

TRUTH HERE AND NOW  
(Part Two of the series on Truth)

A transcription from March 23, 2025 Zoom teaching.  
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The transcript included is only lightly edited to preserve as much of the original tone as possible. In some places, material is added (inside the curved parentheses marks, as here). When that occurs, you should infer that I felt a minor insertion was appropriate for clarity. In other cases [brackets are used to indicate that either voice inflection or body language were important] and to avoid loss of meaning cannot be seen or heard. In some places “quote marks” are used to indicate actual or hypothetical quotes, or to emphasize a particular word such as “truth.” Underlines are also occasionally used to indicate key ideas.

On the first occasion that we got together on the topic of truth, I specified that we would be approaching truth from a biblical perspective. It's not possible, however, to ignore the fact that “truth” is a word that is widely used in almost every field of human endeavor, particularly in fields that have to do with interactions between people, and even more particularly when those interactions have significant consequences, such as in politics, for example, or in the law.

Different things are meant when the word “truth” is used in those different contexts. Each of them has its own reasons for using the word “truth” the way that it does. But if you examine them closely, the various usages will typically be to some degree at variance with one another. I think we've probably all seen, for example, dramatizations, or maybe you've been in a courtroom, where the term “tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth” is used. Whoever hears that term being used in the courtroom proceeding is likely to assume the definition of “truth” that they themselves have, whatever their mental idea about what truth is.

If you examine procedure related to courtroom proceedings, one of the conclusions you'll come away with is that truth doesn't really mean the same thing that it might otherwise mean. I've testified in trials before. And I've been instructed by a court official to “tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth”, but they didn't want to hear the “whole truth.” They generally want to hear a little bitty piece of truth. It wasn't the whole truth. It was what some attorney was after – it was a splinter out of the truth, out of which that attorney could build a new log, (but) not the one that the splinter came from originally. This is just what happens.

I'm not saying that that's a bad thing. I certainly wouldn't say it's a good thing, but it's the thing. My impression anyway, is that in legal theory, the theorists, the philosophers of law really understand that truth is a goal that is almost never truly met. Rarely does the whole truth actually factor into the proceedings. And it's sort of a hands-off kind of thing wherein we're making determinations about people's futures based on procedures that have to do with how you produce

evidence. And the evidence supposedly is either believed to be true or rebutted by the process. The more abstract the nature of the case, the more likely it is that the procedures will eventually outweigh the facts. It is procedures that become the determinants of whether or not things are considered to be true, rather than their actual, what I call, “truth content.”

We'll want to take some time and understand the human aspects of the definition of truth from the standpoint that we mean different things in different contexts when we use the word “truth.” Parents, for example, often encourage their children to “tell the truth. Did you do this, or did you do that? Recite the fact, or facts to me” – very narrowly defined. The child then, of course, if there's any guilt involved, is trying to construct a way to say all of that which shifts the blame or avoids the blame that mom is looking for.

Yeah, as a parent – those of you that are parents or in the more blessed and exhausted state of having been – but no longer parents, you understand that often you knew what the truth was. The recitation of truth was an opportunity for the child involved to deal with the truth, the factual things surrounding the events involved. We have that kind of fairly simple truth, just the truth of the moment, the truth that has to do with parental procedure. “What will I do about the thing that has occurred? I can't (just) ignore it.”

I'll give you an example of a fellow who had a family situation that was pretty terrible. He reached a place where I believe he wished fervently that he could avoid dealing with what had occurred, but he couldn't. The fellow's name was Noah. Whatever the reasons were, on a particular occasion he celebrated the new wine by trying to drink the whole crop, or something like that, and found himself inebriated. In that state of inebriation, the youngest of his three sons, a fellow named Ham (or ‘Ham is probably more correctly) found his dad, and the text says he found him in a state of undress. I can't recall how many sermons I've heard about how Noah being undressed was metaphorical – meant something else altogether. I find that amusing. His dad was drunk, passed out drunk. And he was also undressed, and you know, why do we need to add a layer of interpretation to his undressed-ness? He was probably undressed because he just didn't get dressed after his events with the jug.

Well now, after Ham saw his father in that particular situation, he went and told his brothers, the other two gentlemen who had been co-passengers on the USS Ark. (I made up the first part of that name.) He told them in a way that he was making fun of his father. He was. Had his father been present, he would have been attempting to humiliate his father about the way Ham found him. Now this implies to me that there was a level of disrespect in their relationship. Ham didn't respect his father enough to kind of compensate for what he found when he went into the tent.

The two brothers, however - their names were Shem and Yafeth. They decided that rather than just go see a spectacle they would avoid seeing the spectacle. And they would cover their father. So, the scripture is pretty clear, they walked backward holding something that they were then able to place over their father to cover up his physical nakedness. Which is as close to being metaphorical in the whole thing as I can find.

And then Noah became aware of it. When he recovered, he became aware of the situation. He now had a real problem. It was a very unusual problem because. He only had the three sons. And they had begun to have sons, and maybe most of their sons were already born. This wasn't week two after getting off the ark, it was probably years before he had a functional vineyard. And in fact, all of the sons of Ham seem to have been already born. There are several, I forget the number now. Four or five of the sons of Ham were already born by now. And so, we had this single group of people, maybe consisting of something around 100 or so people, maybe a few more than that living all together in one village, if we want to call it that, if we want to give it a name, one location.

And there was now open disrespect for the leader. He was no ordinary leader. He was, in fact, in his generation, he was the representative of God the Father Almighty, God the Father Almighty (represented) in the flesh in his generation. Noah was that. So, not only was Ham disrespecting his father, Noah, but he was also disrespecting his brothers by inviting them to participate in his revelry. And he was disrespecting God Himself in these activities that they undertook. They all lived together and now Ham had brought basically significant structural disharmony into the camp by his actions. I don't know that he thought about these things. I don't know he went over to his tent and said, "let me see if I can figure out a way to mess things up," any of that kind of stuff. It was just in him to do that.

So, Noah had a significant problem. He had to deal with Ham's disrespect. But it would have been really, really difficult to deal directly with Ham because he represented a very big part of the population of the world at the time. And it was practically, you could almost imagine it would cross Noah's mind, it would practically start a war for him to publicly deal with Ham on the matter. And so, he in the necessity of dealing with the problem, he chose about as remote a solution as he could. He decided to place the punishment onto Ham's youngest son, most removed, the furthest removed from Noah himself in the family line of Ham at the time. The other sons were all older than this son Canaan. That set up dynamic for generations and generations and generations. In fact, at a spiritual level, you could make the argument that the current conflict in the Middle East is still a result of that particular family dynamic that began where they were there in northern Syria.

Well, it sort of solved the problem, in that Noah had said, in a way, "we can't have this kind of thing in the camp"; but at the same time, did the least amount of damage to the overall demographic and social structure of the camp. Now what Noah had to do here – he had to deal with the truth. He couldn't ignore it, he couldn't pretend that his son hadn't done the thing. He didn't ask his son about it. He had witnesses: they were the ones, the witnesses were the ones who notified him (more than likely), probably the other sons, realizing the difficulty that now confronted the people.

But no matter what he did, there was structural pressure on the population of the world, the existing population of the world. God already had it in mind that He would scatter men around

the world. But they hadn't begun to do that. They were all still located there in what amounted to one settlement, let's call it that, in northern Syria, or possibly southern Turkey, and nowhere else. So, this set up some additional dynamics that became very dysfunctional.

Those additional dynamics include, for example, the building of the tower. In the 4th generation of that same family, the family of Ham, in the 4th generation, there was a man born by the name of Nimrod. And we use Nimrod to refer to people in a way that kind of makes fun of them, but actually, he was a conqueror. Nimrod was, in my opinion, the first evidence in the flesh of the first horseman of the apocalypse.

I'll give you an example of the importance of what Nimrod did in that same family line, where the respect of the father had already been badly distorted. Now why am I going on with the story? We're going on with this story because we have to understand that among the services that need to be provided, by truth ultimately, is that it needs to become the refuge by which, or within which, or from which, determinations of important matters are made. They should comport with the Truth.

Early in this particular segment, I indicated that the law is interested in the truth, but only up to a point, and it realizes, in its own philosophy, that it probably never totally finds the Truth, and often makes error in judgment, collective errors in judgment, so that people are released from their responsibilities when they shouldn't be or people are typically, the stories we hear about people being incarcerated when they shouldn't be. There's a lot of factors that go into all of that. And suffice it to say for now because I believe it's a thing we'll have to come back to on another occasion, it's getting worse. It's getting harder and harder to see the truth that the world presents to me, and you as being related to The Truth. You all know when I say "the truth" I may mean one of a number of different things. I think you also know that when I say "The Truth," more or less, I'm talking about something that's very fixed in its nature, the eternal truth.

The eternal truth is the eternal truth. In our last session, I established that for you up to the point of accepting it in faith that The Truth is eternal. I can't cause you to have that faith. But in order to get to the place where you believe that the eternal truth is absolute truth, it is the standard of all truth, you have to exercise faith. You can't get there any other way.

Human systems don't do that particularly well. The exercise of faith in human systems is only approximate. It's like a default, a de facto. Some people who exercise faith say that it's not faith, it's just the way things are when they're exercising their faith. For example, if I make the statement, "There is no God," and I happen to believe it, if I happen to actually believe that there is no God, then that is a statement of faith. It's just a statement of faith. It's what it is because it deals with an eternal question, an extra natural question that human beings typically always deal with to one degree or another. So, I've made a statement of faith if I say there is no God. For any statement about God, it's going to be a statement of faith, or a lie. One or the other. It comes from a place of faith, or it comes from a lie.

I'm not going to be successful, I don't think, with totally separating these things for us today. But I do believe that in the future, we can finish that particular process. Before I get really fully into it, one of the things that I want to add is that in the greater context, the broader context of Christianity, the church – other terms are used – but you all understand – I think, what I mean by that, within that greater context, there are many who can believe in truth beyond natural things, but who will still attempt to distort or pervert even the eternal truth.

That occurs more than once in the prophets, where the Lord says, “your new moon” feast I detest and despise. Now, many Christians will take that and say that proves that Jewish holidays were bad. The problem with that is that in Leviticus, God said to have these holidays. Now, is He a liar? Did He change His mind about holidays, or was He referring to something they had done to His truth? That made it no longer fully His truth.

I'm not going to name the denomination. But I know one which in its written documents, a written document, an origin document makes the statement that under the influence of the Holy Spirit, they believe that any indulgence with alcohol is a sin. Well, for some people, you know, predisposed enough maybe to feel that way, perhaps because of upbringing or culture or something like that, feel like any alcohol consumption is a sin. So, when Jesus was sitting around drinking alcohol with the disciples on Passover, He was sinning right along with them, or when He went to the ridiculous act of converting water into grape juice, the writers just change the words to make it sound like it was wine, stupid stuff like that. That's trying to actually touch the eternal with our preferences, the things we like or don't like ourselves.

So, it's not universally true that all of the damage that is attempted on the truth is in the hands of heathens and atheists and things of that sort. A lot of well-intentioned and maybe not so well-intentioned activity on the part of religious persons, often called Christians through the centuries, to add things onto the eternal truth what they wanted to see there because God forgot to put it in, or something like that.

Well, let's not settle there for now. Let's move on and get a little bit more into how we can begin to separate out Truth as we choose to think of it not as we choose its components to be, but as we choose to think of it from other kinds of truth, because the word “truth” will still be encountered. If I say to you that nothing is true unless it was already true in the eternal, it's going to create a problem for you if you believe me because you're going to run into the word truth in all kinds of settings. I've already talked to you about courtrooms and legal proceedings.

My training is primarily in science. And in science, from one philosopher to another among scientists, and it varies in different branches of science, the use of the word “truth” is quite variable. One philosopher of science will say to you, “there is no search for truth in science. Science is not looking for truth. Science is only looking for knowledge.” Then the reader of science, the consumer of scientific knowledge, decides for themselves whether a thing is true or not, but science can't make that determination. And that's pretty close to the way science operates. I didn't embellish it very much. It's just a broad outline.

So maybe we want to take a minute and look at what that kind of thing means. At the end of all of that, before today's time together is over, I want to propose to you a way of looking at truth that divides it into categories, kind of, and the categories have to do with its relationship to the original, primal, eternal, truth, which all other kinds of truth may fairly well, or not at all well, mimic in some degree. But all human endeavors that purport to deal with truth, purport to define and discuss and catalog truth and so forth, have in mind some sort of reference point.

The problem for human endeavor, in terms of that reference point, is that when we have divorced what we know from that which is eternal then the reference point can't be eternal any longer. And that's going to be our difficulty if there is eternal truth. But if I deny the existence of any eternal entity, then I have removed whatever sense of truth I may have from eternal truth. It's no longer tethered to eternal truth.

They may equivocate a little bit. Some people in science do this, they'll do it like this: "that's not a scientific question, so science can't deal with it. There may be truth related to your question, but it's not scientific truth. It's some other kind of truth that's not scientific." That's about the best science can do.

I haven't read deeply at all in legal theory, and perhaps some of you have, I don't know, but in legal theory, I can't find any real reference to linking the truth in the courtroom, the truth under the law to eternal truth. I can't find that linkage. If it's there, my apologies, but I can't find it. I don't know how to, I don't know how to look for it, and you don't need me to look for it. If you want to find it, you go find it. I've got other things to do besides looking for that kind of linkage because it's not that important to me. I understand what happens in courts of law well enough to know that eternal truth has virtually nothing to do with what goes on. And in some courtrooms, I suspect that the mere mention of God would be considered contempt.

So, you've got such a wide range, but it's all about things that people saw and heard. And things that people saw and heard don't have the same oomph as something like, for example, gravity. Gravity just seems to be of much broader import than "Bob saw Sally slap Susie." Did Bob really see Sally slap Susie? Was it really a slap?" You know, all those kinds of considerations, the law has to do. But they're not eternal considerations. Should Sally have slapped Susie, that was the one, right? Or was it Susie slapping Sally? I don't remember. One of those ladies slapped the other. Anyway, there's not any particularly eternal kind of import in that except that she shouldn't have done it. Well, you know, we can get all tied up in those kinds of definitions and lose track of what really matters.

I'm beginning the process now of disconnecting, or uncoupling, this eternal truth that we spoke about last time (from other truth), without defining very much about it. We mostly talked about its relationship to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit, and the interconnected and interconnectedness of those relationships with us. And how it is then that in the long term, in the overall view of things, the large picture, we are already, by virtue of our relationships with the

eternal, we are already in the presence of eternal truth. And for us, all truth can be measured against the standard of eternal truth.

But there are things that are more important than other things, and I'll give you just sort of a little example. Once we had in our yard, when I was a kid growing up, we had in our yard a miniature apple tree. It was supposed to be a miniature tree that made ordinary apples, but it was also miniature apples, turns out. They weren't very big. Johnny Appleseed would not have been proud. In any event, when the time came, in the fall, when the apples were fully ripe, if we left one on the tree, eventually the stem, the actual juncture between the stem of the apple and the place from which it originally grew on the tree, and there's a name for that spot, and I don't know the name of it (I'm probably not going to go look it up), that particular juncture becomes non-viable. It just ceases to have any viability, and begins to dry, and at some point, the apple and its stem disconnect from the limb from which it depended. And it falls on the ground. And every time if you left an apple on there, eventually, unless critters got to them, eventually the apple would fall to the ground if you didn't pick it before it fell to the ground. That was essentially an inevitable outcome. Everybody gets that. That's not a hard thing.

Now, there's truth in that. Leave the apple alone long enough and it will fall from the tree. It won't just let loose of the tree; it will fall from the tree. It won't let loose and go upward, for example. We accept that as being true, don't we? We kind of know about this thing called gravity, and it says that a fairly small-massed object will move in the direction of an object with a larger mass if they're relatively fairly close together, unless something keeps it from happening. So, when the time comes, the apple will fall – always. The 13th apple doesn't take off and jump up to a cloud somewhere. That just isn't the way it works. So, there's some science in a way kind of involved in all that having to do with what we call now the theory of gravity. In fact, the story goes that when Isaac Newton discovered gravity, it had to do with an apple. An apple fell out of a tree under which he was and hit him. And for whatever reason, it came home to him. “Oh, that's always going to happen if I stand under an apple tree and an apple lets loose. And he gave it a name. And here we are talking about it today, spending billions of dollars doing research on the way gravity works, many billions of dollars. Don't get me started on that. Okay.

Now, there are those kinds of things, and they're true. Yeah, apples will fall. Not some of the apples, but all of the apples. It turns out that had we (we didn't), but had we planted, let's say, an orange tree next to our apple tree, that when the oranges were fully ready, and the wind blew, or whatever, similar things would happen. The orange would fall from the tree and land on the ground. Judy and I had, I think we had at least one orange tree among the various citrus trees we had in Arizona. They were mostly small grapefruits. They seemed to grow the best. Sure enough, I feel like if I sat on the back porch and watched, eventually, all those little grapefruits would fall to the ground, not a single one of them would have taken off with the skies or flown off horizontally or anything like that or just hang there in the air suspended. Wasn't going to happen. So, it wasn't worth my while to get out there and watch for it. I knew some things about that, and they're true things. Leave it alone and eventually it'll fall.

There are some other things I know that are true. It's unlikely, for example, maybe not quite as sure as gravity, but it's unlikely the apple tree would ever bear an orange, and vice versa. Yeah, kind of truth. A kind of obvious factual kind of truth. That's not terribly important eternally, except unless we're thinking in terms of the glories of the way God did things. Then it gets another meaning. I'll get to that. And it also turns out that neither apple trees nor orange trees, and I'm doing this deliberately, grow orangutans. Oranges and orangutans are a bit alike. But no tree grows an orangutan, although orangutans spend a lot of their lives in trees. See what's going on here? You know some stuff. It's fairly true. It's evident kinds of stuff. Life shows us many, many things like that, but are they eternal truth? They might be related to eternal truth, but in and of themselves, they are truth within the context of creation. And they're not truth somewhere else. In fact, in most of the context of creation, they're not true, because as far as we know, there's no other place in the universe that apple trees and orange trees grow. Or orangutans are born.

As far as we know, it's actually an earthly truth, if you will. So, when, I think they call them officers of the law, put on their play in a courtroom, it's all about establishing something that's true there and then. It's for the people who are interested in that particular set of activities and its outcome. That particular truth, whatever truths might be found out in the course of a trial of facts in the law, is roughly related to the truths that are found in other facts of the law. But, no matter what we do in writing laws, we don't capture all of the variability of human behavior very well. Humans are not nearly as predictable as apples and oranges. So we have kind of a higher order of things that are important, and the higher order of thinking about what truth is when we're talking about how people interact with each other, kind of like science deals with one set of things and, and law, and philosophy, and things of that sort, deal more with the human kinds of things and so forth, right up through some sort of hierarchy of truth. So, the idea of a hierarchy of truth, I think is around, but I'm going to give you my particular layout for hierarchy of truth.

But before I do that, I want to set up the primary distinction within the hierarchy of truth, and that is the distinction of eternal truth from any other form of truth. I might even say at the end, I won't, well, yeah, I could say that it's not something we have to take home with us as a takeaway: That in the final analysis, the things that actually matter are found in eternal truth. The rest of the stuff only matters in a very limited kind of way, not particularly important in terms of The Spiritual reality of our being.

Now, let's suppose that you had the capacity to do what I'm about to say, and you chose to do it. And you constructed in some manner, because you have the power to do so, you constructed some sort of cube. Everybody knows what a cube is. It's a thing that has 3 dimensions and all the sides are equal in length in the whole three dimensions and all the angles are 90 degree angles. So, it's a perfect square phenomenon. And in this cube, is everything we can know. Everything. It's a pretty big cube. Everything we can know, every way we can know anything, the definitions of everything, all the relationships between various things inside the cube, all of the dynamics of those relationships, all the causes of those dynamics of those relationships.



Everything that's possible to know, if we don't consult the eternal, everything that's possible to know is inside that cube. Including all of the rules about understanding what's in the cube. Knowledge, after all, is only a word. You believe in knowledge; you've heard the word knowledge enough in your lifetime to have the concept of knowledge and knowing and that sort of thing. Those aren't difficult concepts for us because the phenomena involved with them ~~is so~~ ~~common~~, are so common. So, everything's inside that cube.

[This section is somewhat hypothetical.] Now, your position as the keeper of the cube is that there is nothing outside the cube. Nothing exists outside the cube. Everything that exists, and every idea about it, and everything else is inside the cube. That's it, it all is. That's where we start. Right off the bat, one of our problems is that there is no place in that model of knowledge for anything that is not well-behaved in terms of the rules. For example, we might ask the question in our own impious way, "well, what's outside the cube?"

What's outside the cube? What does that even mean? What is this cube thing we're talking about? What is it? What's outside the cube is non-existent in this particular way of seeing things. So, if I'm talking about describing, interacting with anything outside the cube, I'm doing something that I can't be doing. Therefore, it's not happening. In the way knowledge has come to be seen in human cultures is that the methods of understanding include everything. And if you have taken the position that there is no God, then your cube can't deal with questions that have anything to do with God. You can't do it. All you can do when you get a question and asks about God is like "He's somewhere else," or "There probably isn't one, but if there is, He's somewhere else" or "we don't want to talk about that", or "we're not set up to handle that question", or something similar to that. There's no guarantee at all that there's anything outside the cube when we've already said that there isn't.

If we manage the cube correctly, we believe that we can answer any question, though, that comes along that has to do with anything inside the cube. At all, ever. That must be so. Because there's nothing outside the cube. But if something is outside the cube, even though I say there can't be anything outside the cube, then that thing that's outside the cube, whatever it is, might have an impact on the cube if it chose to do so. And there really would be nothing I could do about it in my knowledge structures. I can't comprehend, I probably can't even understand that something has happened in many, many cases, if it comes from outside the cube, which I've already determined is the only place anything can be. That is getting kind of weird.

If you really stop and think about it though, that's the way we are. If someone says there is no God, then what is there outside their ordinary experience? They pretty much have to conclude and say to you, "there's nothing outside an ordinary experience that I might anticipate." Any kind of proof of the existence of something, or the observation of some dynamic, any kind of proof of something like that, must take place according to the rules that exist inside the cube. This is one of the reasons when you talk to people who don't have a place in their thought processes for the Almighty, they just can't understand what you're talking about. It's not that they're deficient. It's

not that they're mentally incapable. It's that anything outside the cube doesn't exist as far as they're concerned. So, it's not a thing they can discuss.

The only thing they can actually do about that is to say, "this is not a valid discussion." In some way or other, saying this is not a valid discussion. Now, by the way, if they're fairly highly educated, they're going to get mad right about this point. This is going to cause anger because people that are pretty highly educated usually think they know, but what they really mean is everything in the cube is as they perceive it ordinarily. And so, when you challenge them about things outside the cube, pretty quick, it's going to become anger.

Very few can handle the questions about things like the existence of God. Where did the cube come from? What's the cube made out of? Can we see through the walls of the cube? Even questions like that. They're not questions they can touch, they're not questions they can handle as they think of scientific knowledge. So, knowledge, in and of itself, isn't truth. As we're discussing truth today, it isn't truth.

Inside its own context, knowledge is just knowledge. The Latin word for knowledge is *scientia*. And we don't like the way *scientia* sounds, so we just call it science. Science just means knowledge. That's all it means. It does not mean truth. You say to the typical Latin speaker, there aren't any typical Latin speakers anymore, they all died already. You say, "well, isn't that the same thing as truth?" I say no, "truth is *veritas*." *Veritas* and *scientia* don't begin to sound anything alike. *Scientia* is one thing, *veritas* is another. Science is not academic activity in pursuit of truth; it's academic activity in pursuit of knowledge. And knowledge only.

When science positions itself in that manner, then it can be true to itself. It can be internally true to itself. It can set up its methods and its methods are valid, given what it is attempting to do. When you or I come along and we enter the conversation, and we say, "well, isn't it wonderful that God did that?" Then we've gone outside the bounds of what science can accommodate. It doesn't mean we're wrong, it just means we've gone outside the boundaries of the cube as perceived by the scientists in the discussion. We think of scientific knowledge as being the most sophisticated kind of knowledge. It may be sophisticated because its methods are obscure to ordinary people, and they're obscure because they're difficult. And science constrains itself in certain ways. It actually tells itself, "we're not going to do this, we'll do that" within its own set of rules.

For example, most statements of science will say, "there is no absolute truth." If there's no absolute truth, then does that make God a liar, and when does He lie? If there's no absolute truth, when is God lying? Which of the things that God has said are true, are actually lies. Well, for you and I, that's not a very valid question. When is God lying? is not a valid question. We don't think He does. And even if we thought that God lied (and we act like He does a lot), but even if we thought consciously that God lies, it would be difficult for us to understand when He was lying. Right, how would we know?

Science just avoids that altogether. It says there's no absolute truth. There's only approximate truth, truth as constrained by some sort of statement of methods and so forth. Oh, in other words, in its own statements of itself, it says we have a box within which we operate. My cube. It all has to be inside there. Then we can talk about something like truth, but the truth is not always true even at that. Truth is always approximate. There are appropriate ranges of measure in which truth is true, but if we get outside the ranges of those measures, then truth isn't truth anymore, even within the box.

An example of that is that when Mr. Einstein promulgated his theory of relativity, he first worked on a thing called the General Theory of Relativity. And he said there are these four basic fundamental forces, and they all interact with each other. And their interactions with each other determine how things work in the universe. Then he had to write another thing called the Special Theory of Relativity because gravity didn't play nice with the other forces, and the math wouldn't work.

There's an inherent flaw in science right there. Science must reduce itself to mathematical statements. You wondered about why it sounds so weird sometimes. That's because really ultimately, science binds itself to the notion of quantification, and rules of quantification. And it can't violate the rules. And if a thing doesn't work, even within the range in which it's supposed to work, then science has a problem. It's got to go try to find a way to solve that problem. And usually, it's inconsequential. It usually has to do with the problems in measurement.

You and I look, when we look at truth, we look at eternal consequences – not whether gravity bends at the edge of the universe, but eternal consequences. In science, they have a bunch of problems associated with science, with gravity not working like it's supposed to under extreme conditions. And then you say to them, “what do you mean by extreme conditions?” “ Oh man, I wish you hadn't asked that question, because we don't know when it's not extreme. We know what it should look like when it's not extreme. And ordinarily, we encounter that, but as we make the conditions worse and worse, when does it, when does it stop being true?”

The truth then becomes a kind of accordion inside this cube of science. Well, I beat that one to death a little bit because it's the hardest one for us to comprehend. The reason for the disagreements that we get into with science is not that they're being mean to us or we're being mean to them. It's that we're not talking about the same thing. It's just that simple. We're not talking about the same thing.

When I talk about the eternal properties of God, properties like his sovereignty, there's just no way to get that into the box. You can't get it in there. You can't get his glory into the box. You can't get truth into the box. The Truth is the one where it's maybe the biggest problem. Because we all talk about truth so very much. But we can't force eternal truth into this box of the way we know things as human beings. The Lord God is so worried [yes, that is there to get you to think about it] about that. He's so worried about the fact that we can't make His truth fit our models.

But He totally ignores that fact and He just waits to see how we behave. It's our behavior that's important to Him.

So, we can postulate for a moment, just as an initial way of looking at truth. I'm going to give you four levels, four categories of truth. I don't intend this to be everything that you could think of, or everything that I've thought of in the process. I've eliminated some things to make it a reasonable way to look at this. And it starts with the highest, broadest set of considerations and what matters in the body of truth. It goes down to the little bitty things like which tree did that apple fall from?

You walk out into the orchard, let's say you had two or three of those apple trees in your yard, and there's an apple that has fallen overnight, and you didn't really know that particular apple was going to fall. And these trees all have the same variety of apples on them. And you haven't made a day-by-day catalog of which tree has which apples and in which positions. You just know that all of them have got a bunch of apples on them, and soon they'll fall if you don't go picking. And you walk out one day and there's one of those apples. And it's in an intermediate position between two of the trees. It's indeterminate which tree it fell out of.

Do you know that in a scientific way of viewing things, that's a real problem. Which tree did the apple fall from? Whether the apple is good or not, probably has nothing to do with that. That's maybe a more important truth as well. So, these very almost minute kinds of things that happen all around us all the time, that are essentially governed by what we would call natural laws we might call micro truth. They deal with just a little problem, a little specification of something. It's really not even a problem; it's merely an observation.

Well, those apples fell last night. He fell off *that* tree, fell off *that* tree, or somebody's trying to trick me. Or some supernatural being placed that apple there just to confuse me. Nope, can't do that one. That's outside the box. So those micro truths usually are subordinate to macro truths. I'm just making the terms up here, okay? Just to give us a kind of reference as we go on.

Now, a macro truth is kind of like a micro truth repeated a lot. You know, for example, that apple fell off that tree, it might be a micro truth. Apples fall off of apple trees would be a macro truth. It's a bigger restatement, covers a broader array of things, and it allows me then to get the oranges and the orangutans into the discussion. They weren't involved in my discussion of what fell off of which tree, what night. Unless we think the orangutan came along, shook the limb to knock an apple out or something, which would be silly. Beyond that, there's layers of truth, if you want to call it that, at least theories and hypotheses and so forth and so on about why trees, why fruit is attached to trees the way it is, why trees grow that have fruit, why trees grow that don't have fruit.

By the way, there's an eternal aspect of that. God planted trees in the garden, and they all had fruit. Most of them anyway had fruit. Now the occurrence was natural, but it was God Himself who planted them. Where did He get the trees to plant in the garden, y'all? They must have come

out of something else. Anyway then, beyond that, we could maybe have multiple levels, but at some point, we get to the really big truths, like gravity, and strong nuclear forces, and weak nuclear forces, and electromagnetic forces, and all kinds of things like that that have to do with things we study in what we call science. The stuff we tried to skip in high school, science: biology, chemistry, physics, those kinds of things.

We'll call those things – with a high degree of granularity here – cosmological truth. We expect, for example, that what we're seeing when we look at the surface of extraterrestrial bodies can be interpreted as grains of sand because we have grains of sand on the earth and we extrapolate that knowledge to whatever that other thing is. “Let’s call it a grain of sand. It may not be quite the same as grains of sand are here, but it's a grain of sand.” So cosmological truth extends all the way out to the really big things. It explains everything inside the box on a grand scale. It is the big picture.

And in fact, we can even, within cosmological truths, we can even talk about really special things. There's a thing called a third body problem. They made a TV miniseries called Third Body Problem, and I thought it would be interesting, but it wasn't about the third body problem, except very briefly in the second episode. But anyway, the third body problem just says that things are attracted to each other, gravitationally. And if there are three things, reasonably close, so that any one of them has some degree of attraction to the other two, then there are situations in which the proximities among them cause unpredictable things to occur because the gravitational forces get out of whack: they're no longer in balance. So, we even get into a lot of stuff like that.

Science is a pretty well-developed thing and we have all those good rules. And then the highest order, highest level of truth is the eternal truth. Eternal truth is defined for us in scripture. And one of the ways it's defined is, *logos*. God's word is the *logos*. Jesus said, I'm the truth. Stuff like that. Well now, those discussions are not permissible (in science). In the cosmological order, you can't discuss those things, you can't measure them, you can't conduct experiments to find out about them. You just can't do it.

So, you might take the position [hypothetically]: “well, if God really exists, He's going to have to prove to me He exists.” And I guess my response to that would be, “Why? Why does He have to prove it to you? If you permit him, He will. But, why does He have to? Where did that law come from? The law of God-proving, is that cosmological? Is it a macro, you know, is it a macro truth? What is it? Truth then, there's a whole category, a whole layer, level of, I don't like, it shouldn't be the word we use, but it communicates okay.

There's a whole level of truth beyond everything we can know in any kind of human endeavor, through the processes of human endeavor. It is truth that exists there (in eternity). Shadows of it may exist here. For example, I think everybody I'm talking to today has within you an activated spirit. The Lord God Himself saw to it in your lifetime, that conditions came about in which you received the necessary grace to exercise faith for your salvation. And that's an eternal truth. Microscopes are not doing any good in this deal, this discussion. No microscope, no scales, no

listening device, nothing is going to do that which we ordinarily think of. Gaining (natural) information isn't going to do you any good.

In that eternal truth, by grace you're saved through faith. You didn't do it; it's the gift of God. Otherwise, you could claim credit for it. I realize I just kind of rephrased that a little bit, but that's pretty much what it says, except it said it in Greek. That's an eternal fact. It says it in the book, and there's no exceptions. God didn't write any footnotes in scripture. There are a few places where he stuck in a parenthesis, but he didn't write any footnotes. That would disqualify the thing in certain situations. By grace, you're saved through faith, unless of course you're bald, and then you don't get to get in. [Silly example, I hope.] He didn't do that. It's an eternal truth. It won't fail.

We can't measure it. There's no possible way to measure it. We can't even figure out (scientifically) what the things are. What is grace? What is faith? What does it even mean to be saved? And it has to do with spiritual things that resonate in your spirit, in your eternal spirit; and your spirit is eternal, not cosmological. So, this categorization, this attempt to talk about faith, to talk about truth, not faith, to talk about truth from the perspective of what we are talking about when we say truth had to be taken because we don't have other words for this. So, when mama says, "tell me the truth, were you the one that ate the cookie?" And you rub the chocolate off your face and say, "no mom, it wasn't me," she already knew the truth.

She knew that, or at least I hope she did, at an eternal level, you not being addicted to lying was probably a good thing. And her discipline was not based on the loss of the chocolate chip cookie, it was based on the fact that you ate it when you shouldn't have. You were disobedient. So, there was that "eternal" thing, and then there was the busting you got, or whatever the consequence was. They're just different.

There are different levels, different spheres, of the way truth will operate in our lives. So now we have confusion, if we're not careful. We've (potentially) confused the discussion of truth. Our primary focus, as we move through further discussions, will be to understand, first of all, things about eternal truth and in conjunction with eternal truth, we will also have some corollaries that go along with other properties of God, that are, in scripture, that are eternal. And they don't even belong in a sense in the context of discussion in ordinary human knowledge. They belong in the spirit.

How your spirit is separate from your soul is a mystery. It's not so much a mystery because of your soul, though, it's a mystery because of your spirit. I tricked you just then. Your spirit is immune to the laws of physics. Your spirit is unaffected by chemical laws. Your spirit is unaffected by what goes on in courtrooms. And my goodness, look what's going on in the world of philosophy today. Y'all have heard of postmodernism? I'm pretty sure most people these days have heard of postmodernism. And when you distill postmodernism down, what it was, was, it was a rejection of most of the things that we thought we were talking about when we talked about philosophy of knowing and so forth, in a period called the modernist period. And we said,

“the modernists didn't do a very good job, so let's do it with postmodernism,” and now we've got a post-post getting started up now.

We even have something called post-truth. The kind of basic idea of post-truth, and it's not that all philosophers by any means are here yet, but one of the basic ideas in post-truth is, you can make the truth up after the event, and it's okay. So, when you told mama that you didn't eat the cookie, it was okay for you to tell her that because you got to make up the truth whenever you wanted to make up the truth that had to do with the cookie. So, if she's still around, you can go fuss at her. Because she fussed at you when you ate the cookie. How silly is that? It's where we are. Because we're running around trying to solve problems in philosophy, and theology, and so forth, that have to do with, in many cases, essentially invisible spiritual principles and processes while denying the power. Having a form of godliness while denying the power thereof.

Yeah, it's actually something that goes on an awful lot. I'm amazed at what I hear coming from the mouths of people who are reporting on things, or actually expounding things that are considered to be of a spiritual nature that are warmed over human philosophy from not even the same era we live in. Because that's what we want to hear. Because Truth can hurt, can hurt when it lodges in. But our goal in this study of truth is to come to a place we're comfortable with what truth itself is. And when, I started to say “if”, I'll now say, “when” the Father decides that some of your truth needs thumping, I do hope you'll allow Him to do it. I hope I'll allow Him to do it. You understand what I'm saying? The only way to avoid truth is to resist it (through denial).

Eternal truth is more powerful than anything that we can construct to defend ourselves from it. It's just already more powerful than any of those things. And I've known many of you well enough to have been involved in significant conversations in which, just listening to you, I can tell you got some stuff you picked up somewhere along the way because you were in a Pentecostal church or a Catholic church, whatever it was, that's just bunk. Which brings up an interesting topic. Y'all have heard of debunking things. Let me tell you what that actually is. To debunk means to find an authority, of approximately equal stature to the source, who happens to agree with you, and get the authority to say that the source was wrong. Then it is debunked. (That doesn't determine whether it's true or not, though.)

Hate that, don't you? Human beings are so complex now that we can't rely on human methodology to arrive at truth. Next time we're together, probably, we're going to spend some time talking about human methodology, human effort with respect to truth. Human beings have ideas about fixing truth, repairing truth, creating truth. We spend a lot of time denying truth, and so forth. Much of that is directed, of course, at eternal truth. I will hear, within the next two weeks, I'll hear in a conversation, more than likely, I will hear someone say to me, “God told me to do this.” And the person knows when they're saying that to me, that it is at variance with scripture. But they're telling me God told them, claiming His authority to contradict Himself for their benefit – or what they perceived to be their benefit. It will happen. It's amazing if you listen how often people will explain to you that God's wrong, but they've got him straightened out now.

Or they're in the process. But He's got His own Truth. As far as I'm concerned, He's the only one that's entitled to have His own Truth. I don't get to make up mine. I've done it. You probably have. Usually, it doesn't pay off.