

# Why the Differences in Belief?

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[ 0 : 00 ] Well, today we are going to continue in the vein that we started a few weeks ago, when it wasn't really determined what our study would be and what we were going to undertake.

So, we came up with the idea of distributing three by five cards to all of you, and asking you in an anonymous way, nobody signs anything, but just write down any question or book of the Bible you'd like treated, or whatever subject is of interest to you or concern to you that you would like us to pursue, and that's what we'll do.

And there were about a dozen or so that came in, and we've already treated a number of them, but the one that we're going to be looking at now this morning is a question someone submitted, says, with one God, how did we get so many different forms of worship?

Worship. I'm not real sure exactly what is meant by the question, because a form of worship really has reference to liturgy.

Like, what is it that takes place in a church service? How is it that some churches serve communion every week, and some do it a couple of times a year, and some do it once a month?

[ 1 : 18 ] And the Scripture reading, and who reads it, and the Old Testament, and the New, the order and the procedure, that's liturgy. That's the idea of a congregation coming together to worship, and we know that there are certain things that separate Baptists from Methodists, from Presbyterians, from Nazarene, and so on, and all of their differences could be referred to as a form of worship.

I rather suspect, however, that what is meant here, and I don't want to put this in the minds of the person who submitted the question, but rather than forms of worship, I don't think that's what they're really after, because those things are relatively incidental, how you do those things, and when you do them, and the order in which you do them.

But the really big question that I suspect this person has in mind is with there being just one Bible and one God, and everybody supposedly uses the same Bible, how in the world do we arrive at so many different positions, doctrines, ideas, beliefs, etc., when everybody's looking at the same source of information, the same Bible?

What's responsible for that? There are books available, in fact, some of them are about that thick, that deal with cults.

That is, ideas that have been spouted by small splinter groups that sometimes grow into very large groups, and it all has to do with the subject of truth.

[ 3 : 04 ] Truth is humanity's most precious commodity. Don't ever forget that. Truth, that which corresponds to reality, is humanity's greatest treasure.

And in that truth, we find, of course, the one who is the way, the truth, and the life. Today, we are dealing with situations somewhat unlike any that we have dealt with in the past, and it needs a little bit of explanation, so I'm going to take some time and spell this out because it's really very, very important.

There is a teaching today that is very prominent in some circles, and it has to do with the rejection of objective truth, with the idea that it does not exist.

Objective truth, that which corresponds to reality, objective truth does not exist. The only thing that exists is subjective truth. And what that means is you are enabled to create your own reality.

Well, that's nuts. Whoever came up with an idea like that? Well, I'll tell you what. I don't know who it was that originally came up with it, but I'm sure he's got an IQ a lot higher than mine. Because the ordinary average person doesn't think in these veins.

[ 4 : 39 ] It has to be somebody who is thinking in the clouds to come up with some of the most bizarre, ridiculous things that you could ever imagine. And they've got an IQ that outstrips yours and

mine. How can that be?

Well, the reason it can be is because the Scriptures tell us a passage that you ought to commit to memory. 2 Corinthians 4, The God of this age, Satan, hath blinded the minds of those who believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. So, humanity is laboring under a satanic, a supernatural blindness. And they don't even know it. And when the text says that he has blinded the minds, now wait a minute. We tend to think of blindness being connected with the eyes.

What's with the mind? Well, it is the mind that is the center of our thinking capacity, our ability to assess data and information, process it, and reach a conclusion that enables us to act on it.

[ 5 : 54 ] That is in connection with objective truth. And when you say you create your own reality, it is as bizarre as it sounds because there is absolutely no truth in it at all.

But it does serve certain segments of humanity well. For instance, if you believe one thing and I believe another, and they are contradictory to each other, under no objective reality or truth, that's not a problem.

And you may hear people say this today, you have your truth and I have my truth. And they are completely opposite of each other, but the beautiful thing about it is, nobody's wrong.

Everybody's right because you have your truth and I have my truth. that eliminates all argument. It eliminates divisions because the picture is there are many paths up the mountain, but they all end up at the top.

And everybody takes their different path based on their truth. So you create your own reality and the basis for argumentation is gone.

[ 7 : 20 ] And what survives? Peace. Everybody's happy with that. But it is an enormous lie because there is no truth in that at all.

Objective truth is that which corresponds to reality. Can you imagine a scene like this? Here's a court of law. Somebody is on trial for a crime that they've committed. and the defense presents the defense and the prosecution presents the case against the person and the jury is to go in and deliberate based upon the information that they heard.

Can you imagine these jurors saying, well folks, how do you feel about this? Do you have any sympathy for the accused?

Do you feel in your heart that he's really innocent? That doesn't matter at all. What matters is the facts, the information.

that which is presented that needs to be evaluated and a verdict reached. You can't come around with a court of law with creating your own truth.

[ 8 : 38 ] That's nonsense. The whole thing breaks down. It's crazy. For a juror to say, well, I just feel in my heart that he's innocent. Baloney!

That's worth nothing. Feelings and emotions are wonderful things we can't imagine to life without them but they are not dependable for when it comes to discerning truth. So we do not and cannot create our own reality.

Truth, the writer of Proverbs says, buy the truth and sell it not. What's that mean? It means you should be willing to pay any price that is required in order to obtain truth.

But you should not be willing to sell it for any amount of money. That's how precious truth is. It is extremely, extremely important.

And the Bible is regarded as a book of truth. But you know, it has a lot of lies in it. Did you know that?

[ 9 : 46 ] The Bible has a lot of lies in it. The first one I call to witness is, yea, hath God said, you shall surely not die.

God knows that the day that you eat you will become as gods. And God doesn't want the competition. That's a flat out lie. But it's in the Bible. So, all that the Bible affirms is true.

But not everything the Bible records is true. Because it's got a lot of lies in it. So you've got to study it and look at the context and see who's speaking and what the subject matter is and all the rest of it.

So what we're talking about is trying to define a biblical concept of Christianity. In fact, probably ten years ago I was burdened so much about this subject that I started the program, the radio program, and it consisted of just a three and a half to four minute message.

That was it. And it was called and still is called Christianity Clarified. Because there is so much out there that claims to be Christianity that is not.

[ 11 : 13 ] And while I'm saying that, by the way, those CDs that are out there in the lobby are part of those. We provide a new one every month. And so far we've got 65 volumes with 20 on it of each, which is about 1,300 segments of three and a half minutes each.

And by the way, they're great for commuting. It makes the miles go so fast. This was the birth of it and this question that brings it to mind is so very important.

And let me say this also at the outset because this is really important for you to understand. None of us mortals, none of us humans, have this thing called truth altogether.

every one of us has at the least sprinkles of error in our teaching. We just don't know where they are.

But when you discover one, you're obligated to eject it and make a correction. You've often heard me say everyone's theology and doctrine has some wrinkles in it.

[ 12 : 28 ] And when we get to heaven, we're all going to get ironed out. And some of us need more ironing than others because there's more wrinkles and bigger wrinkles.

So the only person, you should give a respectful hearing to people unless the person you're hearing claims to have all the truth.

From that person you want to excuse yourself and get as far away as you can. They are pure poison. God is the only one who has all the truth. Matter of fact, even the Bible doesn't have all the truth.

You understand that? The Bible does not have all the truth. The Bible has and contains all of the truth that God was pleased to reveal for our understanding.

But if you think the infinite God can be confined to a book, you're thinking of the wrong God. The Bible is simply a representative of who God is, what He is about, and how He relates to us.

[ 13 : 40 ] There is so much more about God that is not in the Bible because He's infinite. He's infinite. So we need to keep that in mind. And yet, the information that He's provided us is deemed enough.

whatsoever things were written before time were written for our learning that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope. So, we're going to take a brief look at this, and it will have to be somewhat brief, but we don't have to limit it to just one part.

And I want some feedback from you, too, if you have questions or comments that you want to make. Just feel free to interrupt me or raise your hand or whatever, and we'll do our best to get to it. So, what we've got is how shall I describe? We've got a body, we've got a huge body of information in multiple languages that has been disseminated over thousands of years, and in every generation truth has existed because God has been pleased to give it to every generation, and it is a responsibility of each generation to seek out the truth.

I mean, the Lord says, seek and you shall find. The problem with most of us is we're not seeking. We're not seeking, and we don't take the Bible all that seriously. Let's face it, for most people, the Bible is a dust collector on the coffee table, and we just don't regard it all that, well, it's a big book, and it's too deep for me, and I can't understand.

[ 15 : 19 ] There are names in there I can't even pronounce, and we just kind of, I respect it, I love it, I believe that it's true, but it's just over my head, so we kind of opt out.

And what you do is you deprive yourself of the richest joys that could possibly be imagined, because we just don't delve into it like we should.

So we are encouraged to search the scriptures. Jesus told the Pharisees, search the scriptures, for they speak of me.

And you've got to remember when Jesus said that, all that existed was the Old Testament, but they all, all the Old Testament bore witness to Christ. So what we are dealing with is trying to separate truth from error, and it becomes quite a job.

in fact, it's an ongoing thing that probably will never end in this lifetime, for sure. We've got so many clamoring to be the truth, and there is a competition among them, and this goes all the way back to, my oh my, well, it goes all the way back to Genesis 3, and Satan who claimed to have the truth, of course, and it was bought into by our first parents, and you know the consequences that have existed from that.

[ 16 : 48 ] So as you move on through history, you find truth and error in perpetual conflict. Every generation has to try and sort out the truth from the error.

And let me emphasize this, there is a lot more error than there is truth. Understand that?

There's a lot more error than there is truth. And the best illustration I can give of that makes it axiomatic. There is just one answer to the question, what is 2 plus 2?

There's just one answer that's right. Now, how high do you want to count? Every number on the other side of 4 is wrong, and every number before 4 is wrong, and you're talking about an infinite number, so error is out there in abundance.

Far more error. There are far more wrong things to believe than there are right things. And this is why we have so much division even in what is called Christianity.

[ 18 : 04 ] And you can go outside of Christianity because it's everywhere. everywhere. There's Buddhism. There's Islam. There are Jehovah's Witnesses.

There are Mormons. What are all of these? These are all organizations, religious entities, all of which have one thing in common. They all claim to be true.

And if you apply what I was talking about earlier, the idea of creating your own reality, that there is no such thing as objective truth, there's only subjective truth, then all of those groups that we would call cults or aberrations are not.

They are just as valid as anything else. And this is a common opinion that is taken by our culture today. Maybe objective truth doesn't exist in other areas, but it certainly does in religion.

Let me make the difference between subjective truth and objective truth. Okay? I can say the most delicious pizza there is is pizza with anchovies.

[ 19 : 20 ] Okay? Now, do I state that as a fact or as a preference? And by the way, I don't believe that. It's not my favorite.

I'm just using a weird example. Okay? I do. I do. Some of you anchovies nuts. But an opinion is subjective truth.

So, if that were true of me, but I've already disavowed it, but if it were true of me, I would say, that is the most delicious pizza that there is. And I state that as a fact.

Well, I'm not entitled to state that as an objective fact, but I have every right to state it as a subjective fact. And I'm saying then, in my case, in my opinion, that's the best pizza there is.

That is a subjective analysis. But when you have a different view, that is something else on the pizza, pepperoni or whatever, that's your opinion.

[ 20 : 28 ] Everybody, fellas, let me put it this way. We are all entitled to our own opinion. No one is entitled to their own facts.

Get that? Big difference. Big difference. Your believing something does not make it so. If what you believe is true, it is true because it is rooted in reality and it corresponds to reality. reality. I can look outside and you can say, it's daylight now. You can see that is an objective reality. I'm not saying, well, in my opinion, it's daylight, so that makes it so. No. Objectively, it's light out or whatever. So, the distinction between subjective truth and objective truth is enormous, especially when you come to spiritual things.

Because if you buy into this, like most of our culture does today, you don't have to call anybody wrong. Isn't that nice? Everybody's right.

[ 21 : 40 ] You have your truth and I have my truth and they are completely contradictory to each other, but the beauty of it is, we're both right. Isn't that wonderful?

So, there's no cause for arguing. There's no cause for differing. Oh, by the way, there's no place for evangelism either. What right do you have to suspect or suggest that your belief is more important and is true as opposed to someone else's belief?

Everyone, all religions, you may be hearing this, all religions are good. They all make us better people. They all lead to the same place.

They're all right. You have yours and I have mine and nobody's wrong, everybody's right. Isn't that wonderful? Well, it just won't fly.

And if you go back to that courtroom situation again, the judge and the jury is not interested in your opinion at all. They are interested only in your conclusion regarding the evidence that was presented.

[ 22 : 54 ] guilty or innocent, that's all that matters. And that is linked to reality. It's got nothing to do with how you feel about the defendant.

You see the point that I'm making? This is so critical, so important. And you're going to find it to be even more important as we move on in this culture that we're living in today because you're going to get more and more of this.

So this is where we are. How do these different beliefs come about? Well, they originate of course from the deceiver who is the father of lies.

Jesus spoke of him as the father of lies. He was a liar in the beginning and there's no truth in him. And he has ways of impacting and influencing people and I'm not real sure exactly how this works but I do know that he is the expert at it.

And people come to certain conclusions. Well, let's just limit ourselves to the Bible right now because that's primarily what we're talking about.

[ 23 : 58 ] In connection with the scriptures, virtually everything is linked to the principle of hermeneutics.

That's interpreting the Bible. Hermeneutics is a name that was a technical name that was given to the interpretation of the Bible.

And it was in honor of all things. Of all things, it was in honor of a Greek god. A false Greek god.

And his name was Hermes.

H-E-R-M-E-S. He was called the messenger god. And that was the Greek god. The Romans have one too. It's a counterpart.

Anybody know his name? Mercury. Mercury. Yeah. Mercury. They named an automobile after him. It's since going out of style, I guess. But Mercury. Have you ever seen the FTD florist?

[ 24 : 56 ] The guy wears the helmet and he's got little wings sticking out of his helmet. That's the symbol of the florist industry when they send flowers.

And Mercury is the messenger god of the Romans like Hermes is the messenger god of the Greeks. And they all had multiple gods of course. And by the way, keep in mind the fact that the point that has already been made about Satan blinding the minds, that means he disturbs the thinking process, he feeds in erroneous information that allows people to reach wrong conclusions. And I want you to remember this because it's a very, very important point. the entirety of humanity, everyone without exception, well, clarify that, everyone but with one exception has has a, what shall I say, an impaired logic and thinking process.

The only one who doesn't is Jesus Christ and the way he avoided that was through the virgin birth. Otherwise he would be as contaminated as we are. But that was his, that was his way of overcoming that.

So in this, in this contamination, processing information and reaching conclusions, we all enter into that and we all do it and it enables us to reach wrong conclusions and if you have a personality presenting it who is pleasing and engaging, easy to listen to and so on, that tends to cement the thing.

[ 26 : 46 ] You would be surprised how many people buy into something that somebody says because they like the guy. Well, it's great to like the guy, but that's no guarantee for truth.

We had a neighbor years ago when I was a much younger man. We were talking over the backyard fest. This is a dear lady, sweet lady, and she was talking about how wonderful her pastor's message was the Sunday before and she went on and on about it and I said, and I was a new believer and I knew that person that she was talking to was questionable even regarding his salvation because he didn't preach that.

And I asked her, I said, well tell me, how do you know what he said was really true? She said, oh, it had to be true. it had to be true.

He said it so beautifully. He said it so beautifully. If you've got a pleasing voice, a soothing sound, if you're interesting, entertaining, etc., people tend to assign validity to what you say.

Big mistake. Big mistake. Don't do that. Our responsibility is, as Paul said, regarding the noble people at Berea as opposed to those of Thessalonica.

[ 28 : 13 ] They were more noble than those of Thessalonica. In that, Paul said, they did not take my preaching and teaching at face value and say, this guy's right, believe everything he says.

Paul said, you know what they did? They searched the scriptures to see whether the things I said comported with what the scriptures said.

Guys, that's what we're all about. That's what church is supposed to be all about. It isn't faulty role, and it isn't ritual.

It is the pursuit and embracing of truth. Because once you embrace truth, and it gets in you, truth, then you have something to live out.

That's the whole point. We take in information so we can live out the consequences of that information. It is believing and understanding that leads to doing.

[ 29 : 19 ] That's the end game. Doing. What gets done? But you can't do without knowing what you need to know. So it all begins with knowledge and information.

And it is an ongoing sifting and sorting process. And when you come to the scriptures, there are all kinds of things that need to be taken into consideration. By the way, I spent, I don't know, several volumes, Christianity Clarified, 20 segments to a volume, just dealing with hermeneutics. the principles of understanding the Bible. And I remember this was a little two-hour course that I took as a student at Cedarville College in the late 1950s.

Kind of dates me, doesn't it? Late 1950s. And Dr. Arthur Williams, who's with the Lord now, taught that course. And as a new Christian, that just opened up to me, I cannot tell you.

I cannot, it was just like opening a flood gate. For understanding, appreciation, and grasping the truth of Scripture. And that little two-hour course in hermeneutics did more to stabilize me as a Christian than anything else.

[ 30 : 35 ] And I've tried to make these available through Christianity Clarified, and that's what's out there in the entryway as you come in. So all of this has to do with the Bible.

Well, now we say, well, everybody is on the same Bible, but we reach all these different conclusions. How is that? And that is all due to the principles of understanding and interpreting the Bible.

Everybody knows, or everybody can know, what the Bible says. That's not a problem. If you can read, you know what the Bible says.

That's the easy part. part. But what does it mean? That's the harder part. That's where the divisions occur. If you take, for instance, well, let's just jump into it for an example.

It's a very, very prominent one. And it's in Revelation, Revelation chapter 12. Well, let's just do chapter 7, because that's where it, that's the first place where it is mentioned.

[ 31 : 59 ] Revelation chapter 7, and we'll just jump in at verse 4. And I heard the number of those who were sealed. 144,000 sealed from every tribe of the sons of Israel.

Well, now, who are these 144,000? 12,000 from each tribe. Well, they are who the Bible says they are. They were Jews from the different 12 tribes of Israel.

Israel. And that is rather clear that's who they are. But if you are, for instance, if you are a Jehovah's Witness, you don't see these Jews at all.

Do you know who these 144,000 are? They are Jehovah's Witnesses. They are people who belong to that group, that religious group called Jehovah's Witnesses.

They are the 144,000. Well, who says they are? They do. So, that makes it so. And here's a perfect example of subjective truth.

[ 33 : 09 ] They believe that. Does their believing that make it true? Some would actually say, well, if you are a Jehovah's Witness, and you believe that you are one of the 144,000, then it is true for you.

that's making your own reality again. It is true for you. This can be applied to all other areas. Let's look at one of the greatest.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Was that a fact? Or not? There are those who say, I don't believe that's actually true.

I don't believe that really happened. People just don't come back from the dead like that. I don't believe that really happened. I believe, and some have proposed what they call the swoon theory, that Jesus was tortured, emaciated, and drained of all energy and everything, and he slipped into a swoon that made him appear dead, but he wasn't really dead, and they took and put him in that tomb, and the cool air of the tomb revived him, and he came out of the tomb, and says, he was resurrected from the dead, and that is the liberal explanation of it.

And those who are believers see the resurrection of Jesus Christ as the linchpin of our faith, because if Christ be not raised, your faith is empty, in vain, and we are of all men most miserable.

[ 34 : 47 ] So if you're going to apply the subjective truth here, look, if you believe that Jesus did not rise from the dead, then for you, he didn't.

And if you happen to believe that he did, then for you, he did. Which one is right, and which one is wrong? Well, they're both right, because he has his truth, and he has his truth, and it doesn't matter that they contradict each other, they're both right.

Isn't that wonderful? It also borders on insanity. There's nothing wonderful about it. It has no reality to it. Jesus Christ either came back from the dead, or he did not.

And our faith, because I can tell you this, if Jesus didn't come back from the dead, you have absolutely no hope that you're going to.

You see the connection? It's inevitable. That's why these things are so important. That's why I try to emphasize, nothing matters more than the truth.

[ 35 : 56 ] Truth is what we must traffic in. And we are to go to whatever length is necessary in order to find the truth, because that's the only thing that will serve you and serve you well.

So here in Revelation, 144,000 are declared to be Jehovah's witnesses, witnesses. And this is a problem. This is a group that came about back in the early 1900s, maybe late 1800s, early 1900s, a man by the name of Charles Rutherford.

And he was the founder of that. And he obviously had a compelling way of speaking, and he gathered a number of people around him, and the number began to grow, and he was teaching this, that they were the 144,000.

And then they had an embarrassing time, because the number of adherents exceeded the 144,000. Now what are they going to do?

Because, well, then they had to reduce it and say, well, these are the most faithful of the 144,000. Never mind the fact that there is 60,000 more than what the 144,000 call for, those 144,000 are the ones that actually made it.

[ 37 : 14 ] So, you just kind of make up this stuff as you go along. And that's the way a lot of people approach the Bible. But I'll tell you guys, the Scriptures deserve a better shape than that.

For sure. And we need to regard this book as the veritable truth that God wants us to have, and we are to pursue it with all we can.

When you look back on the blinding of the mind, remember when Paul, in Acts 17, when Paul went into Athens, and by the way, Athens, Greece, in the first century, was the citadel of intellectualism. Athens, Greece, was where all the brains were of the world at that time. Athens, Greece, produced, Aristotle, Socrates, Plato, Aristides, all of these men whose writings are still available today, never mind the fact that many of them disagreed with each other, but they all had IQs that would buy and sell ours and have change left over.

Very brilliant men. And yet, Paul said, as he's preaching that message on Arzeal in Acts 17, he said, I perceive that you people are really quite religious.

[ 38 : 46 ] And what I base that on is, as I walk through your town of Athens, you had a statue of a god on every corner. You even had one that was called to the unknown god.

God. And the reason they put that up was because if there is a god that we don't know, and we ignore him, he could really get ticked off at us, and take it out on us, and make us pay a price.

So we don't want to offend any of the deities, so we'll make this statue, and in case you're out there, we don't know who you are, this is for you. Now fellas, is that intelligence speaking?

These were the great minds of Athens? Do you realize that we have great minds today who are willing, and these are minds that have gone through the rigors of medical school, and may have graduated with honors, and they perform an operation on a boy in an effort to make him into a girl? You say, well that's crazy. Well of course it is, but it is consistent with what's going on today. This is make your own reality.

[ 40 : 22 ] You don't like being a boy, you could be a girl. You don't like being a girl, you could be a boy. And there are surgeons, and some of them are, what's the name of the university in Tennessee?

Can't think of the name of it now. Prestigious school, tremendous faculty, and they're engaging in this operation. Incidentally, there's a lot of money in it too.

Vanderbilt. Vanderbilt, Vanderbilt, Vanderbilt University, are you kidding me? Medical doctors on staff at Vanderbilt University in the 21st century are telling people you don't have to be the sex you were born with.

You can change. This is beyond crazy. This is supernaturally, I'll tell you what it is. It is supernaturally evil.

call it what it is. It isn't misguided. It's evil. And this kind of thing is permeating our culture today. It is going to be intensified as time moves on.

[ 41 : 34 ] And I want you to understand some of the principles that are involved now because it is coming our way in spades. And it's going to increase more and more and more. It's part of the parcel of the end times that we're dealing with.

So, this is, yeah, Dan? the Tennessee culture down there, Scott, Vanderbilt, they're all on hold. They got so much pushback from it. Yeah, well, I'm not surprised. And sometimes it's the pushback that resets the thing and causes them, brings them back to, you know, sanity.

But as long as there's no pushback, then, and by the way, one of the responsibilities we have as believers is to push back, to push back.

Paul said upon his deathbed, when he had an opportunity to express some regrets, he didn't have any regrets. He said, I fought a good fight.

[ 42 : 41 ] I've kept the faith. Fellas, that's what we are called to do. understand, we are not called, we are not even called to win the fight.

We are called to fight the good fight. Win or lose is immaterial. What matters is that you put up the opposition, the pushback, and it is to be done with love, not just condemning, and not, you know, not berating and belittling, but we are to speak the truth in love.

Well, you can't speak it if you don't have it. So, you've got to find it, you've got to have it so you can speak it. This is the rationale for Christian education.

And it begins in the home. We are to learn the truth so we can live the truth, so we can speak the truth, so we can propagate the truth, so we can tell the truth, because it is the truth that opens people's eyes, those blind eyes to the truth.

It's the most precious thing we've got going for us. So, we've got today all of these different groups. There's, well, let's go back to history.

[ 44 : 04 ] I don't have my watch. Anyway, I'll stop when the food comes, I promise. you see, as you read the Old Testament, you've got prophets like Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, these were all men of God called upon to deliver the truth of God to the nation of Israel.

And they didn't want it, and they didn't like it, and they didn't buy it. But that did not relieve Jeremiah of the responsibility of giving them the truth.

Jeremiah said, I've been preaching to these people and they're not listening. And he says, I decided, I made up my mind.

Jeremiah says, I made up my mind. I don't know where the chapter is. It probably moved anyway. He said, I made up my mind and I told God. I'm not going to tell them anymore.

I'm not going to speak the truth anymore. I've written them off. I'm finished. They're not believing it. They're not buying it. I'm not giving it out anymore. And in the next verse he says, but his word was as a fire in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay.

[ 45 : 30 ] I just had to give it out. So what? They won't believe it? So what? And by the way, the Lord told Jeremiah, I want you to tell them this, and this, and this, and this, and lay this on them, and tell them that, and warn them about this, and oh, by the way, Jeremiah, one more thing.

They're not going to believe me. What? What am I doing this for? They're not going to believe me. And you know what the king did when one of his aides brought Jeremiah's prophecy, and in our Bible it's 52 chapters, and it's not a chapter divided at all, it's just one long document, and one of the king's aides said to the king, your majesty, this is the document that Jeremiah has written, and we want you to see it.

You talk about speaking truth to power. The king was the power, and Jeremiah was the truth, and the king opened the scroll, it was just a long scroll, it wasn't a book, it was a long scroll, he read it, and he pitched it into the fire, just threw it into the fire, burned the whole thing of the scroll, and the Lord told Jeremiah, that's okay Jeremiah, don't let it bother you, write it again, same thing, all over again, and by the way, they didn't have any Xeroxes back then, or copy machines, and Jeremiah said, well, okay, and he wrote the whole thing again.

All of the prophets, all of the prophets that God raised up, met with opposition, severe opposition, sometimes even to paying the ultimate penalty of martyrdom, but nonetheless, they regarded the commission they had, and the truth they had, as being all surpassing, and it just has to be delivered.

And, sometimes it's good news, and sometimes it's bad news. So, you've got Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and others, there's the minor prophets too, and they all had words of condemnation, and demands for the nation to turn, and get back to God and the original relationship they had with Him through the covenant, and if you don't, God is going to bring an enemy against you that is worse than you are, and that will be the Babylonians.

[ 48 : 09 ] And Nebuchadnezzar came in, and in 586 B.C., sacked the city, killed a bunch of people, led them, made them walk all the way from Jerusalem to Babylon, and they took their leader, Zedekiah, who was the king of Israel at the time, and they made him witness the execution of all of his sons, and then they put out his eyes and made him walk all the way to Babylon, and they would be there for 70 years.

These are God's chosen people? Are you kidding me? Is that any way to treat your chosen people? Listen, God loves us enough that He will not let us get away with things.

This is divine discipline for a nation, and they were warned that it was coming. They even warned them who was going to bring the judgment. It would be the Babylonians, and they are from the east, and they are coming against you.

And this was years before it happened. And Jeremiah was trying to tell them, turn, turn, turn. And the idea is repent. Change your mind. Change your position.

And they said, nothing doing. This crazy old coot, this so-called prophet, and they put him in a miry pit. Probably up to his elbows in mud and slime and left him there before he was taken out and survived.

[ 49 : 54 ] But this was, Jesus said, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who stone the prophets and kill those who have been sent unto you, how often would I have gathered you together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings?

And you would not. You would not. That's the epitome of rebellion. And God could have just walked away and said, okay, I'm done with you.

You don't want anything to do with me. I'm writing you off. God would have certainly had justification for doing that, but he could not do that. He could not do that.

You know why? Because he had already made a covenant, an inviolate covenant, with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and for their descendants.

And that's why God couldn't write them off. But I'll tell you what he's going to do. He's going to chasten them. He's going to punish them. He's going to discipline them.

[ 51 : 12 ] And why is he doing that? Because he loves them. Go figure. Why do we discipline our children? Why don't we just let them do whatever they want to do?

Because we know that's not good for them. We discipline them. It's called child training. And we do it not because we want to throw a weight around and make them know who's boss.

We do it because we love them. We care for them. We know what's best for them. They don't. And they aren't supposed to. But we are supposed to.

So we impose our will on our children for their own good. And God imposed His will on His children, the nation of Israel, for their own good. And the Babylonian captivity was something that was a real serious learning lesson for them.

fantastic time. I'm sure I've taken more time than I need. But comment or question to me? When's he going to start on the Democrats? As soon as he gets finished with the Republicans.

[ 52 : 20 ] Democrats own the government and they're making this obey. Yeah. This world is not my home. I'm just a passing through.

My treasures are laid up somewhere beyond the blue. And aren't we glad? Thank you.