

Treasuring Truth

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Main Scripture Text: Proverbs 23:23

“Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding.”

PROVERBS 23:23

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Introduction

Would you find in God's Word Proverbs chapters 23? And, in a moment, we're going to look at verse 23. But, as we preached last week, truth is fallen in the streets, and the casualty of twentieth century America is fallen truth. We have sacrificed truth on the altar of pragmatism, and we don't ask any more, "Is it true?" We have lost the idea that there is such a thing as fixed truth. We just simply ask, "Does it work?" Now, we are

drowning in an ocean of facts. When I'm talking about truth today—and, by the way, the title of the message is "Treasuring Truth"—when I'm talking about truth today, I'm talking about truth that goes beyond facts. Now, facts, in and of themselves, may be true, but I'm not talking about an accumulation of facts; I am talking about truth itself. Now, we are drowning, I say—especially through the use of the computer and the Internet—we are drowning in facts. There's a difference in acquiring facts and learning truth.

I read recently that there are 3,000 pages of new stuff printed every second—3,000 pages. One thousand books in America are published every day. You will never read them all. And, the Bible says, "In the last days, knowledge shall increase, and men shall rush to and fro" (Daniel 12:4). Well, folks, we are seeing that.

As a matter of fact, let man's accumulated knowledge from creation to 1845 be measured in inches—all of that knowledge from creation to 1845 would be on our scale just one inch. But, from 1845 to 1945 it would have grown to be three inches. But, from 1945 to 1975 it would be as tall as the Washington Monument. And, from 1975 to the present it would be out of sight.

We are drowning in an ocean of facts. But, the Bible speaks of those who are "ever learning, and [not coming] to the knowledge of truth" (2 Timothy 3:7). America today needs truth. And, you can see this because where are facts taking us? Where does mere intellectual knowledge take us? Today we see more suicide, more broken homes, more drug abuse, more illness, more heartache than ever before, and yet we have facts. You see, facts are like a recipe; truth is the meal. And, we've not learned truth.

Now, look at our passage of Scripture here in Proverbs chapter 23, verse 23: "*Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding*" (Proverbs 23:23). Buy the truth, and don't sell it. Now, Satan is the sinister minister of evil. He is the master of camouflage and deception, and his method is to deceive. Jesus spoke to the Pharisees of His day, and He said in John chapter 8 and verse 44: "*[You] are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he*"—Satan—"is a liar, and the father of it" (John 8:44). Satan is the master liar. There is no truth in Satan. And, Satan has corrupted our world. He has ruined God's creation through a lie. Jesus said of Satan that his motive is murder. He wants to bring death to youth, happiness, joy, purity, spiritual death, physical death, eternal death. He is a murderer, and his method is the lie. His motive is murder; his method is the lie. And so, we need, today, to learn to treasure truth.

Now, again, look at our verse of Scripture. The Bible says here, "*Buy the truth, and sell it not*" (Proverbs 23:23). Three things I want to lay on your heart today out of that

verse of Scripture.

I. We Must Prize the Truth

Number one: Brother and sisters, we must prize the truth. That is, we must value truth in our own heart.

A. Truth Is Indispensable

Truth is indispensable. Why did God give us the Bible? Well, the Lord Jesus says the Bible is truth. It is called the Word of truth. Why did God send us the Holy Spirit? Well, He is called the Spirit of truth. Why do we have that Savior that we just sung about? “Oh, What a Savior!” He said, *“I am the...truth”* (John 14:6). Why are we worshipping here in this church building with our brothers and sisters in Christ? The Church is called *“the pillar and [the] ground of...truth”* (1 Timothy 3:15). What gives me, as a father, joy and, as a pastor, joy? The same thing that gave the apostles joy—John: *“I have no greater joy than...that my children walk in the truth”* (3 John 1:4). Now folks, truth is indispensable.

B. Truth Is Absolute

I want to say something else: truth is absolute. We have lost our absolutes today. Today we are told we’ve got to be tolerant. And yet, in math, we’re not told that we need to be tolerant. In medicine, we’re not told we need to be tolerant. In mathematics and physics, we’re not told that we need to be tolerant. But, when it comes to the greatest truth of all—spiritual truth—we’re told that we need to be tolerant, that there are no fixed absolutes in this world.

One professor in a liberal college stood up, and he began his lecture by saying to his students in a philosophy class, “There is nothing that we can know absolutely”—“nothing that we can know absolutely.” A student lifted his hand and said, “Professor, are you sure about that?” He said, “Absolutely sure!” Now, do you see the contradiction there? Truth is absolute. Truth is indispensable. Truth is absolute.

C. Truth Is Attainable

But folks, I’ve wonderful news for you: truth is attainable. We can know the truth. This Bible contains the precepts of truth. Jesus said in John chapter 17, verse 17: *“Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth”* (John 17:17). The Bible is the precepts of truth. Jesus Christ is the person of truth. Jesus said of Himself in John 14:6: *“I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”* And, the Holy Spirit is the power of truth. In John chapter 16 and verse 13, He is called *“the Spirit of truth”*—and Jesus said—*“he will guide you into all truth”* (John 16:13). Now, you see, if you have the precepts of truth, understand the person of truth, but you don’t have the power

of truth, then truth without power is deadening and depressing. That's what the Bible calls the letter of the law rather than the spirit of the law. *Knowledge without transformation avails nothing*; it only increases your judgment.

If you sit here today and hear truth and do not allow the Holy Spirit, who is the power of truth, to transform you from information to transformation—if that doesn't happen—your judgment is going to be all the greater. Perhaps we ought to put a sign over the church door that says, "Warning: A church attendance could be dangerous for you." It could be. Listen to 2 Peter chapter 2, verse 21: "*For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them*" (2 Peter 2:21). One of these days, you're going to give an account for what you will hear this morning in this building, and it would be better for you not to have heard it than to hear it and to refuse to live by it. So, what I'm saying is, first of all, we must value—we must prize—the truth.

II. We Must Purchase the Truth

Number two—look at the text again: we must purchase the truth. Do you see what it says? It says, "*Buy the truth*"—now, notice also it says—"*also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding*" (Proverbs 23:23). Now, how do you get the truth? Through wisdom, instruction, and understanding. You see, the search for truth is costly. There's a price to pay if you would have truth.

Now, you remember what Jesus said in John chapter 8 and verse 32? "*Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free*" (John 8:32). We hear that often quoted, but people don't quote the whole verse. Let me read the whole verse to you—and put it down in your margin. John 8, verses 31 and 32: "*Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed*"—and the word *disciples* means "learners"—"*then are ye my [learners] indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth [will] make you free*" (John 8:31–32). Now folks, truth alone will not make you free. No matter how much truth you're surrounded by, if you do not know the truth, learn the truth, understand the truth, then that truth is...it avails you nothing.

First of all, He's speaking to those who believe. You must believe. And then, after you believe, you must continue in the Word. And, in order to continue in the Word, you have to be a disciple—that is, you have to be a learner. And then, when you're a learner, you know the truth. And then, the truth makes you free. The thing that keeps me going in my Christian life—and I've been on the trail long enough to look back and analyze some things—is not how I feel; it is what I know. It is the truth that delivers me from ignorance and the bondage to sin. Now, Jesus said, "You must be My disciples." Discipleship is costly—discipleship is costly—but ignorance is far more costly. Do you

want to know truth? Do you want to teach your children truth? What's it going to cost?

A. It Will Cost You Time

First of all, it's going to cost your time—it's going to cost you time. Time is precious. Ignorance is more costly, however, than time. And, in your quiet time and in your search for truth, hurry is the death bell of prayer, study, and meditation. We sing a song, "Take Time to be Holy." Most of us in this building are not paying the price to purchase truth. It costs precious time.

B. It Will Cost You Discipline

Another thing it's going to cost you is discipline. Now, look in verse 23. There's the word *instruction* (Proverbs 23:23). Do you see it there? That word may be translated "discipline." *Instruction* means "self-discipline." Now, you can pray for wisdom, but you have to study for instruction. How many in this building really are serious Bible students? Very few. And, it's no wonder that we're so easily led astray.

You never get beyond the place where you continue to study. Study is becoming more and more important to me. There's an interesting passage of Scripture; I want you to look at it. It's in 2 Timothy chapter 4 and verse 13—2 Timothy chapter 4 and verse 13. Now, Paul is in prison, and it's his second imprisonment. He's writing to Timothy. Perhaps it's the last letter he will ever write. This is the last part of that letter, and I want you to see that old warrior. He's in that prison, his weary old bones creaking—his joints. He's shivering a little bit because it's the end of summer; winter is coming. That old cell is damp and dark. And, here's what he says as he writes to Timothy in 2 Timothy chapter 4 and verse 13: "*The cloak that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee*"—old Paul said, "I need my coat. It's chilly in here." And then, he says this; listen to this—"*and the books, but especially the parchments*" (2 Timothy 4:13). Now, here's Paul. He's in prison. Do you know what he wants? He wants something, first of all, to protect his body. He said, "Would you bring me the coat?" And folks, you know, you never get so spiritual—I hope you never get so spiritual—that you neglect your body or see that we all have physical needs as human beings. And, God knows that. And, our bodies are important to God. And, I, you, need to take care of your health. You need to preserve your body. And, no matter how spiritual you are, the common mundane things are very important.

I was in the grocery store a while back, and a woman saw me. And, she said, "Oh, Pastor Rogers, I didn't know you had to buy groceries." Yeah, I do. Paul—here's Paul, the mighty apostle, the author of most of the New Testament. He says, "I need a coat. Bring the coat." But then, he says, "*Bring...the books, [and] especially the parchments*" (2 Timothy 4:13). Now, the books—evidently, those were just books that he'd accumulated, like your library and my library. He had some books. Books were very

important to the Apostle Paul, as books are very important to me. And, books should be very important to you. That's the reason we have a Christian bookstore in our church. He said, "Bring the books." And then, he said, "*especially the parchments*" (2 Timothy 4:13). And, most Bible commentaries believe that those parchments were the Old Testament scriptures that he had. And so, he's saying, "I want some books to read."

Now, I want you to consider this: here's the Apostle Paul—hey, folks, choir—he's at the end of his life, his ministry, and he's still a student. He still wants to read. And, here is a man who's proficient in many languages. Here is a man who wrote most of the New Testament. Here is a man who has seen the Lord face to face. Here is a man who has been to Heaven and back in a vision, and he still wants some books. And, he's the same one who said to this Timothy: "Timothy, 'till I come, give yourself to reading."

Now folks, you're not going to learn simply by watching ABC, NBC, CBS, and CNN. You're not going to get truth by those little knick-knacks and those sound bites. As a matter of fact, you're going to be led away from truth if you don't get away and get some good, solid reading material and do as the Apostle Paul told Timothy—to give yourself to reading. Now folks, it's going to cost you some discipline. Here's the Apostle Paul.

Now, let me tell you why you read. Warren Wiersbe has pointed out at least four reasons why we ought to read.

1. You Should Read for Enlightenment

Number one: You read for enlightenment—enlightenment. You read to get hold of truth.

You see, truth is to your spirit what food is to your body. Truth is to your spirit what light is to your eyes. Truth is to your spirit what melody is to your ears.

When you read, don't read merely to get facts—read to get truth. Now folks, you've only got one life. Do you want to live and die without learning the truth? You see, to know truth is to know God. To know truth is to know Jesus. Jesus is the truth. All truth is God's truth. The devil doesn't have any truth. He is the source of deception. You say, "Then, Pastor, I'm just going to read the Bible and nothing else." No, that'd be a mistake. You need to read widely; the Apostle Paul did. He said, "Bring the books, and also bring the parchments" (2 Timothy 4:13).

Now, obviously, there are some books that no Christian should read, but as you read the Apostle Paul, you'll find that Paul was a very literate man. For example, he quoted the Greek poets and the philosophers. He was familiar with the philosophers. He was familiar with all that went on, because Paul knew that all real truth intersects. And, he said, for example, "*In him we live, and move, and have our being*" (Acts 17:28), as many of your poets have said. In other words, he read what the Athenians were reading. He knew these things.

Dr. Wiersbe said, "If you were to read seriously on any subject, just simply whether—just 30 minutes a day—whether it be nutrition, history, or whatever, in ten

years you would have the equivalency of a PhD in that subject.” You don’t have to go off to college to learn. You can learn if you will read. And, you know, you, of course, you read other books, and you read the Bible. The Bible gives you a lens, a radar, by which you trust and test all other truth. All truth intersects. And, when you learn the truth, then you’re going to see how it relates to all other truths, and it all comes together.

Now, when you learn, when you read, you don’t read just to be a gatherer of facts. You learn to be a channel of truth. If you read and you grow in knowledge, but you don’t grow in grace, you’re going to make yourself obnoxious. You’re one of these people who parades your knowledge. The Bible says, “Knowledge puffs up. Love builds up” (1 Corinthians 8:1). Don’t read so you can split a theological hair into nine different sections, but read so that you can be a whole person. You read for enlightenment. To know truth is to know God.

2. You Should Read for Enjoyment

Number two: You read for enjoyment—read for enjoyment. I cannot get enough reading. You know, one of the terrible things that we do in school—they did when I was a little boy in school—they made students read to punish them. If you did something wrong, the teacher said, “You’re going to have to stay in after school and read two or three chapters of this book.” And, somehow we associate reading not with enjoyment, but with punishment. Reading is not dull; reading is exciting.

You take books, and you can meet people that you’ve always wanted to meet—the great leaders of all history. You read books, and you can visit great periods of history. You can go back in time by reading books. Read books, and you can visit faraway places—places you will never go to if you do not read. Read books, and you can grapple with the great issues of life, and death, and eternity. There are no problems that are new. Listen, folks, there’s nothing new under the sun. That’s the reason a wise man said, “Those who don’t study history are destined to repeat it.” And, those who don’t study the future—they won’t really have a future. Think about the great issues that you can study. When you read books, you can learn great truths. And, the greatest truth of all is theology, which is called “the queen of the sciences.”

Would you like to be a helper of people? Would you like to be a counselor? I know people that, if I had a problem, I’d want to go to those people. And, I’ll tell you those are the people who have learned, who have acquired knowledge, especially theology. Do you know what counseling is? Counseling is just loving people, and knowing God, and getting the two together. That’s all it is—loving people, and knowing God, and just bringing people to God. You don’t solve their problems. If you’re a counselor and you try to solve their problems, what you are doing is taking the glory from God and you’re making them dependent upon you rather than upon the One in whom we live, and move, and have our being. You read for enlightenment. You read for enjoyment.

3. You Should Read for Enrichment

You read for enrichment—for enrichment. People say, “Well, books are expensive.” Friend, ignorance will cost you a whole lot more. Buy books. Education costs money. Your treasures in your home ought to be your books. Your children can inherit your books. Your children can enjoy your knowledge. In your home, you need to be building character by putting truth into your children. There needs to be devotional truth for the heart. There needs to be doctrinal truth for the mind. There needs to be practical truth for the will. Getting truth into the hearts of your children—practical truth is so important. Children need to learn about missions, about prayer, about soul winning, about home building, other disciplines.

Would you like to test yourself right now to find out whether or not you’re growing in knowledge, growing in truth?

a. Are You Excited about Truth?

Let me ask you this question: Are you excited about truth? A person asked me... I had dinner with a person, last...well, last Thursday night. And, that person leaned over to the table—over the table—and she said to me, “Pastor”—she’s not a member of this church any longer; a former member. She said—“Pastor, what new truths are you learning?” That blessed me so much: “What new truths are you learning?” May I ask you that question: What new truths are you learning? Are you excited about truth?

b. Are You Experiencing Freedom in Your Life?

Let me ask you another question: Are you experiencing, in your life, freedom? Jesus said, “[*You’ll*] know the truth, and the truth [*will*] make you free” (John 8:32). Are you still in bondage to political correctness, prejudice, lies, the party line, pressures, and fears? It is because you’ve not understood the truth.

c. Are You Learning Humility?

Are you learning humility? A man who is learning truth doesn’t tell you how much he knows; he’s telling you how little he knows and how much he has yet to learn, because the more you learn, the more you realize that the ocean is so big and your boat is so small—humility. “[*Knowledge puffeth up, but charity [edifies]*” (1 Corinthians 8:1).

d. Are You Learning Balance?

Are you learning balance? God help us to have balance—not all worship and no evangelism, not all evangelism and no worship, not all prophecy but no devotion, not all program but no meditation. You need to be balanced. What I’m saying is this, friend—that you need to “[*buy the truth, and sell it not*]” (Proverbs 23:23). And, it will cost you time. It will cost you discipline.

4. You Should Read for Enablement

But, not only do you read for enrichment—you read for enablement, to do what you need to do. You know why I continue to read? So I can be your pastor, for one thing. Would you like a pastor who never read, a pastor who is just simply drawing out of his own well? No! I could not stay and pastor this church for 25 years if I remain static and I don't grow. I want my doctor to continue to read. If a man's going to work on my automobile, I want him to be up-to-date. I'd even like for my cooks to continue to read. My wife does. I mean, you want to do your job better? You need to upgrade your skills. You Sunday School teachers—you need to read a book on teaching. You wives—read a book on homemaking. You husbands—read a book on how to love your wife better. Now, reading it, alone, will not change you. You need to apply what you read. Don't become a book recluse. *Readers are leaders, and leaders are readers.* It's going to cost you. Friend, it's going to cost you time. It's going to cost you discipline.

C. It Will Cost You Obedience

Now, watch, and listen carefully: if you buy the truth, it's going to cost you obedience. Now, this is very important. If you are just simply a gatherer of facts, a note taker, but you do not obey what you hear, you're living dangerously. Truth is to be transformational. The Bible says, *"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is...reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be...transformed"*—how?—*"by the renewing of your mind"* (Romans 12:1–2). As your mind feeds on truth, your mind is renewed. When you learn truth and don't act upon it, you do yourself danger. A wise man has said that "impression without expression leads to depression"—"impression without expression leads to depression."

The Apostle James said in James chapter 1 and verse 22: *"be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves"* (James 1:22). A person who hears truth and does not act upon truth is self-deceived. What would you think of a person who comes to Bellevue Baptist Church on Sunday morning and goes home raving about the choir, talking about the message, but does not put it into practice? You know what James says about him? He's self-deceived. You know what Jesus said about him? Now, don't get angry, but I'm going to tell you what Jesus said: "Whoso heareth these words of Mine and doeth them not is like a foolish man" (Matthew 7:26). Jesus said, "You're a fool if you hear and you do not do."

There's a story I've often told about—I don't believe the story literally happened, but it illustrates the truth—of a theater that was packed who came to hear a great actor. And, everybody wanted to hear this man. He was world-renowned. The manager of the theater came to him just before he was to step on the stage and said to the actor, "We

have an emergency. A fire has broken out in the wings of the theater, and we don't want the people to stampede. We don't want to do as they say—to yell fire in a crowded theater—so what we would like is for you to go out, tell the people that the theater's on fire, but keep the crowd under control. And, ask them to leave quietly and politely, and nobody's life will be in danger.” So, when this great actor stepped on the platform, they applauded. He held up his hands to stop the applause, and he said, “Ladies and gentlemen, may I have your attention? I have a serious announcement to make, and I want you to listen very carefully.” He said, “Now, I don't want there to be any panic. There's no cause for panic. Everything is under control. But, I have been informed that a small fire has broken out in the wings of this theater; and so, it is important for our safety that we rise from our seats and carefully leave the building. There's enough time for everyone to leave in order.”

You know what happened when he made that announcement? They said, “Bravo! Bravo!” They thought it was a part of the act. “No,” he said, “ladies and gentlemen, this is not a part of the act. There's a fire. It is important that you leave the auditorium now.” “Bravo! That's even better.” Now, with the tears streaming down his cheeks, he said, “For God's sake, you must go!” “Yes, wonderful—wonderful.”

So many times we sit in church and hear truth that way, as if the preacher is some actor and this is some form of entertainment, and we do not act upon that truth. And, Jesus said when we hear truth and we do not obey the truth, we're like a foolish man that built his house upon the sand (Matthew 7:26). And, the storms are coming. James said that—*“be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves”* (James 1:22). “Impression without expression leads to depression.”

And so, folks, if you would buy the truth, it's going to cost you: it's going to cost you time; it's going to cost you discipline; it is going to cost you obedience. But, it'll be worth it. *“Buy the truth, and [don't] sell it”* (Proverbs 23:23).

III. We Must Preserve the Truth

Now, here's the third and final thing this morning: you must prize the truth; you must purchase the truth, and you must preserve the truth. Now, look at this verse of Scripture—Proverbs chapter 23, verse 23: *“Buy the truth, and sell it not”* (Proverbs 23:23). Get a bulldog grip on the truth, and never, never, never, never let go! There is nothing so valuable that you should exchange that for the truth.

Put these scriptures down—Titus 1:9: *“Holding fast the faithful word.”* Philippians 1, verse 27: *“that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel”* (Philippians 1:27). Jude 1, verse 3: *“that ye...earnestly contend for the faith”* (Jude 1:3).

A. There Are Those Who Deny the Truth

Now, we're in a battle for truth. Those who deny the truth... There is an open war today on the Word of God like I've never seen in all of my life. There are those who deny the truth.

B. There Are Those Who Distort the Truth

Even more dangerous are those who distort the truth. We have now, in extreme charismatic areas, those who are getting extra-biblical revelations, and visions, and ecstasies. And, what they are doing is simply distorting the truth. And, when a person gets into these extra-biblical revelations—and somehow, what they say, or what they think, as compared to the Word of God—they distort the truth. And, it's a very dangerous thing, because soon this extra-biblical revelation becomes anti-biblical revelation, and people are led away from the Word of God. There are those who deny the truth, those who distort the truth.

C. There Are Those Who Dilute the Truth

There are those who dilute the truth—that is, that they mix the truth with error to try to accommodate biblical truth to what they believe to be, for example, modern science. I've seen people who try to accommodate themselves to modern evolution because they believe that that's the scientific truth; and yet, they say they believe the Bible. So, they just say, "Well, I believe in evolution, and I believe the Bible; and I just believe that evolution is God's way of doing it." Friend, I want to tell you something: that's very sloppy thinking. That's trying to ride one horse in two different directions. And, when you become a thinking person, you're going to find out that that is impossible. You cannot have both, because they are antithetical. They do not work together; they do not merge together. But, there are those who today would dilute the truth.

They remind me of a preacher. One time, a man came to him and said, "Will you do a funeral for me?" The pastor said, "If I can get it on my schedule, I'd be happy to do it. Who has died?" He said, "It's my dog, old Shep, and," he said, "I'd like for you to do Shep's funeral." The preacher was a little incensed. He said, "Hey, look—we don't do funerals for dogs." The man said, "I'm sorry, I guess I'll have to go somewhere else." He said, "I wanted to give the church \$1,000, whoever it was that did old Shep's funeral." The pastor said, "Why didn't you tell me old Shep was a Baptist?"

There are those who try to just simply fit things together that are not fitting together. They just dilute the truth.

D. There Are Those Who Defile the Truth

And then, there are those who defile the truth—that is, somehow they preach what is true, but they do not live what they preach. And, they make merchandise of the Word of

God. And, Paul said in 2 Corinthians 2, verse 17: *“For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity”—“but as of sincerity”—“but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ”* (2 Corinthians 2:17).

Conclusion

So, let me just sum it up. Listen to me, folks: *“Buy the truth, and sell it not”* (Proverbs 23:23). And, when the child of God looks into the Word of God, and sees the Son of God, and is changed by the Spirit of God into the image of God for the glory of God, he has found the truth of God, as he’s been set free.

Would you bow your heads in prayer? Heads are bowed, and eyes are closed. Now remember, Jesus is the person of truth. The Bible is the proclamation of truth. The Holy Spirit is the power of truth. I have given you God’s Word today, and I want to present to you the Lord Jesus Christ, who loves you so much that He died for you as if you’d been the only one who ever needed it. He took your sins and carried them to the cross, and with His own blood He paid the sin debt that your sins have incurred and bore the punishment that is due to you. Jesus Christ baptized His soul in Hell for you. Jesus Christ died in agony and blood for you. Jesus had sweat His great drops of blood in the Garden of Gethsemane for you. And, when Jesus bowed His head and died, He said, *“It is finished”* (John 19:30). That means it is paid in full. The debt that your sins have incurred has been paid with the precious blood of Jesus Christ.

Now, what must you do? You must believe that. You must receive that. You must confess it. Would you believe it? Would you say to God, “God, I believe that Jesus Christ is Your Son. I believe that He died on the cross for my sins. I believe He walked out of that grave risen and victorious. I believe it”? And then, would you say, “Lord, I receive it right now. I open my heart and by faith I receive your Son, who is truth, into my heart. Lord Jesus—Lord Jesus—come into my heart—come into my heart—right now. Forgive my sin. Cleanse me. Make me your child. I receive it by faith right now, this moment, in this seat today, now, this moment. Now, I give You my heart. I receive you”? Tell Him that: “Lord, I believe; Lord, I receive.” And then, tell Him this: “Lord, I will make it public. I will not be ashamed of You. You hung naked on a cross for me. When that man gives the invitation, I will go forward. Lord, I believe. Lord, I receive. Lord, I confess you now.” And, I want you to tell the Lord, “Lord, if you’ll just give me the strength, I’ll let it be known that I’m trusting you. I believe. I receive. I confess you now.” Lord, I pray that many will do just that in the strong, strong name of Jesus. Open hearts and draw people, Lord Jesus, to yourself. In your holy name. Amen.