A few weeks ago, when my parents came into town for my son’s wedding, I had the privilege of taking them out on the boat to do some crappie fishing. We had a glorious day together, and it’s one of those memories I want to capture and treasure in my heart for many years to come. On the way home from our fishing trip, my parents were sharing some of the changes they had made in their lives, and one of those changes caught me a bit off guard. I learned that my parents no longer watch television! Now, that’s a big deal. Some of my earliest memories include sitting around the dinner table with my family as a child every night watching Walter Cronkite deliver the evening news on our black and white TV. So, I asked my parents why they stopped watching television, but I already knew the answer: they simply could not stand the ugly, polarizing, disheartening rhetoric any longer. They got to a point where they didn’t know what they could believe, so like many Americans, they simply turned the television off. Many of you have also shared with me that you had to quit watching the news because it caused you to feel anxious and depressed. I get it. These are challenging times. It seems that everyone has their own version of truth based upon their political convictions, their feelings, their peers, what’s popular on social media, or whatever they recently heard on a Ted Talk. Our country increasingly lacks “common” sense. In other words, there seems to be precious little that we can agree upon since “truth” has become relative to each person’s feelings or experiences.

As crazy as our culture seems to be in 21st century America, you should know that it’s not all that different from the culture of the first century Roman Empire! Religious pluralism was the norm in the days of Christ. Slavery, racism, sexual perversion, prostitution, and ruthless politics were commonplace. Even in conservative, God-fearing cities like Jerusalem, the Romans were constantly promoting their pagan propaganda, practices and ideologies. I think it is important to remember the similarities between our culture and the ancient Roman culture so that we might appreciate the profound significance of what Jesus says to His disciples here in John 14:1-7. On arguably the darkest night in all of history, just hours before the Son of God is betrayed and sentenced to death on a Roman cross, Jesus speaks words of encouragement to His troubled disciples. So, once again, let us stand and read what Jesus states in John 14:1-6 and this morning we will read verse 7 as well.

“Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. 2 In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. 4 And you know the way to where I am going.” 5 Thomas said to him, “Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?” 6 Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. 7 If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.”

Now, to get started, we need some context, and our old friend and commentator, Arthur Pink provides just what we need. Pink writes:

Before sin entered the world Adam enjoyed a threefold privilege in relation to God: he was in communion with his Maker; he knew Him; and he possessed spiritual life. But when he disobeyed and fell, this threefold relationship was severed. He became alienated from God, as the hiding of himself painfully demonstrated; having believed the Devil’s lie, he was no longer capable of perceiving the truth; and he no longer had spiritual life, for God’s threat ‘In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die’ was strictly enforced. Every sinner, therefore, has a threefold need—
reconciliation, illumination, and regeneration. This threefold need is perfectly met by the Savior. He is the Way to the Father; He is the Truth incarnate; He is the Life to all who believe in Him.

Last week we began by looking at the first of the threefold needs mentioned by Pink: reconciliation with God. We observed that Jesus emphatically pointed to Himself as The Way. Jesus serves as the pathway, the process, and the Person through which we might one day be brought into the Father’s house. Jesus is The Way…no one comes to the Father except through Him.

This morning we will look to the second of the threefold needs of every sin-sick soul: illumination. Jesus addresses our need for illumination when He declares of Himself, “I am…the truth.” Thus, the title of my message is simply, The Truth, and it will fall under three subheadings: 1) The Lord; 2) The Logos; and 3) The Light.

I. The Lord

NT scholar William Barclay observes:

Jesus said to Thomas, “I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life.” That is a great saying to us, but it would be still greater to a Jew who heard it for the first time. In it Jesus took three of the great basic conceptions of the Jewish religion, and made the tremendous claim that in Him all three found their full realization.

Barclay’s point is a great starting place for us. In essence, Jesus claimed to fulfill the three primary aims of the Jewish faith: the way of God; the truth of God; and the everlasting life of God. So…here’s a simple question: If Jesus claimed to be the way of God, the truth of God, and the life of God, who is Jesus claiming to be?

Church, when Jesus states, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life,” Jesus is ultimately making a claim that only God could make. Think about it. What fallible, 33-year-old man could hope to make his students believe that he was “THE Way”, “THE Truth,” and “THE Life”? Such a claim would be a sure mark of insanity unless this man was, Himself, God, right? Is that what Jesus is claiming? Is Jesus claiming to be God Himself? Yes…without question. Consider what Jesus states in vs. 7, “7 If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.”

Jesus is the Truth because Jesus is LORD. Jesus is Truth because when we look upon Jesus, we see the Father. If we know Jesus, we know God.

The writer of Hebrews proclaims: He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of His nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of His power (Heb. 1:3).

Paul writes, “He is the image of the invisible God…for by Him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross (Col. 1:15-20).
The disciples seated at the feet of Jesus on this night in Jerusalem no doubt followed Jesus initially as a Rabi, to the end that they might learn from Jesus about God’s truth. But notice what Jesus is saying: Jesus is the END of Truth…He is the Telos…He is the final and perfect revelation of Truth with a capital “T.”

Alexander Maclaren writes:

Jesus is the truth in reference to the divine nature. That Truth, then, is not a mere matter of words. It is not only His speech that teaches us, but Himself that shows us God. His whole life and character, His personality, are the true representation within human conditions of the Invisible God. There is all the difference between talking about God and showing Him. Men reveal God by their words; Christ reveals Him by Himself and the facts about His life. The truest and highest representation of the divine nature that men can ever have is in the face of Jesus Christ.

I will come back to this point in a few weeks as we move further into John 14 but let us take a moment to consider the importance of what Jesus just said.

Human beings are hopelessly spiritual creatures. We are all going to “worship” something, even if we have no belief in god. In other words, in the absence of knowing God for who God actually is, we will make up our own “idols” and allow them to play the role of God in our lives. These are the idols of our hearts, and they take many forms. We make idols out of our own pleasure, our intelligence, our good looks, our kids, our jobs, our sexual conquests, our hobbies, and so on. These idols provide meaning for living. These idols prioritize our resources, our best thinking, and our time. And yet we all know, don’t we, that idols fashioned in our own image cannot possibly account for the universe in which we live. Idols fashioned in our own image cannot account for the universal moral law that is written upon the hearts of all people regardless of race, tribe, or language. Idols fashioned in our own image give us no insight into life after the grave and no hope for the life to come. Thus, one of the greatest hinderances to human flourishing is wrong thinking about God.

Only Jesus stands up in history and says, “I am the Truth about God. Look to me and you have seen the Father. If you know me, you know God.” If Jesus is the Truth, we no longer have to guess about God’s nature and attributes. We know that God is loving. We know that God is forgiving. We know that God is just. We know that God loves the humble and brokenhearted. We know that God has prepared a place for those who are redeemed and forgiven. We know that this life is not all there is. We know that this age will come to an end and a new age will begin! Knowing who God actually is serves as the foundational Truth for all other claims of truth. It is no small thing that Jesus said, “I am the Truth.” Jesus is LORD! Thanks be to God! Let us now turn to my second subheading.

II. The Logos

In addition to the singular claim to be the Truth of God, Jesus is also establishing Himself as the Truth about everything else. In other words, Jesus is the Logos…the WORD, which in the Greek/Roman/Jewish mind means that Jesus is the Reason, the Fact, the Reality that accounts for all things.
We covered some of this ground early on in the John series, but let us remember the profound words that we find in the Prologue:

In the beginning was the Word (the logos), and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. 4 In him was life, and the life was the light of men. 5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

Jesus is the Logos through whom all things were made. Thus, Jesus is the TRUTH by which we come to understand all things. That is a remarkable claim but make no mistake: that is exactly what Jesus is saying when He declares, “I am the Truth.”

How are we to understand the nature and purpose of the cosmos? We must look through the spectacles of Christ. How are we to understand the nature of sexuality and marriage? We must look through the spectacles of Christ. How are we to understand the nature of justice and mercy? We must look through the spectacles of Christ. How are we to understand our purpose for being as individuals, families, and a church? We must look through the spectacles of Christ. Christ is the Reason. Christ is the Fact. Christ is the Reality. This claim of Jesus as the Truth applies not only to the revelation of the Father or grasping the great metaphysical questions of the universe, but also to every ethical question under the sun.

Maclaren writes:
‘Whosoever things are true, whosoever things are noble, whosoever things are lovely and good report,’ He is these, and all true ethics is but the formulating into principles of all the facts of the life and character of Jesus Christ. As such, Jesus should be the starting place in our thinking about everything.

So let us consider a typical day in the life of Jim West. As I awake and my feet hit the floor, I begin with the recognition that this is the day the LORD has made, and I should be glad and rejoice in it, right? My days are numbered in His book of Life. I was fearfully and wonderfully made; knit together in my mother’s womb by the LORD through whom and for whom all things were created. I step into the shower and the water flows over me, reminding me of my baptism and the washing away of my sins made possible through Christ who died for me. I sit down to eat breakfast and I give thanks, remembering the Body of Christ and the Blood of Christ that nourishes the soul and sustains my spirit. I greet my wife and remember that ‘what God has joined together let no man tear asunder.’ She is bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh, and the LORD has made us One. I greet my children and remember that my children are like arrows in my quiver, gifts from God to develop, teach, train up, discipline, and love unconditionally even as my Father in Heaven loves me unconditionally. As I get into my truck to head to work, I remember that the Logos designed me to work, that I have a vocatio—a calling—and that I am to do everything I do for the glory of the One who made me. On my drive I must remember that every soul seated behind the wheel of the cars around me are those beautifully made by the hands of the Master, each extraordinary in their givings and each bearing the image of Christ Himself. These are they for whom Jesus died to save. He thought them worth dying for; so I must esteem them the same, regardless of how they treat me, offend me, or ignore me. As the rain falls upon the windshield, I can give thanks that God sends the rain upon the just and the unjust, and that the rain makes things grow according to the design of the seed that God provides for our nourishment that sustains all living things.
You get the picture, right? Christ is at the beginning of every thought; He is the Reason behind everything that is; and we enter into knowledge and gain understanding when we call to mind that Jesus is the Logos, the WORD, the Reason of God…He is The Truth! Jesus is not an afterthought…He is every thought!

Blaise Pascal, my favorite French person of all time, the great philosopher and mathematician, insisted that what is needed is to see all things through Jesus Christ. Apart from this, we would have no true knowledge. Pascal writes:

Not only do we only know God through Jesus Christ, but we only know ourselves through Jesus Christ; we only know life and death through Jesus Christ. Apart from Jesus Christ we cannot know the meaning of our life or our death, of God or of ourselves. Thus, without Scripture, whose only object is Christ, we know nothing, and we can see nothing but obscurity and confusion in the nature of God and in nature itself.

This practice of looking through Christ into all matters and fields of learning applies to politics, racial reconciliation, sexuality, social policies, mathematics, physics, engineering, you name it. Jesus is the Logos…the Reason…the Fact…the Reality. Sin corrupts our thinking until Christ is in us; thus, only through Christ can we ultimately know or understand anything at all. I encourage you to pick up Bradley Green’s book, The Gospel and the Mind where he explores the implications of Jesus as the Logos and the means by which we come to know and understand truth.

OK, let me wrap up now with my third and final subheading…

**III. The Light**

Perhaps the most common metaphor associating Jesus with Truth is the language of Jesus as the Light. John writes in John 1:9-10, “9 The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. 10 He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him.”

Jesus states in John 8:12, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life.”

Again, we have covered some of this ground before, but let us simply observe that light brings reality into view. Light reveals Truth because light exposes things for what they really are…which can be great, or not so great.

I suspect many of us remember the terrors of the night when we were children. We would see some dark object in our rooms and immediately our imaginations would get the best of us. We would be gripped by fear that the unknown object was a monster of some kind, and we would cry out to our parents in sheer panic! The cure was always the same…our parents would turn on the lights. The light would reveal that the “monster” was only our old stuffed animal we had forgotten about, or some other harmless object. In those times, the Light was our comfort and our security…the Light defended us against fears of the darkness that were baseless and not even
real. However, as we age, we come to depend on light to defend us against the real threats of darkness. In most cases, light is our friend, right?

On the other hand, the Light can also reveal things we don’t want to see, or that which we don’t want anyone else to see. The paint on the walls in my house looks pretty good as long as the lights are low. But as soon as sun shines through the windows, you can see all the scratches, marks, smudges, and mess that I would rather you not notice! The same is true for the Light of Christ that shines upon our lives. The Truth of Jesus reveals our falsehoods, our wrong thinking, and our corrupted hearts. And here’s the truth: many people walk in darkness, and they do so on purpose. They don’t want the Light to expose the truth about their thinking or their behavior because they don’t want to see it, or they want to keep everyone else from seeing it, or both.

The Bible regularly leverages this picture to describe our sinful human condition. Proverbs 4:19 states, “The way of the wicked is as darkness; they know not at what they stumble.” Paul writes in Ephesians 4:18 that those who are far from God are those who “are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to their hardness of heart. They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity.” This is the fallen, default condition of those who are far from Christ. Apart from the Truth who is Christ, our minds are corrupted, and we walk in darkness.

Let me ask you a question: Do you welcome the light of Christ as our Defender against the darkness? Or do you fear what the Light of Christ will reveal in you? Do you run to the Light, or do you run from the Light?

It is true that the closer we get to the light of Jesus, the more we will see every imperfection in our lives and character. Seeing ourselves accurately is not, at first, the most pleasant experience… I know this from personal experience. It’s hard to admit how deeply flawed we actually are and what great need we have for a Savior. Sadly, many of us are not interested in the Truth and Light of Jesus for this very reason. We are walking through life with secrets and self-deception, and we like it that way. Such is why many people find any excuses to dismiss the existence of God or the truth about Jesus: they don’t want to believe the truth that the Light reveals. The Danish theologian and philosopher, Soren Kierkegaard states this truth quite frankly:

People try to persuade us that the objections against Christianity spring from doubt. The objections against Christianity spring from insubordination, the dislike of obedience, and rebellion against authority. As a result, people have hitherto been beating the air in their struggle against objections because they have fought intellectually with doubt instead of fighting morally with rebellion.

Friends, listen to me: you may love the darkness, but the darkness does NOT love you back. The darkness will not forgive you, and the darkness cannot save you. The Light of Jesus is inevitable for all of us. All of our secret addictions; our unforgiveness; our lies and sexual exploits…all of it will one day be revealed. Jesus said in Mark 4:22 "For everything that is hidden will eventually be brought into the open, and every secret will be brought to light."
If you are a person who has run from the Light of Christ, I implore you: stop running. Stop running from the Truth. Jesus has not come to condemn you, but to save you! In John 3:17 Jesus states, “For God did not send His Son to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through Him.”

Remember, Jesus says, “I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father but through me” just hours before going to the cross to die in our place…to earn our forgiveness! Jesus does not hate you, nor is He surprised by our darkness. Jesus loves each and every one of us, He comes to us as the Light of the world so that we will never have to walk in darkness again. Jesus is the Truth that drives away all falsehood. Jesus is the Liberator who sets us free from the chains of the slavery.

Jesus is the Way to the Father. As we walk in His Way, we come to know and personally experience that Jesus is the Truth. Jesus reveals God as the Loving Father. Jesus is the Reason of God that makes sense of the world in which we live. And Jesus is the Light who drives away the darkness and all falsehood. As we follow The Way and submit to The Truth, we will come to discover Jesus is also The Life we have always wanted! We’ll pick up there next Sunday.

Friends, call upon the name of Jesus. Walk in The Way, submit to The Truth, and The Truth will set you free.

Will you pray with me?