

Truth That Cannot Be Ignored

Luke 24:8-12

8 And they remembered his words,

9 And returned from the sepulchre, and told all these things unto the eleven, and to all the rest.

10 It was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and other women that were with them, which told these things unto the apostles.

*11 And **their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not.***

12 Then arose Peter, and ran unto the sepulchre; and stooping down, he beheld the linen clothes laid by themselves, and departed, wondering in himself at that which was come to pass.

John 18:37-38

*37 Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. **Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.***

38 Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault at all.

- I. Introduction
1. Truth matters.
2. It matters what you believe. Because you read it or hear it on the internet doesn't mean it is true.
3. **[image – Lincoln and internet, and Lincoln with cell phone]**
4. We are in danger of believing untruths because we have a tendency to accept as true, stories that confirm our way of thinking. No matter how outlandish they might sound.
5. A picture, a video, and even a sound bite that shows or states something, can easily be doctored.
6. There are people with great technical skills who can create a news story that looks believable, but be careful what you believe. Especially nearing an election, in a global pandemic, and where tensions are already high.
7. Like during the 2016 election cycle, a story was circulating reporting that Ted Cruz said he would replace the constitution with the Bible, but that was a story that originated from an entertainment website, not the senator.¹
8. When I was young, I remember reading that someone was selling splinters from the actual cross of Jesus and people were receiving miracles from them.
9. I heard a television evangelist many years ago say if you sent him \$100, God would immediately bless you with a fortune. He even had several give a testimony of how it happened for them.
10. It is not only funny how we will believe outlandish stories—we can be gullible—but it can be very dangerous to believe a lie.

¹ <https://www.snopes.com/fact-check/ted-cruz-constitution-bible/>

11. You may remember in November 1978 when over 900 members of the Peoples Temple in Jonestown, Guyana, drank cyanide laced Kool-Aid, because it was the right thing to do.
12. Folks, don't drink the Kool-Aid. Prove the truth. Don't accept an idea as truth without credible witnesses.
13. Stories of all kinds may appear as truth, but it matters what you believe.
14. *John 18:37... Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.*

II. Unbelievable Lot

1. God showed Abraham that the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were going to be destroyed.
2. He knew his nephew, Lot, and their family were living there—Lot, Lot's wife, and at least two daughters living at home.
3. So Abraham interceded for them and asked God to save the city if there were at least 10 righteous there.
4. Since there were not, God sent two angels to the city to retrieve Lot and his family.
5. The angels asked Lot:

Gen 19:12-13

12 And the men said unto Lot, Hast thou here any besides? son in law, and thy sons, and thy daughters, and whatsoever thou hast in the city, bring them out of this place:

13 For we will destroy this place, because the cry of them is waxen great before the face of the LORD; and the LORD hath sent us to destroy it.

B. Go get your sons-in-law

1. Lot believed the warning of the angels as truth, so in obedience to the angels, he went back out into the danger of the night and sought to bring his future sons-in-law home with him.
2. That was a truth that Lot could not ignore. The significance of these two visitors. They had already saved Lot's life by bringing blindness on the attackers at Lot's door, and then pulling Lot into the safety of the house.
3. So Lot went out to reach out to the young men pledged to marry his daughters.
Gen 19:14 And Lot went out, and spake unto his sons in law, which married ["to take" or were going to marry] his daughters, and said, Up, get you out of this place; for the LORD will destroy this city. But he seemed as one that mocked unto his sons in law.
4. Lot had heard the convincing words of the angels and had believed it, but just think about how it sounded to two young men whose lives were full of promise.
5. They were pledged to marry—perhaps soon. They no doubt had jobs to work at and homes to build. Plus, they were living in Sodom—party city.
6. To them, the future looked bright. Why would they want to leave their hometown?
7. Why would they want to leave their own family?

8. They knew Lot was not from Sodom originally, so let the old man leave if he wants to. They felt more at home in Sodom.
9. So when Lot said, “*Up, get you out of this place; for the LORD will destroy this city,*” they thought Lot was mocking, ridiculing, or joking.
10. So rather than taking Lot’s words as truth, the young men chose to ignore that “truth.”

C. Agree to disagree?

1. People can have differences of opinion of a subject, and with some, you may just decide you have to agree to disagree.
2. If the disagreement was, “Asparagus is so tasty. I love it!” or “Asparagus is awful. I can’t stand it;” then you can agree to disagree and walk on with life.
3. But if the disagreement is over whether to believe the city is going to be destroyed or not, if that were true, your life is at stake.
4. Even if the truth seems difficult to believe, even if others won’t understand and ridicule your actions, even if someone calls you a religious nut, even if pursuing this truth means a significant life change, that is a truth that can’t be ignored.
5. As it turned out, that was a truth that could not be ignored. Fire and brimstone did rain down on the city and it was destroyed.
6. It was a truth that could not be ignored. It required an action plan.

III. Jesus is alive! Unbelievable

A. Disbelief

1. Then we have another story that sounded unbelievable. But if true, the significance is unparalleled in human history and it changes everything.
2. The apostles were hiding out in a room in Jerusalem. It had been a tragically crazy week.
3. Just seven days before, they had marched into Jerusalem for the Passover feast, and multitudes of people had proclaimed Jesus as King of the Jews, singing *Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest.* (Matt 21:9)
4. But since that day, things went from great to bad, and from bad to worse.
5. Jesus had been arrested, convicted of blasphemy, scourged and then crucified with thieves. And now His lifeless body lay wrapped in a tomb.
6. What were they do believe? Their hope of Jesus becoming their king, and them ruling alongside Him were dashed.
7. And with Jesus convicted, crucified, and killed, what did they have to hope in? What future did they have?
8. The apostles were still in disbelief at all that had happened.

B. Hope knocks at the door

1. Then came a commotion at the door followed by frantic knocking.

2. There were no less than four women standing at their door, all about to explode with excitement to tell them something.
 3. They had just left the tomb and came to report what they had just witnessed.
Luke 24:1-7
1 Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them.
2 And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre.
3 And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus.
4 And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in shining garments:
5 And as they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead?
6 He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee,
7 Saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.
 4. And as the women retold these events to the 11 apostles and some others who had gathered in the room, they didn't know what to make of this incredible story.
Luke 24:9 And returned from the sepulchre, and told all these things unto the eleven, and to all the rest.
 5. What were they to think? What were they to do? The truth was that Jesus had been condemned as a criminal on death row, the death penalty had been executed, Jesus had hung on the cross until dead, and as far as they knew, He should be in a tomb.
 6. And now, their hopeless despair was interrupted by this story. What were they to believe?
Luke 24:10-11
10 It was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and other women that were with them, which told these things unto the apostles.
*11 And **their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not.***
 7. They had heard Jesus foretell these things were going to happen—many times.
 8. But when the women told this story, it seemed to them as idle tales, “pure nonsense,” and they did not believe them.
- C. When faced with truth
1. It is useful to go back to a few days earlier when the chief priests and elders were questioning Jesus.
 2. The charge of blasphemy was on Jesus and they were questioning Him about His claims. He was making Himself God. What was His answer?
*Luke 22:67 **Art thou the Christ? tell us.** And he said unto them, **If I tell you, ye will not believe:***
 3. They knew Jesus spoke as God. That is why they had Him in custody.
 4. They just wanted Him to say it so they could approve of their charge to crucify Him.
 5. But Jesus said of truth, “**If I tell you, you will not believe.**”

6. It was a truth that should have transformed them—a truth they could not ignore.
7. But for these people, hearing the truth did not matter. They were going to take that action regardless of the truth—because they did not believe.
8. How about you? When faced with God’s truth, how do you plan to react?
9. Jesus could have stood before them and told them the truth, but still, looking Him in the eyes, and watching His lips form the words, and their ears perceiving the sounds coming from His mouth, they still would not have believed it.
10. It was a truth that cannot be ignored—yet they did to their own detriment.

D. What is Truth?

1. But when faced with truth, some still ignore it, or at least, don’t know what to do with it.

2. Pilate asked that question with Truth standing before Him.

3. *John 18:37-38*

*37 Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. **Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.***

*38 Pilate saith unto him, **What is truth?** And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault at all.*

4. The truth was that Truth was standing before him:

*John 14:6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, **the truth**, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*

5. And Jesus said **everyone that is of the truth heareth my voice.**

6. What does that mean for you and I today?

7. Does “everyone that is of the truth” include you?

8. Are you one who can ignore truth?

IV. Cannot be ignored

1. But here is the point we must emphasize today—what do you do with a Bible truth that is hard to believe?

2. Like when Lot spoke to his future sons-in-law, it sounded like ridiculous nonsense to them.

3. And like when the disciples heard the women report the tomb was empty and that Jesus was alive, they didn’t believe it. It was as idle tales.

4. Do we have the option of “believing not” when faced with such a story?

5. Truth matters. Especially a truth like this—a Man who was dead for three days in a tomb, and now the tomb is empty, and you want me to believe He is alive?

6. If this is true, what do we do with it? Does it mean I need to take some kind of action? And if so, do we act now?

7. If we believe that, there is another resurrection getting ready to happen we need to be aware of and take action on:

1 Thess 4:14-17

14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.

16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

8. This truth before us today is that kind of truth that will alter our plans. If we believe it, or if we believe it now. It will impact us.
9. If this whole thing about God, the coming resurrection of believers, is all true.
10. And in this next passage, Peter adds that this world will be consumed by fire. What if it is all true?

2 Peter 3:3-7

3 Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts,

*4 And saying, **Where is the promise of his coming?** for since the fathers fell asleep, **all things continue** as they were from the beginning of the creation.*

11. **But do they? Haven't things changed?**

5 For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water:

*6 Whereby the world that then was, **being overflowed with water, perished:***

12. They chose not to believe. But that stop the flood?
7 But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.
13. While that will be a truth that cannot be ignored, those who have made ready have this promise to look for:

2 Peter 3:13-14

13 Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

*14 Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, **be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.***

14. That is how we can respond to truth.