law. The Bible describes it as the moral law of sowing and reaping:

### **Galatians 6:7-8**

If you choose to violate God's sexual standard which says one man, one woman, married for one lifetime and that's the only place sexual relationships are to take place, if you violate that then you expose yourself to the law, the fixed law of morality that says, break God's law and suffer the consequence. Sowing and reaping.

Let me give you another illustration. Gravity is a fixed law. (By the way, it is that fixed law that makes rocket launches so challenging.) Now you may come along and say, "I don't believe in gravity. I do not believe in the Law of Gravity." And you may advocate that, you may write a book on that. You may go on a speaking circuit and get on TV and the internet to deny gravity but when you jump off a building, you won't go up, you won't go sideways, you won't hang in place; but you'll go down at a precise rate and you will die. Because the Law of Gravity is not dependent on what you believe. And the law will go into effect as soon as you put it to the test. And that's true in the physical area and it's also true in the spiritual area.

You can't, you see, segment the two apart. You can't say the physical world has laws, the moral world has none. You have separated the world in a way that you simply do not have the power to do. To segment life into a physical dimension in which fixed laws cannot be violated and the spiritual dimension in which they can be violated is an impossible dichotomy. For the same Creator who made the whole thing built it all on fixed laws, **moral** and **spiritual**.

The question then comes, where do we find the spiritual laws? Now the physical laws are visible to us in the world and we learn more about them all the time; but where do we find the moral laws? Where do we find the fixed standards of human behavior which, when violated, bring about disastrous results?

Where do we find out what is right and what is wrong? Has our Creator given us a standard? And the answer is yes, and this is where you find it, in the Bible. The Bible claims to be the revelation of God in which God delivers the fixed laws of moral and spiritual conduct. It is His revelation and there are many compelling reasons to believe that.

There wouldn't be enough for me to say to you, "Well, here's the Bible, you gotta believe it." You're gonna say, "Well, now why should I believe the Bible? There are a lot of sacred books, a lot of them. Why would I believe that this is the right

one? There are a lot of people who say they speak for God. There are a lot of people who say they have revelations from God. How do I know the Bible is really the one-and-only, authentic, undeniable Word of God?"

Well let me give you five proofs, okay? Five reasons for believing in the authenticity of the Bible as God's revealed standard of moral behavior, and they go from the lesser to the greater, all right? They're in an ascending order, these five.

**Number one**; here is the number one (but least important one we'll talk about today) reason for believing the Bible. Let's call it **experience**. One reason that I personally believe the Bible is true is that it gives the experience it claims it will give. For example, the Bible says that God will forgive our sin if we come to Christ, repent and believe. I came to Christ, repented of my sins and my works without Him, and God forgave my sin and freed my heart and soul and mind the guilt. And I have been freed from the bondage of sin in the sense that I am not under the pile of guilt, because Christ has delivered me. Any true believer should have that same joyful experience. The Bible said God would forgive my sin, I put my faith in Christ and God did. The Bible says if any man be in Christ he's a new creation.

## **2 Corinthians 5:17**

I used to crave sin and crave things that were not right. Now I crave righteousness and crave things that are right. My whole constitution is different. My character is different. The Bible said that would happen and it did. Now millions of people all over the world have put the Bible to the test of experience and it indeed has proven itself true. We've experienced the power of the Word of God.

Now, even though it is an acceptable argument, it's a weak one and I'll tell you why. Experience, while acceptable and necessary in every believer's life, is the weakest of the five because that makes the individual the validator of truth and that makes the validation **subjective** rather than **objective**.

Truth ought to be something outside of you and the Bible ought to be true if you never experienced it, right? It ought to be true in itself. I mean after all, you could probably line up a Muslim, a Buddhist, a Hindu, a Hare Krishna, Christian Science, Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses and every other kind of religion and

cult and they could all tell you about their experience, too. Satan often uses the deception of experience to convince the lost that they either don't have a problem with God, or that they can "fix" it all by themselves.

And then there are those people who think they see pink elephants but they don't. And then there are those people that get high and hallucinate on who knows what and they have experiences, too. So we don't want to get ourselves in a situation where we just buy into something because somebody says it happened to them. So now we can state that experience is "necessary but not sufficient" for our examination so far this morning, and we need more evidence than that.

Let's go to a **second line of proof** then. Ascending up the scale, to **science**, science. Most people assume that the Bible is scientifically incorrect, that what's in the Bible doesn't match with science and this antiquated old book is scientifically illiterate. That's not true. That's *completely* not true.

If you go to the Bible you're gonna find there the most plausible explanation for the existence of the universe anywhere in science, anywhere. And the most plausible explanation for understanding the universe and the existence of life is simply this, **God created everything**.

### **Genesis 1:1**

Now the alternative is that there was no Creator. So you can take your choice. You can believe God created everything so that the effect had a cause or you can believe that nobody created everything. In fact, you can take this as your view of life, nobody times nothing equal everything.

How's this for a fairly tale: Once there was a puddle -- now who knows where the puddle came from -- and once there was in the puddle a one-celled thing (which no one knows where it came from either) and one day the one-celled thing said to itself, "Let's be two" and they separated and the two got carried away and the next thing you know, here we are!

Now if you want to call that scientifically plausible you have defied science itself because science is really a study of what is observable and "nobody times nothing" is not observable. Moving past the completely unanswerable question of the origins of life, the evolutionist have spent decades attempting to recreate

the simplest observable evidence of the simplest macro-evolutionary theories, they have all failed miserably. In fact, both experimental results and continuing new discoveries in the fossil record continue to confound the very basic tenants of secular evolution and demonstrate that all life forms burst onto the fossil record as a complete fully-formed species. So the Bible, looking at science, remains solidly the most plausible explanation for everything.

Let me remind you why this issue of evolution is so critically important. It's not just an argument about how we became to be – which is vitally important in itself, where denying God His Glory as Creator is damnable all it itself. But it gets worse. Virtually every “science” derived and developed today by the religion of human secularism has its roots in evolutionary theory. The fact that major categories like psychology, sociology, history, medicine, politics, and government accept as “fact” the basic tenants of natural macro-evolutionary theory has direct influence on the principles, policies, and practices which are then imposed on the rest of us – often with dire consequences. Just some quick examples: Communism, Nazism, the Holocaust, Abortion, Euthanasia.

And yet as you look deeper into the Bible you find it scientifically touches on many, many things. For example:

### **Isaiah 40:25-26**

It says it is God who creates the universe. It says He holds the stars together by his power and it says not one star is missing. Think of that. Not one star is missing. God created them all, now follow this, and sustains them all.

Now we won't have time to discuss that the Bible actually introduces the First and Second Law of Thermodynamics which state that although mass and energy are always conserved, they are also breaking down and going from order to disorder. In other words, while you never destroy matter, and it's never created, it is disintegrating, breaking down. It goes from order to disorder, from cosmos to chaos, from organized to disorganized.

The Bible says that. Romans 8, it says the whole creation groans under the curse waiting for redemption from the curse of sin which came in Genesis, Chapter 3, when man sinned and brought the curse upon the earth.

How about the hydro-logical cycle ... In Isaiah 55, "For the rain and the snow come down from Heaven and do not return there without watering the earth." So Isaiah says they come down, they water the earth, they go back up again. The water keeps running into the sea but the sea never gets full. Why? Because the water keeps being pulled back out again.

Job 36, likely the oldest book in the Old Testament, verses 27-28 speaks of evaporation and condensation centuries prior to any knowledge of this. It says God draws up the drops of water, they distill rain from the mist which the clouds pour down, they drip upon man abundantly.

By the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, you have Kepler and Galileo giving birth to modern astronomy. Prior to that people thought there were one thousand stars in the whole sky, one thousand. Yet in the book of Genesis, first book in the Bible, it says the number of the stars of heaven is equated with the number of grains of sand on the seashores.

...There are dozens of additional examples, but let's close on this proof...

English philosopher Herbert Spencer died in 1903. He was famous for applying scientific discoveries to philosophy. And he came up with a great discovery for which he was heralded. He said everything knowable in the natural world fits into one of five categories. It was an amazing categorization that no man had ever described before him.

He said everything is either time, force, action, space or matter -- everything. That's good, Herbert. Took him until the 19<sup>th</sup> Century before anybody really discovered and identified those categories. Time, force, action, space, matter. Everything in existence fits into one of those categories.

Listen to this, first verse in the Bible, "In the beginning," that's time, "God," that's force, "created," that's action, "the heavens," that's space, "and the earth," that's matter. What Herbert Spencer didn't discover until the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, God wrote in the first verse of the first chapter of the first book in the Bible and gave us all the categories we needed for everything.

## **Exodus 34:10**



Let's go to a **third area** of evidence for Bible authenticity and that's **miracles**, that's miracles. The Bible includes from beginning to end supportive information to establish the credibility of the miracles that it records. The Bible records miracles and you've got all kinds of eyewitnesses, they're absolutely undeniable miracles.

The most monumental miracle of all is the miracles of the resurrection of Jesus Christ who rose from the dead; and just to be sure nobody could doubt it there were over 500 eyewitnesses. Over 500 people saw Jesus risen from the dead who absolutely knew that he was dead. His death was verifiable, there's no question about that. And yet 500 people saw him alive.

### **1 Corinthians 15:3-6**

Now you're gonna have to deal with that in his Book. This Book is filled with miracles that were verifiable by a mass of humanity. Around two million people walked through the Dead Sea and the walls of water were up on the side. And when they got on the other side and Pharaoh's army came through, they were all drowned. Massive numbers of eyewitnesses saw that event. This is not some subjective isolated whimsical miracle:

### **Exodus 14:30**

The army of Israel marched around the walls of Jericho as instructed by God through Joshua and they fell supernaturally.

### **Joshua 6:20**

Only in the last century have excavations at Jericho revealed heaps of bricks just as would be expected by the sudden collapse as described in Scripture, and even more amazing has been the discovery that a small section of the North wall, which included some housing, had not collapsed with the main walls. It is quite possible that this is where Rahab's house was located! There are literally hundreds of findings just like this one, which provide evidence for the inerrancy of Scripture. (In fact, you will occasionally find reports of recent new discoveries posted on the Fox News website.)

So you have to look at this book and say it's filled with the miraculous which is not subjective but objective -- which is not *unverifiable* (like virtually all of evolutionary theory); but which is **verifiable** historically.

**Fourthly** ascending up the scale, how do we designate the authenticity of Scripture from an evidential viewpoint? **Prophecy**. How can you explain that the Bible predicts the future if it wasn't written by God? How can you explain that? For there are so many, many prophecies.

### **Isaiah 46:9-10**

Did you know there are more than 300 specific prophecies about Jesus alone? Saying where He's be born, where He would live, Bethlehem, Nazareth, specific things about him, details about His life, what he would say on the cross, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" Also note that many of these prophecies were not related to broad, vague activities that would be fulfilled by some future Messiah (although those are included as well), which could be manipulated by some impostor claiming to be the promised One. No, these were largely related to very specific predictions. Things like: He would be betrayed for 30 pieces of silver, an excruciating method of execution that would not be invented for several centuries, he would be crucified among thieves, even that He would be given vinegar and gall to drink. Have you ever thought about that? How can someone arrange to be born of a virgin, in a specific city, then with and all the intricate details after His birth that had to be fulfilled "according to the Scriptures"?

About 330 Messianic prophesies and there are myriads of prophecies of other than Christ. But Peter Stoner who is a mathematician who worked particularly in the area of probabilities, wrote a book called *Science Speaks*, which can likely be found on the internet. He said let's just take eight Old Testament prophecies, okay? Just take eight of them and look at the probability of their coming to pass by accident.

He said it would be one in ten to the seventeenth power ( $1:1 \times 10^{17}$ ). Typed out numerically – **1:100000000000000000**. For just eight of them to be fulfilled, and remember there are hundreds of them! Just take eight and they would have one chance in ten to the seventeenth power to come to pass by accident. This is what he concluded.

Here's a way to visualize what ten to the seventeenth power is ... we take ten to the seventeenth power silver dollars and we lay them on the face of Texas, okay? They will cover, you ready for this, the entire state two feet deep. Silver dollars, two feet deep over the whole state of Texas.

Now mark one of these silver dollars with a little X. Blindfold a man and tell him he must pick up only one and he must pick the one with the X. What chance would he have of getting the one with the X? The same chance the prophets would have of writing eight prophecies and having them come true at one time by one man by chance. Incredible, and yet the Bible has hundreds of prophecies, hundreds, and Jesus fulfilled every one.

The Bible predicts many other things. The Bible predicts that a man named Cyrus would be born a hundred and fifty years before he was born. That he would rise to power in the Middle East and that he would release the Jewish people from captivity. Read it in Isaiah 44 and 45. Sure enough, a hundred and fifty years later Cyrus the Great became king of Persia and released the Jews just exactly as the prophet had said.

Look at the ironic story of the great Assyrian city of Nineveh. Most of you will be familiar of the story of Jonah and his attempt to run from God to avoid calling the city to repent. One of the great cities of the ancient world reached its apex during the 7<sup>th</sup> century B.C. and the prophet Nahum comes along about 100 years after Jonah and says Nineveh will be wiped out. He said an overflowing river will crush the gates and the city will be destroyed. Nahum Chapter 1, Chapter 2. That's exactly what happened. The case of Nineveh, a great storm came, flooded the river, carried away the city walls permitting the Medes and the Babylonians to enter the city and destroy it just as God predicted.

And then **fifthly** and finally for today in defending the authenticity of Scripture, from prophecy you go to the life of Christ:

### **John 5:39**

The single greatest proof, validation of the Bible's authenticity is the life of Christ. You can study the prophecies of Christ in the Old Testament, you can study the life of Christ in the Gospels, you can study the teaching about Christ's life and work in the Epistles, you can study the second coming of Christ in the Revelation, the last book and the most overwhelming indicator of the truth of

Scripture is this incredible, unbelievable, supernatural God-man named Jesus Christ. There is no way to explain him away.

There simply is no human explanation for Christ. If men wrote this book they could never conceive of such a person as Christ. They could never conceive of such wisdom. They could never make his mouth say the profound things it said. They could never conceive of one who could do what He did. They could never have devised such an incredible scheme of redemption as God devised and revealed in this book. Every other religion on the face of the earth demonstrates this fact.

And so ever and always when you read the Bible you're reading about Christ and all that He is and there is no human explanation for Him at all. Not for the prophecies He fulfilled, not for the words He said, not for the miracles He did, not for His crucifixion as the final act in the great atoning work God had planned, not any the explanation for His resurrection other than that they happened exactly as they are stated in Scripture. As R.C Sproul has so simply stated after a lifetime of studying Scripture, "If the Bible says that Jesus said it, He said it. If the Bible says that Jesus did it, He did it".

### **Hebrews 1:1-4**

There's no explanation for the birth of the church except His resurrection. If the disciples stole His body, why in the world would they all go out and die as martyrs for a body they had stolen? None of it makes any sense if you try to explain away Christ. There is no human explanation for Him.

The Bible then is where you go when you want to get God's standards, God's laws for moral, ethical behavior. We live in a world of fixed laws, physically *and* morally. The physical laws are observable to us and the moral ones are revealed to us through this book. It's an amazing book, an astounding book.

Perhaps as definitive a passage as there is in the Bible is **Psalms 19**... we'll look at vs **7-11**.

Now let me speak to this for just a moment. It says the law of the Lord, or Scripture, is perfect. That's what it means, perfect. The Hebrew means many-sided or all-sided so as to cover all aspects of a thing, comprehensive. It is so all-sided; it is so comprehensive, that it is able to totally restore the soul. Soul

means the person, the whole person, *nephesh*. It's translated several dozen ways in the Old Testament. It means the whole person.

The word restore means to transform, to revive. And so what it says is the Scripture is able to totally, comprehensively transform the whole person, there is tremendous power in this book.

Now you may say I'm not interested in being transformed. Despite the overwhelming evidence that someone can present, the Bible isn't for you. If you like life the way it is, then have it the way it is. The Bible's for people who don't want it the way it is. The Bible is for people who don't like the things in their life the way they are. The Bible is for people who are tired of their sin. The Bible is for people who wish they weren't driven by the passions that control them. The Bible is for people who do not want to be victims of circumstances. The Bible is for people who have a fear of death that is deserved, who wish they could be made right before their God. The Bible is for people that don't have all the answers. The Bible is for people who want something far better than they have on their own; but if that's not you, then the Bible's not for you.

But if you're dissatisfied and there's a sense of desperation in your heart, and you'd like to be a totally transformed person, only the Word of God working in you personally can make that happen, through the grace of Jesus Christ.

This inerrant Book says, the transformation comes through faith in the Lord, Jesus Christ. God came into the world in the form of a man, namely the Lord, Jesus Christ, died on a cross to pay the penalty for your sin, rose from the grave to conquer death. He now lives to come into your life, cleanse your sin, be your Savior, rid you of your sin, your guilt, your anxiety, totally transform the pattern of your life. Only the Bible can bring the truth of Christ to you who alone can transform your life.

The Psalmist also says, the Scripture is not only perfect restoring the soul, that is comprehensive totally transforming the whole person, but it is sure, making wise the simple. That's a profound statement. Sure means absolute trustworthy and reliable. And it is able to make a simple person wise.

The word simple means its root meaning is an open door. And the Jews described a person who was simple as one whose mind was an open door -- everything flew in, and everything flew out. Naive, uninitiated, undiscerning,

indiscriminating, just allows everything in and everything out. Simple, without discernment, totally naive, unable to assess, evaluate, hold on to truth, reject error, doesn't have any standard by which to make a judgment.

The Bible comes along through the power of Christ, takes a person who's simple, doesn't understand truth, doesn't know what to keep and what to reject and takes that person and makes them wise. Wise, in the Hebrew *shaham*, skilled in the spiritual living, skilled in daily living. Wisdom that is not an abstraction or mere knowledge, but wisdom that is real and bears out in behavior. Wisdom that is shown by conduct.

Because we can know that Scripture is true, you can trust it to teach you about how to live life, how to live out relationships. The Bible touches every area of life. You want to know about your marriage? It touches that. Need to know about a work ethic? It touches that. You want to know about the factors of the human mind? It touches that. You wanna know about motive? It touches that. You wanna know how to get the most out of your life? It touches that. How to enjoy life more? It touches that. How to have joy, peace? It touches that.

Beyond scientific truth, miracles, and prophecy, it touches attitudes, reactions, responses, how to treat people, how you're treated by people, how to cultivate virtue in your life, every aspect. And you can live life with true wisdom, skilled in the matter of daily living.

And it comes by knowing the Scripture and knowing that Christ was the theme of Scripture. And the Psalmist says the Scripture is right, rejoicing the heart. He means it sets a right path that brings joy to your heart.

As you walk the path of the Scripture, as you obey the word of God, as you live it out, it fills your heart with joy.

**Luke 11:28** "...Blessed are those who hear the Word of God and observe it."

True happiness comes because you know where you're going, you know you're honoring God; you're walking in the place that pleases Him, the place where He blesses. The happy life comes walking in the path that God lays out in the Scripture. He shows you the path and He give you His word and His spirit to lead you down the path and it's a path of joy.

Then he says the word of God is clear enlightening the eyes, pure, clear, enlightens the eyes. Hey, most people live in the world, they don't understand what's going on, and everything's pretty dark. People die, disasters, diseases, war, problems, they can't figure it out. They don't understand the dark things of life.

The autobiography of English philosopher Bertrand Russell written near the end of his life implies that philosophy was a washout to him. In fact he said, "Philosophy has proved a washout to me." That's shocking. Spend your whole life trying to concoct a scheme of reality and convince a whole lot of other people that your scheme is true; only to come to the end of your life and saying the whole thing is useless.

Now most of us will not claim to be Bertrand Russell's intellectual equal, I'm certainly not, but if we trust in the Word of God we can know the things that he didn't understand. We know where we came from, we know where we're going, we know why we're here, we understand perfectly about life with its suffering and sacrifice, we understand what happens at death. We understand about relationships. we understand about love and hate.

More specifically, we know why there are wars, we know there are diseases, we know why people die, why people live, we know what God has in the future for men who believe, and we know what He has in the future for those who don't. We understand what's right and what's wrong. And when it comes to sanctification, we know clearly what we ought to do, what we ought not to do. So where do you get all that information? In the Bible.

Scripture deals with every tough issue in life. We can go to a Christian in a tragic situation, bound to a wheel-chair or bed for the rest of their life, or imminently facing death, and we can have a great time, a joyous time because we understand death releases a Christian into the presence of the Lord. But because Scripture deals with eternal consequences of this life, this should also give us an immense sense of urgency for the lost.

And the Bible is unwavering; it goes on and on and on and on. Even though it's an ancient document every person in every situation finds it relevant. It never needs to be edited, it never needs to be updated, it never needs to be brought into contemporary understanding. In fact, our challenge is always the other way

around -- to bring contemporary understanding *in alignment with Scripture*. It's never out-of-date; it's never obsolete because it's flawless.

Compared to the world it is really quite sad. I suppose that there are thousands of college courses across the country offered on the history of philosophy, which is really the study of all the dead philosophies that no one believes anymore. In liberal arts and many other curricula, the students are required to take a course in psychology. In graduate school they'll usually take another course in psychology. And every form of psychology and psychotherapy they read about will be obsolete before they end their careers.

There's one thing never changes, folks. That's God's word. Never changes, always relevant. As then the Psalmist says in Psalm 19:9, "It's true", it is true, and produces comprehensive righteousness. It is true. Do you realize that - just to say God's judgments are true is incredible?

Let me ask you a question, are the news media true? Are internet stories true? Are politicians true? Are doctors true? Are lawyers true? Are teachers always true? Who knows? You know why people find it so easy to lie? Because they give up on looking for truth anyway. No different than Pilate, who sent Jesus to the cross after asking cynically, "What is truth?"

So if you want to know the truth, look to the pages of Scripture, look to the pages of Scripture. The Bible is sufficient for the things you need. What do you need? What are people looking for? I think they're looking for a transformation. The Bible calls it salvation and through Jesus Christ your whole life can be changed. Just a profound encouragement along our road to sanctification.

Amen. Let's pray.