

# Why Christians Differ Doctrinally - Part V, The Origin of Doctrinal Differences

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[ 0 : 00 ] sets forth the contrasting differences of people's receptivity to the Word of God. And it ties in with what we are proposing in our morning sessions for at least the next few weeks, and that has to do with why it is and how it is that Christians differ so much when it comes to doctrinal issues.

We are into all of the different denominations and different kinds of confessions and church practices. How did these originate and how did they become so diverse?

How is it that we all claim to be Christian and yet there seems to be so much division among the ranks? And this is just one aspect of how that comes about, and it has to do with people's receptivity or lack thereof to the Word of God.

We find that not only in the Old Testament with the preachments of the prophets and the hostility with which many of their messages were received by the common people. We find it in the ministry of John the Baptist when he proclaimed the kingdom, the good news of the kingdom.

There were those detractors as well as there were those proponents, and he stirred up quite a bit of controversy. When Christ came on the scene, it was the same thing.

[ 1 : 21 ] Nothing had changed. Matter of fact, he used the phrase a number of times, He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear. And he also said something like, He who would be ignorant, let him be ignorant still.

One of the things that ought to characterize a thoughtful student of Scripture, matter of fact, you don't even have to be a student of Scripture, the thing that ought to characterize intellectual integrity, and that is a serious pursuit of the truth, ought to be an eager openness to the truth.

I am not talking about naivete. I am not talking about gullibility. I am not talking about believing everything you hear. I am saying you have a mind that is ready to be engaged and to consider, to weigh, to evaluate, to process, and be able to reach a conclusion that this is a valid proposition or it is an invalid proposition.

That is very becoming to a thoughtful individual, and we ought to all be that way. And when we begin talking about the doctrinal differences that divide believers, I certainly do not want to give the impression that we are the ones who have it right, everybody else is wrong.

There is no room here for elitism or for arrogance or for thinking that we have a corner on the truth. How many times have I told you over the years that we all have flaws in our thinking and in our theology?

[ 3 : 14 ] None of us has it all right. And when we get to heaven, everybody is going to get straightened out. Some of us are going to require a lot more straightening than others.

But we are all going to get straightened out because none of us has this thing all together. What we do want to do, however, is to give you an appreciation as to how these differences occur.

And what is it that takes place in the minds of people, individuals, and congregations, and denominations, that kind of locks them in to these things and just kind of holds them there?

I would say, they wouldn't agree with this, but I would say holds them there captive almost. Hostage-like. Like I said, they would not agree with that, but that's the way I see it.

I know when I was privileged to discover a few things that were contrary to my background and that in which I had been involved up to that time, and I got a certain amount, not all the truth or even close to all the truth and still don't, but I got a certain amount of truth that enabled me to really appreciate it in a new way and to be able to discard some of the stuff that I had always considered so vital, I felt like I'd been let out of jail.

[ 4 : 43 ] It was just liberating. And I know some of you know what I'm talking about. So we are going to be discussing our approach to the Word of God and how people differ in their approach, how they differ in the processing, and the ingredients that they bring to it that enable them to reach the conclusions that they do, whether they are right or wrong.

And hopefully you'll be able to gain some appreciation for why the brethren, and if they are believers in Christ, they are brethren. It doesn't make any difference the name of the church or the denomination they belong to.

If they are believers in Christ, they are brethren, but they may have doctrinal differences from ours. We have been telling you that no mere man, this man included, has the wisdom or the competence to actually interpret the scriptures.

We simply do not have that ability and do not claim to have that ability. And that means that we look elsewhere for the authority for the interpretation of the scriptures.

And where would that be? We've already discounted the common answer that many would give to that, which has to do with, well, when a pastor is in his study and he is working over a portion of scripture and he is trying to determine the interpretation of a passage and what it means, what he is supposed to do is pray and ask for wisdom and enlightenment, and God will give him the answer, and that's the interpretation of the passage, and then he takes that out and preaches it.

[ 6 : 20 ] It doesn't work that way. That sounds good. It sounds spiritual. Sounds like you're really connected with God and you've got an inside track and he tells you exactly what the passage means so that you can relate that to the people.

But as I pointed out to you, there is a fallacy with that because down the street away here there is a preacher who prays over the same passage and he gets a different answer.

And down this way, on Dietrich Jordan Pike, there is another church of another denomination and he will pray over the same passage and he comes to a different conclusion, different interpretation.

Which one is right? The most irresponsible answer is, they're all right. And that's the way people are thinking today.

And one of the reasons they're thinking that way is because political correctness declares that if you pronounce everybody right, then nobody has to be wrong.

[ 7 : 24 ] Isn't that sweet? Isn't that nice? Nobody has to bear the pain or the responsibility of being wrong about anything because everybody's right. This is a distortion of subjectivity.

Nothing is true. Nothing is true. Because somebody believes it. Understand that? Nothing is true.

Just because somebody believes it. They may consider it true. That doesn't make it true. Nothing is true because I say it is.

If something is true, it is true because of its inherent truthfulness and because it comports to reality.

It measures up with the facts that are available. What's the basis for anybody believing anything about anything?

[ 8 : 30 ] Just one answer. The fact that it is true. Or you consider it to be true. Truth does not become something because of belief.

It becomes something because of its inherent truthfulness. This is objectivity. And we are at sea without it.

Subjectively, people try to define for themselves what is true. And it leads them to say things like this. Well, I've got my truth and you've got your truth. Now, there are certain areas wherein that's okay.

When you're talking about personal preferences and personal opinions, that's fine. That's very legitimate. Your favorite pizza is pepperoni and mushroom.

For you, that's the best pizza there is. But for somebody else, it's anchovies and whatever. And that's subjectivity. That's personal taste and personal preference.

[ 9 : 38 ] And you like this picture more than you like this picture. Because beauty is in the eye of the beholder. It is what you think is.

I happen to know, and this is not just opinion, this is fact, that I was married to the most wonderful woman in the world for almost 50 years.

Now, there are some of you who would challenge that. But you're wrong because that is an objective fact. Well, you know what I mean. But in my opinion, she was.

Okay. So, subjectivity and objectivity. And that brings us down to who or what then is the only competent interpreter of the Bible.

And that is the Bible itself. And that's why we spend a lot of time comparing Scripture with Scripture. We make an effort to allow the Bible to shed light on itself so that we arrive at an understanding.

[ 10 : 40 ] And the Bible is its own best commentary. Now, I don't want to demean man-written commentaries. I have shelves full of them in there.

Hundreds and hundreds of commentaries where men have written what they think a passage means. And I find it very helpful.

I have benefited enormously from my friends who line my shelves in my library. So, I am not in any way, shape, or form demeaning what they have arrived at.

And this will be made more clear, I think, later on as we look at... And I don't want to turn this into a hermeneutic class. But I do want to give you the basic principles and laws for the interpretation of Scripture.

And then you can take them from there and apply them yourself. All believers, including those who teach them, are eager or should be eager to know what the Bible is actually saying.

[ 11 : 44 ] Confusion arises when those in a teaching capacity, like myself, confound the Bible's meaning by mingling the teacher's interpretation with the Bible's interpretation of itself.

And this goes on wholesale. It's one of my greatest fears. Because you, as a congregation, cannot afford Marv Wiseman's interpretation.

You deserve better. I don't want to give you that. This is why we have made the statement that there is that which God says in His Word, and there is that which man says God says in His Word.

They may or may not be the same. Man, this one included, I am not exempt, has a natural tendency to force a meaning on God's Word that is not there.

This, too, goes on wholesale. We have pet positions and pet doctrines that we hold that are very dear to us. We set them forth as truth, and then we go to the Scriptures and try to find a passage that will support that.

[ 13 : 17 ] That's not what we're supposed to do. We are supposed to come to the Scriptures with an open mind, and let the teaching of the Scripture that is enlightening itself from other portions of Scripture determine for us and to us what the meaning is, and that is to be the position that we take.

Most natural thing in the world is to already have the position, and then look for a proof text to back it up, so you can use it to prove your point, and sometimes so you can use it to club the opposition, believe something different.

And this is an insidious thing, but the human condition is such that everybody has a tendency to do that. And if there is anyone who tells you that they don't have that tendency, they are pure in all of their intentions, and they are above that, and they could not possibly read something into the Scripture that is not there, that would be dishonest, and they would never do that.

If anybody tells you that, run for the nearest exit. But you don't want to listen to them. None of us has that kind of objectivity. Man has a natural tendency to force a meaning on God's Word that is not there.

He may not realize that he is doing that, in which case it is done in great ignorance. Or he may realize that he is doing that, and is fully intentional in doing so, and in this case it is not great ignorance, it is a great crime, against the Scriptures, and against the people under his care.

[ 15 : 03 ] Now, in the passage that was read earlier, I would ask you to return to it, please. Acts chapter 17. I have here before me a 26th translation New Testament, and I use this quite frequently in our men's class on Thursday morning, and I've found it to be very, very helpful.

We've got an incident that distinguishes the Thessalonian believers from the Bereans, and the text sets forth exactly what happened historically.

The Apostle Paul, on this missionary journey, in verse 1, is going through Amphipolis and Apollonia. He came to Thessalonica, or some call it Thessalonica, Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews.

And in virtually every city of any size throughout the Mediterranean world, you would find a synagogue of the Jews. What are the Jews doing there? They are part of the Diaspora, the Diaspora.

And the word in the Greek, D-I-A-S-P-O-R-A, diaspora, simply means, it's a compound word that means through spores.

[ 16 : 17 ] S-P-O-R-E-S. You know what spores are? They are like little seeds that may even be airborne for weeds or plants, and they fly through the air, and they're blown about by the wind.

Well, these Jews are called the Diaspora, through the scattering. They are called the scattered. As a result of persecution in the homeland, and enemy invasions of the Romans, of the Greeks, of the Egyptians, of different ones, Jews were persecuted.

Many of them were carted off in slavery. Many of them fled. They just took it on the lam for wherever they could find a home. And they landed in different places all throughout the Mediterranean world.

Well, if you get a Jewish community together, all you need to start a synagogue is a minyan. M-I-N-Y-A-N.

A minyan. A minyan, to the Jewish people, consists of ten adult male Jews. If you've got that, ten adult male Jews, you have the making and the establishment of a synagogue.

[ 17 : 34 ] And a synagogue simply is a place, synuguge, which means to come together. That's all it means, to come together.

And that's the idea of a synagogue. So you've got ten male Jews. And here in Thessalonica, they might have had multiple synagogues. Because sometimes, can you imagine this?

Sometimes Jews get together, and they form a synagogue, and they have children, and they have grandchildren. And the synagogue grows, and it multiplies, and people move in, and the synagogue gets bigger.

And I know that you can't imagine this possibly ever happening, but there are disagreements that arise, and they have a big fight, big falling out. And they say, well, phooey on you guys, we're going down the street and start our own minyan.

So they go down the street and start their own synagogue. That's how you get multiple Jewish synagogues. It's like how you get multiple Baptist churches and Methodist churches. They just, like Lot and Abraham, someone said Lot and Abraham were the first two Baptists in the Bible.

[ 18 : 40 ] Abraham told Lot, you go your way, and I'll go. You know what? Bible churches can do that, too. Because people have their old nature, and sometimes they get fussy and difficult to please.

They have a big argument over something that is really of monumental importance, like what color the carpet is going to be in the hallway. And they fight, and they split, and they separate, and so on.

So here, synagogue. And Paul went in, and he was preaching that Christ, the Messiah, when the Messiah comes, he must suffer and then rise again from the dead.

And I want you to know that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is indeed the Messiah.

He is the long-awaited one. And we read, some of them believed and consorted. That is, they attached themselves to Paul and Silas, and to the devout Greeks, a great multitude, and the chief women, not a few.

[ 19 : 47 ] But the Jews, which believed not, moved with envy, and took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort.

Elizabethan English really has a way of expressing things, doesn't it? The American Standard Version said, certain vile fellows of the rabble.

20th century New Testament says, they engaged some worthless fellows from the streets, or idlers in the marketplace. And the New English Bible says, that they recruited some low fellows from the dregs of the populace.

Every community has a pocket of ne'er-do-wells in it. These are the town troublemakers. They are the people who cause all of the rowdiness in a community.

They're always involved, always in the thick of things. Springfield has its share. Columbus does. Dayton does. And the police community knows where all of these pockets are.

[ 21 : 05 ] They knew who all the troublemakers are. They knew what it means when you get a call for a certain area of town. They have a pretty good idea of who is involved. That's the kind of people these were.

The ne'er-do-wells who hang out looking for trouble to get into, and always seem to find it. So they gathered a company, and set all the city upon an uproar. And they assaulted the house of Jason.

Now they are turning to violence. This is what a rejection of truth can lead to. When you are so opposed to the truth, you become hostile and take steps to try to eliminate it.

And this is the same old game. They play this all through the Old Testament, and all through the New Testament. And the principle is this. When you cannot answer an argument, when you cannot respond to, or when you cannot rebut an argument, when you have no ammunition against it, and you cannot defeat the argument, what do you do?

You kill the messenger. When you cannot respond to the message, and you cannot refute the message, you have to do one of two things.

[ 22 : 30 ] You either have to say, okay, I was wrong. I buy it. I go with it. I believe it. I adopt it. Or, you have to say, away with him.

Kill him. Get rid of him. And that's exactly the attitude that Saul of Tarsus had, when he was persecuting the Christians, and Stephen, and nothing has changed.

That's the attitude they had to John the Baptist. That's the attitude they had to Jesus Christ. That's the attitude they had to all of the Old Testament prophets, whom they persecuted. Sad.

It is so sad. They do not have ears to hear. They assaulted the house of Jason, sought to bring them out to the people. This is like a lynch mob.

This is getting out of control. And they foment this, and work these people up into a frenzy, by appealing to them on the basis of, these people are violating our sacred religion.

[ 23 : 32 ] You know, you've got the very same thing going on today in Islam. These people have insulted the Koran.

Death to them. You're going to see a lot more of that. In this country, in several other countries, you can insult the Bible.

You can desecrate the Bible. You can rip its pages out, and throw them to the wind in public. And the most that would happen to you, is you might get arrested for littering, but not for anything else.

But if you do that with the Koran, do you know what the Koran itself provides liberty to do? Death to the infidel.

Death to the one who would insult the Koran. Death to the one who would insult Muhammad. Death. I'm talking about cutting your head off. Death to the one who would insult the Koran. And doing so with complete impunity.

[ 24 : 53 ] Can't do that in this country and get away with it, but you can do it in any Muslim country, and you don't have to worry about being prosecuted. It's incredible. That is how people can become so entrenched against any idea or concept that does not confine to their prescribed, understood dogma.

Dogma. It isn't worthy of life. So, they make the accusation, crying out, loudly accusing them.

These are the men that have turned the world upside. These people, Paul, these people, they cause trouble everywhere they go. Everywhere they go, they upset everybody, and you know what?

Now they're here. Now they're causing a big commotion here. Well, we're not going to put up with it. We're going to take care of these people. Turn the world upside down. They've come hither also.

And Jason, one of our own people, has given them comfort and has received them. And these all do contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, one Jesus.

[ 26 : 05 ] And they troubled the people and the rulers of the city when they heard these things. When they had taken security of Jason, that is, they took him into custody and of the other, let them go.

And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night. By night. Why by night? Well, you've got to sneak out of town under cover of darkness because you won't make it in the daylight.

They'll spot you and they'll accost you. They were coming hither. They went. Well, talk about a glutton for punishment.

Where did all this problem develop? In the synagogue at Thessalonica. Now, they are coming down to Berea in verse 10 and where do they go?

Into the synagogue of the Jews. I almost feel like saying, Paul, haven't you had enough? Give it a rest. But what was the burden of this man? Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they might be saved.

[ 27 : 10 ] For I bear them witness that they have a knowledge of God. They have a zeal for God but not according to knowledge. I could wish that I myself were a curse from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen, according to the flesh to whom belong the fathers and the prophets and the commandments and all the rest of it.

And he had a, he had a heart that was aching and breaking for his own countrymen because when he looked at one of these hostile Jewish brothers of his and all of the opposition that he put up against the gospel, it all came back to him in vivid memory.

That's exactly where I was. It's exactly the way I used to think. It's exactly what I said. Exactly what I thought. It used to be one of them.

And now he knows how wrong he was and he knows how wrong they are. But they don't know that. Christ said to his disciples the night before he died, Fellas, the time is coming when those who kill you will think they are doing God a service.

Well, that time came for the twelve apostles and that time came for Paul. But these people, these Bereans, my, oh, my, they are cut from a different bowl of cloth than the Thessalonians.

[ 28 : 51 ] And I want you to see what distinguishes them. These were more noble, verse 11, than those in Thessalonica.

20th century New Testament says, these Jews of Berea were better disposed than, or, of a nobler disposition than, Goodspeed says they were more high-minded than, Phillips renders it, they proved more generous-minded.

New English Bible says they were more liberal-minded. Now, you might not like the use of that word, but it does have the idea of an openness and a willingness to consider alternate opinions.

Not necessarily buy them, but give them a hearing. Listen to them. Weigh them. Evaluate them. Don't reject it out of hand without knowing what it's about.

Give it a fair hearing. It's just like if someone were on trial for their life and the prosecution has presented the case and the jury is taking notes and listening to the evidence and looking at all of the exhibits that are set forth to prove that this person committed this crime.

[ 30 : 12 ] and then it's time for the defense to get up. But by the time the prosecution gets finished, very often you feel like there is no defense.

There's no need to even present a defense. This guy is so obviously guilty. Why take time for the defense? But when the defense starts presenting his case, you say, well, wait a minute now. Maybe he's got a point there.

Well, I didn't see that weak point in the prosecution's defense, but this guy is pointing it out. And then, can you imagine a judge stopping a defense attorney right in the middle of his presentation and say, okay, that's enough.

We've heard enough. Go on in and deliberate. Wait a minute. Wait a minute. We didn't hear all the evidence. Oh, you've heard all you need to know. No. You need to let both sides make their best case.

And you need to ask them, have you got anything else to say? Is that it? Do you have any other arguments? Any other points? Have we heard all of the evidence for and against?

[ 31 : 19 ] And when you have, then you deliberate. You don't short-circuit either one of them and say, I've heard enough. I've heard enough. I don't need any more. A Berean mentality says, I want to be fair, open-minded.

I want to be able to say, after I reach a decision that I considered the whole thing, that helps you sleep at night. That is called intellectual integrity.

Every Christian should embrace it. We all have an obligation to be Bereans. These Bereans, they have become a watchword among evangelicals.

There are organizations, literary organizations, Christian organizations, fellowships, and we all are familiar with some of them that take their name from this group of people, the Bereans.

And we tell people, you don't buy anything wholesale. You be a Berean. And the thing that characterized these people and made them so noble was their willingness to weigh the evidence.

[ 32 : 42 ] The Bereans were more noble, more fair-minded than those of Thessalonica in that they searched the Scriptures to see whether these things were so.

Paul began proclaiming that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah, the long-awaited one promised by Moses and the prophets. Some said, right out of hand, no!

Nothing good can come out of Nazareth. Well, the fact that this man was crucified on a Roman cross and that God didn't prevent it, that ought to prove right there that he wasn't the Son of God.

God would never let a man get away with something like that. God of Heaven would never allow his Messiah to be crucified. That's proof positive that he couldn't have been the Messiah.

But these Bereans say, no, wait just a minute. Hold on there. If what you say is true, Scriptures will support that. Let's search the Scriptures and see what they say.

[ 33 : 48 ] And you go to Isaiah 53 and you hear he was wounded for our transgressions.

He was bruised for our iniquities. Chastisement of our peace was upon him. Who's that? What's that all about?

You read, Rejoice, daughter of Zion. Rejoice. Thou Bethlehem, Ephrata, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me, who is to be ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.

Well, this is Micah. This was written 500 years ago. Who's Micah talking about? Bethlehem, Ephrata, ruler, born in, where did you say this Jesus, you said he was Nazareth.

Where was he born? Was he born in Nazareth? No. He wasn't born in Nazareth. He was born in Bethlehem, city of David.

[ 35 : 03 ] Well, how did he call the Nazarene? He was raised in Nazareth. He was born in Bethlehem. He grew up in Nazareth. Hmm.

Wow. You go on with the evidence throughout the process. And all they had was the Old Testament. New Testament didn't exist. But they searched their own scriptures, the Old Testament.



And what they found was corroboration after corroboration after corroboration. And the conclusion was, how do you like that? He's got to be the Messiah.

He fits the description across the board. There's no denying it. The evidence is overwhelming. And they came on board. Amazing.

Just wonderful. Well, there is a riot that is caused because the people of Thessalonica heard about the success of Paul in Berea.

[ 36 : 16 ] And they came down and stirred up everything, started another big fight and another big commotion. And Paul, of course, had to leave in verse 14. Immediately, the brethren sent away Paul to go, as it were, to the sea.

Silas and Timotheus abode there still. What a tremendous passage. Come with me, please, to a closing passage in 2 Corinthians chapter 4.

And we'll open it for a quick Q&A.; 2 Corinthians chapter 4. Handling the word of God deceitfully.

Verse 1. Therefore, seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not. that we have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty.

Some say the secret dealings of shame. Some say disgraceful, underhanded ways. Paul is saying we have turned our backs on conducting a ministry that is not up front and open.

[ 37 : 41 ] We've got nothing to hide. We just proclaim the truth and let it all hang out. We have no hidden agenda. There's no secret deals going on in back rooms or under the table.

What you see is what you get. We are what we appear to be. We are not engaging in shady practices, not walking, in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth, commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

That's the only way that any ministry that calls itself a godly ministry can be conducted. Anytime you've got chicanery going on, backroom deals, underhanded, secrets, a lot of secretives, virtually all the politicians when they go into office, they campaign on the platform, I'm going to have an open administration.

We're going to just have our doors open to everybody. Everything is going to be public and open and up front. We've got nothing to hide in. What do you find in practice? Very often just the opposite.

And this pertains to both political parties. None of them are beyond this. And the only conclusion that you can come to is the reason a lot of these deals are struck in the smoke filled rooms out of the public eye is because they know doggone good and well the public is not going to buy it.

[ 39 : 22 ] So you've got to keep them from it until there's nothing they can do about it. But then of course it's for your own good. Well you don't conduct a ministry that way.

Whether it's in a church or a parachurch ministry or an evangelistic ministry or what. You've got to be open, above board, up front, transparent, no secrets.

I've always admired the Billy Graham organization and their handling of finances. They have official audits conducted at every crusade. They can account for every penny.

It is all public and open. All of the salaries, all of the perks, everything is open before the public with whom they have to do. No secrets. Any organization that will not open their books, that will not be up front, that will not answer your questions about finances or practices, you can be doggone sure they've got something to hide and they wouldn't be proud of it.

Avoid them like the plague. Questions or comments? We've got a few minutes. Anybody? Yes? I just have across the website on Friday, speaking about the same thing you just mentioned about ministries being transparent, and a lot of the major ministries, I can name them, are not transparent.

[ 40 : 44 ] They got F's from, what is it, Ministry Watch? I believe that's the name of it. It's like a watch store organization. That's shameful.

It's tragic. It's a black mark on the cause of Christ. There's nothing to be proud of. If you why not be open and transparent?

The only conclusion you can reach is, the only thing you can do is say, I smell a rat. If they won't let you know, if they won't be open, why won't they?

It would appear that the only reason that they keep this stuff under a cloak of darkness is because they know it would be contrary to public disapproval.

Well, if it would be, then why are you doing it? Other comments or questions? Anyone?

[ 42 : 04 ] Way in the back, John? John? Yeah. You kind of touched on it, but a lot of people will tell you that all religions are equally valid. You grew up as a Midwestern, narrow-minded Christian, and somebody else grew up as a Muslim, and somebody else grew up as a Buddhist.

So they're all equally valid. I mean, that's, you know, what do you say to that? Well, that's very popular today, and it goes along with political correctness.

Political correctness requires religious pluralism, and religious pluralism is the idea that embraces the complete validity and legitimacy of all faiths and all beliefs.

And it is common today. It is practiced throughout, especially here in the United States and in Great Britain and in Canada.

In fact, Great Britain and Canada are even further ahead in this business of religious pluralism than what we are. And all you need to do is apply the simple laws of logic, and when you utilize the law of non-contradiction or the law of the excluded middle, you just see that these positions simply cannot hold.

[ 43 : 25 ] They are untenable. You cannot say that this is the truth and that this over here is the opposite of this, but it's the truth too. No, it isn't.

It doesn't work that way. That is illogical. And logic applies, believe it or not, logic applies to spiritual truths as well as it does to secular truths.

And in fact, there is no such thing as secular truth and spiritual truth. There is just truth. There's truth and there's error. All truth is God's truth. It doesn't make any difference what it is. If it's science or whatever, it's God's truth.

So when people espouse this idea of political correctness and religious pluralism, they may say that they prefer this faith over this faith and they are entitled to that.

Everybody is entitled to their own preference. Everybody is entitled to their own opinion. Nobody is entitled to their own facts. Facts are stubborn things.

[ 44 : 26 ] Opinions are linked to personal preference and opinion. And everybody's got them and everybody's free to have them. That's fine. No problem. But objectivity is something that says if A is true, the opposite of A cannot also be true.

It is impossible. It is a logical fallacy. You can't live that way. You can't function that way in any area or in any discipline. God's love.

So, and I'll leave you with this. I've made this statement before. So, say I now again. And it comes, I've even heard it from well-meaning Christians who want to be nice and sweet.

and they say things like this. Aren't we supposed to respect all beliefs? No.

No. We are to respect all people because people are made in the image and likeness of God.

[ 45 : 44 ] But respecting people does not mean agreeing with them. Sometimes you respect people by disagreeing with them. We are to respect people in that we treat them with kindness with courtesy with consideration.

We owe that to every other human being. You do not have the right to respect something that you know is an error. That's like saying, don't we all have a right to respect the lie?

No. No. You respect the truth. You have no right to respect what you know to be a lie. we respect people, not the positions that people hold necessarily.

Okay? Okay. May we stand, please? Father, you are the giver and the sustainer of all truths.

And we are so lacking in a lot of the truth that we would like to have. And we know that. But we believe the way you have ordained to gain additional truth is to walk in the truth that we have.

[ 47 : 11 ] And we want to do that as individuals and as a congregation. and we are trusting that you will reveal untruth to us so that we can abandon it and turn our hearts toward that which is true.

Thank you for such a wonderful, truthful Savior. Amen.