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Battle for the Truth (Part 2)



Individual Topics - Steve Gregg

Steve Gregg discusses the battle for truth in society and the spiritual warfare against lies and falsehoods. He argues that reality is objective and truth conforms to it, contending that standing up for truth is important in courts, Congress, universities, and even churches. The absence of the Word of God has resulted in societies drifting away from knowledge and a lack of understanding of truth and spiritual things. Gregg emphasizes the importance of knowing and accepting the truth, even if it may be uncomfortable or unpopular, and encourages Christians to stand strong in their beliefs and to lovingly and patiently correct those who are deceived or deluded.

Transcript

I was asked if I'd talk about the battle for truth. It's possible that when I was asked it was because I gave a talk at our Sunday home church once a few months ago and called it that. And I think it was based on that fact that I was invited to teach.

Again, I've made more notes than I had back then. I had just put that one together at the time on the same day. But since then I thought it should be fleshed out a little more.

I think most Christians know that we are in some kind of spiritual warfare. But a lot of people think of spiritual warfare as a direct conflict with maybe demonic spirits, which it sometimes is. When you encounter a demon-possessed person and you, you know, deliver them, that's obviously some aspect of a spiritual warfare.

I think a lot of people think of spiritual warfare in terms of, you know, fighting off temptation from the enemy or fighting off maybe even demonic attacks on your own person. And I certainly would say that too is spiritual warfare. But I think the majority of spiritual warfare that we do on a day-by-day basis, unless you're one of those people that has demons tormenting you exceptionally every day, and I meet those people once in a while, sadly, but most of us probably don't have quite that experience every day.

But we do have the experience of living in a society that is being deceived. And frankly, the principal activity of Satan is not, as some people would say, to make you sick or to take your money from you or to even demon-possess you with demons or things like

that. He does maybe some of those things, but the devil's principal activity, according to Scripture, is a deceiver.

Jesus said in John 8, 44, that Satan is the liar and the father of lies. He lied from the beginning. In Revelation 12, 9, it says he's that serpent, that ancient serpent, the dragon, the devil, who deceives the whole world.

In Revelation 20, we read that Satan is bound for a thousand years, during which he can't deceive the nations the same way as he did before. But at the end of the time, he's loosed again for a little while, and he goes out and deceives the nations again. Deception is the main concern that the devil has.

You might think it's his main concern to give you a miserable life. No, he doesn't care if you have a wonderful life, as long as you're deceived. If you're deceived, he has you.

Jesus said to his disciples in John 8, 31, he said, if you continue in my words, you're my disciples indeed, and you'll know the truth, and the truth will make you free. Freedom is what God wants for us. Bondage is what Satan wants for people, and it's through deception that people are brought into bondage, and through the truth, which is the opposite of deception, that they're made free.

Now, we live in a society that not too many decades ago had a high level of knowledge of biblical truth. We are a nation that was founded by people who were very biblically literate. Our laws, our culture was shaped very much by people whose worldview was a biblical worldview.

Some of them were Christian, some of them were deists or something else, but they were nonetheless God-fearing people who believed the Bible was an important guide. And because of that, our country has always been not only tolerant of Christianity, but favorable toward Christianity. Although I feel that began to change primarily in my generation, although God jumped in and gave us a Jesus movement revival that helped to rescue a lot of people of my generation, but still the trend was toward nihilism, new ageism, relativism, and all kinds of isms that are not true.

And I remember, I think it was around, if I'm not mistaken, around 1989, the Jewish-American philosopher and professor at Chicago University, Alan Bloom, wrote a book called *The Closing of the American Mind*. It was a very best-selling book, and he was very negative, of course, about the American situation, but as a college professor, he had noticed that almost all college students believe there's no such thing as truth. I believe it was in that book, he said many things could be said about college students, and not all of them are the same, but one thing you can be quite sure of, if you meet a college student, he doesn't believe there's absolute truth.

Now that was an overstatement, because there have been Christian college students all

along, but he was certainly observing a trend which, even back then, this is like 30-something years ago, you would think that young people today would see that as, oh, that is so 80s, you know, that's so my dad's generation, this there is no truth. I mean, it's such a ridiculous, unsustainable worldview that you'd think it would have, if anyone accepted it at all, they'd accept it for a little while, and then they say, oh, this is just stupid, and go back to reality again. And yet, it would appear that the devil is truly deceiving Western civilization to a degree that I don't think he ever has before.

Now, it's very common for people talking about Bible prophecy in the end times to say, oh, this is the worst times we've ever lived in, there's more evil, there's more chaos, and I don't believe that's true. I don't believe there is more evil or more chaos in our time than there has ever been. I think there have been lots of times in history that, by many measures, the world was worse than today.

But I'm not sure if there's ever been time when the world was as deceived as it is today in some very fundamental ways. I mean, I don't know if there was ever a time, let's say, 20 years ago and beyond, into the past, where anyone had any trouble defining what a woman is, or a man, or what marriage is. I mean, there were people who had deviant lifestyles who didn't follow the biblical patterns of marriage and sexuality, but no one was saying, we just can't define marriage anymore.

Who knows what marriage is? Well, everybody knew what marriage was right up until, like, yesterday, and what a woman was until, like, three minutes ago. I mean, the deception is just, you know, it's a cataract of lies that are being swallowed by a world that has lost knowledge of God. And this is a problem.

There's no way that people can be as deceived as we are unless they've rejected God and His Word. And it's an amazing thing, if we don't have an impact in our society, that it'll soon not only be that they don't agree with our views, but they won't tolerate our views, because we are seen as closed-minded, or worse, we're seen as haters. If you don't believe that a man can just decide that he's a woman, and therefore he is a woman, and everyone should support that delusion, and that would have been called a delusion anytime until about 10 years ago.

It was in the psychiatric literature as a, you know, gender dysphoria, it's a mental illness. You know, only a few years before that, homosexuality was listed in the psychiatric literature as a mental illness. But when people, when enough people do the mentally ill thing, it becomes normative.

It doesn't make it any less ill, it just makes it more average. It makes it more seem normal. But you see, reality doesn't change as much as people's opinions about reality changes.

Reality is pretty stubborn stuff. You know, if there is a meteorite hurtling toward the

earth, about ready to destroy us within the next 10 days, some people might say that's true, and they would be right, but most people wouldn't want to believe that's true. And, you know, you could have 99% of people denying that it's true, but it wouldn't change anything.

Reality is what reality is. Now, what has happened in the relativistic age we are in, I remember hearing back in 1990, that a huge percentage, in the 90-something percent of high schoolers entering college as freshmen, when surveyed about their world, they would say they do not believe there's any absolute truth. Now, that means that before they even got to college, 90-something percent of these students had been brainwashed just in high school to believe there's no such thing as truth.

Now, how do you educate people if nothing is true? How do you teach them history? How do you teach them science? How do you teach them math? Now, of course, there's no one on the planet who really believes that there's no absolute truth. And you can tell by if they go to the 7-Eleven store and get a cup of coffee, and they're supposed to give them two bucks, so they give them a \$10 bill, and the cashier gives them back \$4. You know, I don't care how relativistic you are, you're going to say, I think I have more like \$8 coming back, not \$4.

But if the cashier said, well, that's your truth. I'm living my truth. Now, honestly, this is not a subjective thing.

Mathematics is totally objective. You can't change it. You can deny it, but you'll be out of touch with reality, and it'll eventually catch up with you.

You'll go broke or something. Because there is objective reality. Mathematical reality is just one category, but you see, if it is true that 2 plus 2 equals 4, and not, say, 3 or 5 in any circumstances, that's just telling us, you know, the numerical truth.

But there's also truth about science. There's truth about history. Some things happened, and some things didn't.

If we say the American Revolution was fought in 1776, if it really did, then that's true. I trust the sources. I've been told this by, so I believe it did happen.

I believe it is true. But if someone said, I don't believe it's true, well, I don't care if they believe it's true or not. It happened or it didn't.

Either I'm right or they're right, but we can't both be right. It can't be my truth that the nation fought the Revolutionary War in 1776, and their truth is that it happened in 16-something, you know, because only one thing happened. The other thing didn't happen.

Truth is what conforms to reality, and reality is stubborn. You can beat your head against the wall and say, I don't like this truth, and you're not going to hurt the wall a bit, but

your head will be worse for the wear. And this is what our society is lapsing into.

They don't like truths. Some people don't like the truth that they were born male, and so they wish to believe they're female. Well, frankly, I'm not against these people.

What they wish is what they wish, but don't let them tell me I have to acknowledge the delusion. I mean, if they tell me they're Napoleon, I don't have to believe that. They can believe it if they want to, and many people in mental institutions do believe that kind of thing, but I don't hate them for it.

I don't hate trans people. I don't hate anyone. I don't hate someone who's living a delusion, but I do resist the idea that I have to say that their delusion is true when I know it's not, and when everybody knows it's not, it's suddenly what is true is considered whatever, honestly, is politically correct.

I was reluctant to use that term just because it's so overused. I have a friend who used to call me on the radio all the time, and every time he called, he's going to use the word politically correct. He's against political correctness, as I am too, but it's just way overused, and I wish he wouldn't always use that term, but honestly, the kinds of things that are being said to be somebody's private truth today are things that very clearly are only supported by a political mood, not by evidence, not by science, certainly, not by even majority vote, but just what is politically acceptable in the mood of our day.

When I was in high school, I remember there were people, not very many, but you'd find people who said, oh, there is no absolute truth, and it was such a joke. I mean, it's a self-refuting statement. Is that an absolute true statement? If there's no absolute truth, then your statement is not truth.

You're telling me there is no absolute truth. That's a truth claim. You're claiming there isn't.

You're telling me that your statement is true, but if there's no absolute truth, then there's no reason for me to believe your statement is true. You've sawn the limb off that you're sitting on. It's just a stupid thing to say, and to me, in high school, I remember when people joke about that, oh, there's no absolute truth.

We all knew the answer to it. Well, is that absolute truth? And I thought, no intelligent person would really believe that. It was just kind of crazy mood that some people were going through, but our society has become crazy.

And it says in Jeremiah, they've rejected the Word of the Lord. What wisdom is in them? We didn't know that there was no real wisdom outside the Word of the Lord, because we've never lived in a society that was lacking the Word of the Lord. Now, you might have been raised without knowledge of the Bible in a non-Christian home.

That's possible, but you were raised in a world where the knowledge of Bible was very general and very influential, not only over the morality, but over the whole worldview of the society. And therefore, there was wisdom in it, because the Word of the Lord is true. And I would have assumed that if a whole society became pagan and was unfamiliar with the Word of God, that they would come to be unaware of certain truths.

They wouldn't know about Jesus. They wouldn't know He's the Son of God. They wouldn't know about salvation.

They wouldn't necessarily know all the moral things to be true that we know to be true. But I never thought that you take away the Word of God from people's minds, and they don't know anything. Even what a child knows before they go to school, what gender their mother is, or their fathers, or they are, or their siblings.

There's never been any generation foolish enough to not know these obvious things. Yet, nowadays it's considered foolish to point that out. And it is foolish to point that out in some circles if you don't want to lose your job, or you get kicked out of school, or get sued, or you know, or whatever.

I mean, this is the society. There is a battle here. This is how the spiritual war has advanced in our time, in my lifetime.

And it's not going in a good direction. So, the younger people here, whose lifetime will extend into the future beyond my lifetime, will be facing, very possibly, even worse issues here. And therefore, if you stand for the truth, you're going to have to fight for the truth.

Because the people who don't have the truth and don't want the truth, don't believe there is truth, they're not going to be silent. They're going to fight you. They are already fighting you.

They're fighting us in court. They're fighting us in Congress. They're fighting us, you know, just about in, certainly in the universities, even in churches.

Maybe not your church. I hope not. But there's a lot of pastors now that have decided that going woke is really the way to, you know, reach people.

And to do that, you've got to kind of deny things you know are true or pretend that you don't know they're true. And this is the battle that's being fought now. And we cannot take it lightly.

It's not as if it's just kind of a little quirky thing, and this too will pass. Well, it will, but we may not live long enough to see it pass. We might.

Depends on how we fight the battle for truth. But, you know, if we just kind of say, oh,

this will just go away by itself. I would have thought that back in 1990, when the majority of entering freshmen in college didn't believe there's such a thing as absolute truth.

How long can that last? I mean, they're going to get out in the real world someday. Eventually, they'll graduate from college. I'm not even sure how they'll learn anything in college if there's no truth.

I have a Christian friend who taught in a secular university in McMinnville, where my school used to be. Our great commission school used to be across the street from Linfield College in McMinnville, Oregon. And one of the professors there physics professor there was in our church.

And he, I'd talked to him a lot about this thing. And he said, he says, you know, back in the 60s and the 70s, all these radical students were in my classes, and they were asking really hard questions. And I, you know, I was afraid of them, because they were challenging everything I took for granted.

They were, you know, challenged all my Christian values and all our assumptions and so forth. And he says, but they were looking for truth. And he says, that's, I actually found that somewhat threatening, because they had searching questions about reality, about truth that I didn't, I hadn't thought through, and I wasn't really able to answer it.

It was quite uncomfortable for me. He says, he said, but now, and he said this in the late 90s, he says, I'd give anything to have those students back. At least those students wanted to know what the truth is.

He says, the students I have now don't even know, don't even believe there is truth. They just want to go to school to figure out how can I make a living. Teach me a trade, or teach me something that can make me money.

They don't have the slightest interest in truth, he said. Now, I don't know to what degree he spoke for professors, you know, nationwide at the time, but I think it was fairly general. Now, that was 25 years ago, and Christians were on the scene.

And some Christians were speaking out, but let's face it, some must have been sleeping. Because somehow that mentality, that there is no absolute truth, just took over. It just took over in the last 25 to 40 years, so that it's not anymore a strange fringe doctrine.

It's not even considered a controversial statement anymore. It's just considered correct. There is no absolute truth.

But of course, if there's absolute truth, then nothing can be said to be correct. Because correct means corresponding to what's true, and true means corresponding to what's real. Reality is what it is, and that's...if we were to say, what is truth? Well, the answer is, truth is what conforms to reality.

Now, much of the truth, and I don't mean spiritual truth in this sense, but just what's real, is discoverable by experiment, through science, or through research. You can learn the truth about historical events, and wars, and rises and falls of empires from studying archaeology, and history, and things like that. You can learn all kinds of things about the natural laws, and the application of natural laws, through becoming adept in science and technology.

There's truth out there, natural truth, that can be learned through science, through experiment, through observation. And then, of course, there's spiritual truths that aren't discovered that way, but are discovered through revelation. I just want to say this, that even those things that can be discovered by science, and experiment, are said not to be true anymore.

I mean, there was a time I would have thought that, you know, those who believe in science, you know, they're going to become the majority. They're just not going to believe in God, or Jesus, or the Bible, but they're going to believe, of course, what can be shown and proven to them. But that's not true anymore.

The last, you know, the COVID epidemic that we came through, there was plenty of truth out there. Of course, you had to get it from the internet most of the time, or from unusual news sources, but it was available. But the nation's policies did not follow science.

They could have, because there was science. People knew. I mean, even now, with the whole vaccine thing, you know, there's information out there that would make many people very cautious about getting vaccines.

And the scientific data is what keeps me from wanting one. And I'm not saying you can't get one. I'm not telling you what they should do, but I don't want one.

And the reason I don't is not because I'm rebelling against, you know, political correctness. I'm rebelling against what science says is not a good idea, in my opinion. The thing is, appeal to science is simply not in vogue anymore.

They say it. All the people who are trying to advance the irrationality of the modern agenda, they say, follow the science. But when you actually look at the science, they're not following it.

Science, then, is whatever they say science is. And that's exactly what's true with the, you know, the critical gender theory stuff. I mean, everything they say about gender, or gender and sex, are not the same thing.

You can be one sex but different gender. Really? And what scientific experiments, exactly, were those that yielded that brilliant insight? Well, none. And I'm not here to rag on, you know, the gender issue, but that's got to be one of the things we talk about,

because that's where truth is really under assault in a big way right now.

Many people don't know that the idea of, you know, people being transgender arose with a man named John Money, who was a pseudoscientist and a child molester. And basically, he took a couple of twin boys, one of them had been sadly, accidentally mutilated in a botched circumcision, and he talked them into, their parents into, letting him transition one of them into a female. And so, he believed that if you just give them female sexual organs, and raise them as a female, and impart them a feminine, you know, identity, then they'll be a female.

Now, he raised, he tested these boys, and experimented with them through their, through their upbringing. And his failures, his science, they both commit suicide. One of them, as a young adult, just got drug addicted, and died of overdose.

The other one just killed himself outright. And of course, this is what the science tells us. Science tells us that people actually, who are affirmed in the transgender movement, as transgenders, typically have a suicide rate that's like 20 times higher than the suicide rate of the general public.

20 is not the statistic that's around there. I've read it, but I don't remember the exact one. But it's huge, huge.

And they say, well, that's because, you know, they're depressed because society doesn't accept them. Doesn't accept them? There's no group in our society more coddled, and affirmed, and protected by law? I mean, if you say you don't believe in transgender, you'll be fired from almost any job you hold, especially if you're in a big corporation. And, in other words, it's not that they're not being affirmed, it's that they're being affirmed in something that's not true.

And it's got to be terribly hard. And I'm not unsympathetic toward them. I'm not.

Like I said, I don't hate them. I'm not threatened by them. I'm not transphobic.

I'm not afraid. I'm afraid for them. I'm thinking, you know, if people keep affirming you like that, you are now in one of the highest risk categories for suicide of anyone on the planet.

And I don't think that's, I don't think it's a good thing for you to be in that category. I'm sorry for you. And I certainly understand, well, I don't understand from personal experience, but I can understand that if you really feel that you're the wrong gender in the wrong body, that must be a very, very hard thing to do.

But, you see, when people have had mental illnesses like this, and frankly, that's what it was called until, you know, just very recently, and it was more accurately called that, obviously. But, like, you know, when Nebuchadnezzar went mad and thought he was a

cow for seven years, and he ate grass and lived out under the open sky, and his fingernails grow out like claws, and ate grass for seven years, we call that madness. However, given long enough, we're going to just say, that's his truth.

He is a cow. If he feels like a cow, if he identifies as a cow, he's a cow. How can you go out and milk him every morning, and, you know, that'll affirm him.

Yeah, well, if you affirm someone in their delusion, you're not helping them. You may be making them feel momentarily more accepted, and therefore, they would say, more comfortable, but they're still living with the conflict between truth and delusion, and they're trying to live in the delusion in a world where the truth and reality are simply going to be in conflict with them all the way. The best thing you can do for someone who's got a delusion of any kind, is to tell them the truth.

I have some Christian friends whose young adult daughter became demon-possessed. They lived in Santa Cruz when I was there, and she was bizarre. She just, she was a very sane young girl until then.

Suddenly, she was in church one Sunday morning, and she just started manifesting demonic spirits, which blew everyone away, because she was thought to be a good Christian young girl, and for four months, she was crazy, and during that time, she wasn't sure if she was a girl or a boy. That was one of the things, one of many things that she went through. The demons came out.

She's now a married woman, married to a man. She knows what gender she is again, but, I mean, the devil wants to rob and kill and destroy, and the way he destroys young people's lives, well, there's a multitude of ways, but one way that's very effective is to totally make them confused about reality, and make them out of touch with the truth, and apparently, apart from the Word of God, there's not much to tether people to the truth. Like I said, I once thought that if you remove the Bible from society, it'd be a worse society, because we wouldn't understand God's moral standards.

We wouldn't understand spiritual things. I didn't know we wouldn't understand anything. That's what has surprised me.

I knew our society was drifting away from the knowledge of the Word of God, but I didn't think that the result would be they don't know anything. College professors, so many times, they admit, we don't know what's true. We can't say anything's true.

Well, what are you teaching? In any class, in any subject, what are you teaching? You don't know it's true. It's very common for professors to say they don't know it's true. In fact, I don't know if you had occasion to watch Matt Walsh's movie, What is a Woman? It's a documentary, very interesting, because he interviewed, you know, professors and things like that.

He couldn't find anyone who could give him a definition of a woman, until at the end he asked his wife, honey, what's a woman? She said, an adult female human. Okay, that's easy. That's what a woman always has been, but there wasn't a college professor or a sexual therapist or anything who could actually define woman.

They skirted the issue. And one college professor he was talking to in the interview, Matt was just saying, well, I just want the truth. And the guy said, why do you want to know? He said, well, you know, just because I want to know the truth.

And the man says, that's threatening. He says, I feel very uncomfortable about you using that word truth. And he didn't back down from that.

The man was a man who would not be comfortable in any discussion where the word truth was in the discussion. He considered that aggressive. He said, that's a very aggressive word.

Well, I guess it is a battle. I guess if you have truth and you say the truth, that's aggression against lies. That's aggression against falsehood.

That is the spiritual warfare between the deceiver and the one who said, I am the truth. That's the battle we're in. Yes, there are other aspects of spiritual warfare, but we need to understand most of it is not sensationalistic.

It's not like the movie The Exorcist. What it is like is more like the quiet removal of sanity with the removal of the Bible from the thinking of people. Now, I remember also when I was young, I was a Christian and I'm going to witness to non-Christians.

There weren't that many non-Christians that wanted to tell me the Bible isn't true. There were a lot of them who didn't want to obey the Bible, didn't want to believe the Bible, they didn't want to go with the Bible, but not many would say, that's just not true. But that's the assumption now with people.

And you younger people who are living in a world where everyone's just assuming the Bible's not true. Oh, that's ancient stuff. That's old.

We don't believe that anymore. You may not realize this if you grew up in recent years, that this idea that the Bible is not true did not arise because some new discoveries have been made in the last generation or so. It's not as though some really clear thinkers came up and said, oh, that just doesn't make sense.

Or that, oh, there were these archaeological discoveries or this scientific evidence that proves that the Bible's wrong. There has literally been not one evidential argument against the Bible that has arisen in the 50 years that I've been in the ministry. And I've been in apologetics.

I've debated university campuses, things against professors and so forth, and atheists. But they have nothing. I read the atheist books.

They don't have any evidence. They just don't want to believe it. They don't like the implications.

If there's a God, I don't like the implications of that. That might make me morally answerable to somebody. I don't like that idea.

Well, whether you like it or not, again, is not what really makes it true or not. But that's the point. That's the mood of our age.

If I don't like something, it's not my truth. That's why I can be born a male, but I can actually be a female, because I don't like being a male. I want to be a female.

And therefore, you have to say I am. In other words, truth has to conform to what I feel comfortable with. And if I don't feel comfortable with what you're saying, well, you can't say it anymore, because that's triggering me.

That's threatening me. That's aggressive. You're a hater.

Well, that's exactly why people have stopped believing the Bible. Not because there's any reason to do so, but because people are getting more and more places they don't like what the Bible says. They're particularly anti what the Bible says on sexual issues, but there's other things the Bible says they don't like, too.

And, you know, the more the culture doesn't like it, the more they just assume that what I don't like isn't true. What I do like is true. Truth is what I identify as truth.

And therefore, if you younger people think, well, you know, my generation doesn't accept the Bible, because obviously we live in a scientific age, or we live in an age where we know a lot more than they did when they wrote the Bible. That's not why people don't believe the Bible. There has been nothing discovered, frankly, I can say in my lifetime in the past 70 years, and because I study history enough and these evidences, I know there's been nothing discovered in the last 2,000 years.

That calls into serious question anything about the reliability of Scripture. When it makes historical statements, hundreds of them have already been confirmed by archaeology. Archaeology continues to unearth things that confirm it.

There was a very interesting discovery not very long ago that confirmed the exodus, where there hadn't been anything. There was, a decade or so ago, a lot of skeptics, the man David never exists, he's just sort of a legend like King Arthur. And then they found a coin with King David's, you know, imprint on it from his era.

I mean, the skeptics have again and again said the Bible's not true, because we don't

want to believe it's true. And then the stubborn truth is discovered in an archaeological dig or something like that. Many of you may know the story in Daniel chapter 5 of how Babylon fell to the Medes and the Persians in Daniel 5, and it says in Daniel 5 that the king in Babylon's name was Belshazzar.

Now, the ancient historians from a few centuries after Daniel's time, Thucydides, Herodotus, who were like three centuries or four centuries before Christ, where Daniel's like six centuries before Christ. But Thucydides and Herodotus, they said that the last king in Babylon at the time of his fall was a man named Nabonidus. But Daniel said it was someone named Belshazzar, no one had ever heard of him.

No other historical record ever mentioned anyone named Belshazzar. The current belief throughout the entire academic world was that the last king in Babylon was Nabonidus, not Belshazzar. Therefore, Daniel was wrong.

I say the common belief through the whole academic world, I should say until 1853. And that's the year that they found in digging in ancient Ur, in Babylon, a temple to a Babylonian god. And it had an inscription by Nabonidus.

Now, Nabonidus was who? He's the one that everyone knew as the last king of Babylon. That's Thucydides, Herodotus, and the old ancient historians of the last Babylon king. His name was Nabonidus.

And here's an inscription by Nabonidus on a pillar in a temple to a Babylonian god. And he says, he's praying to that god, and he says, may reverence for you continue in my first born favorite son Belshazzar. That's 1853.

Prior to that, there's not a single mention of Belshazzar in any historical document except Daniel. And by the way, Daniel is closer to the time than Thucydides and Herodotus were. By the time Thucydides and Herodotus wrote, they'd forgotten about Belshazzar.

His name was totally lost until they find the discovery of Nabonidus makes an inscription mentioning his first born favorite son, Belshazzar. So Nabonidus, the last king of Babylon, had a son named Belshazzar. Now, since that time, they found more tablets and so forth.

Since the 1800s, there have been a lot of archaeological discoveries. They now know that Nabonidus, the father, was in semi-retirement from his ruling in Babylon. He was down in Arabia at the time that the Medes and the Persians conquered the city.

And Belshazzar was appointed to be the king in the city during that time. So Belshazzar, in fact, we know historically now was the king in Babylon, just like Daniel said. What's interesting is how Daniel just kind of almost accidentally shows its historical accuracy.

Because when Belshazzar saw the writing on the wall and his astrologers and wise men

couldn't read it, he said, whoever can read this writing on the wall, Belshazzar said, I'll make him third ruler in the kingdom. There's not the slightest hint in Daniel why he said third ruler in the kingdom. But now we know from archaeology, Belshazzar himself was only second ruler.

His father was the first, Belshazzar was second, and the highest position he could appoint under him was the third ruler. I mean, it's almost an inadvertent proof of the historicity of the book. This is one example.

There are scores and scores of examples how archaeologists have proven that the Bible is true when all the great scholars were quite sure it wasn't. But this move away from belief in the Bible has simply not been like, oh, now they discovered something that proves the Bible wrong. They have not.

They don't even claim they have. If someone says, oh, you can't trust the Gospels, those were written, you know, not even by people who knew Jesus. Those were written, you know, a generation or two later than the life of Jesus.

You can't trust those. I was going to say, okay, and your evidence for that is exactly what? Where are you getting that? You'll never get an answer to that question because there simply isn't. There's a general mood, I don't want to believe the Gospels are true, therefore I can speculate that maybe they weren't written by the people who lived with Jesus and recorded his actions correctly.

They were written by generations later that made things up. Okay, well, I mean, that's a theory. Let's work on that.

Where's your evidence? I mean, even a little bit? Anything? Anything? I'll give you, you know, a couple minutes. You're never going to find it. There's not the slightest evidence that has ever come to raise questions about whether Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, first century Christians, three of them acquainted with Jesus personally, and one of them traveling with Paul, that these men wrote those Gospels.

And there is evidence for that because the people in the first and second centuries, Christians who preserved these books, knew who wrote them and told us who wrote them. You know, I mean, at least their testimony counts for something, especially in view of the fact that if you want to say, well, we don't really know who wrote them, but they just put the names of famous people on them to pretend like they were written by famous people. Mark was not a famous person.

The reason you know his name is because his name is attached to the Gospel of Mark. He's an incredibly obscure character in the Bible. He's not one of the twelve.

His mother is more famous than he is in the book of Acts. But he later traveled with Peter, but it's not recorded in the book of Acts that he did. But, you know, he's a very

obscure guy.

If you're going to pick a false name to put on an anonymous book in order to give it credibility, you're not going to pick a guy like Mark. You'll pick someone like one of the apostles or something. And Luke, even less.

You know, Luke is not even mentioned in his own book, Acts. He wrote Acts, but he never mentions his own name. And the only way we know there was a man named Luke in the first century is that there were like twice or three times that Paul is closing an epistle and sending greetings from the people who are with him to the recipient.

And Luke, you know, Luke sends his greetings, too. The only time we have any information about Luke is, oh, Luke, the beloved physician. He's almost as obscure as Trophimus or Aristarchus or some other person that Paul mentions as sending greetings to.

I mean, there's not a reason in the world that the early church would have attached the name of Luke or Mark to those books unless they knew that's the actual authors. If they were making up names to add to them, give them credibility, they would have picked someone well-known. We know the name Luke and Mark because their names have been on our Gospels ever since we got our Bibles.

But when the books were first written, you know, there's no reason anyone would attach those names wrongfully. So what I'm saying is you're going to hear people all the time say, you can't trust the Bible anymore. But why? Has anything in it been disproven? No, nothing has.

It simply has been proven unpopular. And today, the mood of our age is if it's unpopular, it's not true. But thinking people can't do that.

You know, I'm not very good at math. If I had to do a trigonometry test, which I don't know anything about trigonometry, I would fail it miserably. And if the professor at the Senate bank said, wrong, wrong, wrong, wrong, wrong, wrong, I'd say, no, but I think that's right.

I think that's right. I think you're wrong to say that I'm wrong. Well, okay, Steve, what's your reason for saying that? Because I don't like to be told I'm wrong.

I don't like to have an F on my grade. I don't like that. I want these answers to be right answers because they're my answers.

This is my truth. Well, the professor would still, I don't think he'd raise it to a D minus because I'm still wrong, no matter how much I don't like the fact that I'm wrong. And I don't like the fact that he's probably right.

I just have to change me. You see, when you find that you are out of step with truth, you either have to change you or change the truth. But the truth won't change.

The truth will stay the same. And if you're not going to change, if you're not going to conform yourself with what's true, well, then you're going to have to pretend that the truth is something else. And that's what our society, I think the last, say, the present generation of young people and their parents are the first ones to come along who are willing to say, yeah, I think I'll change the truth instead, instead of changing me.

And that's, that again is a very dangerous thing to do. The testimony of Jesus is true, of course. And Jesus himself said about the Bible when he's praying, Father, sanctify them by your word.

Your word is truth. If Jesus is the truth, and he said the word of God is truth, anyone got more authority to speak on it than him, by the way? I mean, I heard someone recently say, well, your beliefs, they're just, the Bible, that's just written by men. And I said, well, who wrote the books you believe in? Women, or children, or chimpanzees with tie braids? I mean, who? Yeah, yeah, it's true.

Books are not written except by humans. No species is known ever to have written a book except humans, men, women, and so forth. So what? Well, what they're suggesting, it's just written by men, so we can't trust it.

Well, your statement to me is, you're a man, aren't you? Why should I trust what you say? Obviously, we do need to say, why do I believe a certain testimony? We're not going to, we can't say, well, if it's not written by men, we'll believe it. Well, then we won't believe anything that's written by men, which is everything that's written. We have to say, okay, who are the men who did it? How credible were they? How likely is it that what they wrote is true? That's the question that a critical thinker has to make, but critical thinking is not being taught in universities or high schools.

And we're getting people who know all about how to make a meme and post it on Facebook, but they don't know anything about critical thinking, in many cases, unless they're homeschooled or going to some, you know, have some kind of unusual private school or something, or have a very, very unusual public school teacher. I mean, there are some Christians in public school teaching. A few of them are still tolerated there, probably not for long, but the point is that, I mean, some people are taught to critically think by a good teacher, but that doesn't describe the general policies of our educational system.

So we don't have people who think critically anymore, not very much. But people who think critically say, okay, here's somebody who wrote something. They say it's true.

Well, it is either true or it's not true. Why should I believe them? Well, first of all, who are

they? And there's two things I want to know about them. One is, do they know what they're talking about or are they just blowing smoke? And there's a lot of people who don't know what they're talking about, but they speak very confidently.

And people who are very meek and foolish and don't know anything, they say, oh, I guess you must be right because you're so confident about it. Well, you can tell if these confident people have any authority or not by when you challenge them. If someone knows what they're talking about and they get challenged, they're not threatened, because they know what they're talking about.

They know the person who's challenging them just doesn't know what they're talking about. If I know something is true and someone tells me, no, you're wrong, I say, oh, okay, I'm not threatened. Tell me how I'm wrong.

Give me the reasons for believing I'm wrong. I'll check it out. If I am wrong, I'll change my mind.

Because I love truth, I'm not afraid to say I was wrong. But you have to show me that I'm wrong, not just say it. And generally speaking, when people are just being arrogantly confident, saying something that they have no evidence for, if you say, well, how do I know that's true? They don't say, oh, thank you for asking.

They say, how dare you? Where'd you get your degree from? Who do you read? They get threatened just by being asked how I should know they're telling the truth. But competent people who write books can be trusted. Now, if I wrote a book about ancient Sumerian culture and somehow self-published it or something, you shouldn't read it.

Because I've studied about this much about ancient Sumerian culture and you really need someone who knows that much about it. If I don't know what I'm talking about, I'm not likely to be writing a book you should listen to, okay? And if somebody's writing the life of Jesus and they don't even, they never even knew Jesus, well then, why believe them? Now, by the way, this is the way almost all modern books about Jesus are written, by people who never knew Him. If you watch the History Channel, Discovery Channel, and these specials they have about Jesus, Time magazine or whoever writes these articles about Jesus and they quote the Jesus seminar people and so forth, they're always giving a different picture of Jesus than what the Bible gives.

But my question is, okay, how well did you know Jesus when He was here? Oh, you weren't there? And then, so who, where'd you get your information? It certainly wasn't from the people who knew Him because they left their information here and you're saying something different. Where'd you get yours? Oh, from your college professor? Where did he get it? Oh, he made it up? Okay, that's all I need to know. You are incompetent to speak on the subject.

You can speak very confidently, but not very competently. The first thing I want to know if I'm going to trust somebody to be telling me the truth is, do you know what you're talking about? Why should I think that you have any authority to speak on the subject? And the second question I want to know is, are you an honest person? Because you might know the truth, but you still might lie about it. You know, I have sometimes debated evolutionists.

I've read a lot of evolutionary books and so forth, and one of the things that knowledgeable and honest evolutionists always point out is that although they do believe in evolution, they have to admit, as Stephen Jay Gould did and even Charles Darwin himself did, that the fossil record does not really produce the kind of evidence you would expect if evolution was actually true. Nobody has ever seen evolution happen. It's an assumption that it happened, but the best place to find out if it happened is in the fossil record, because that's where you would find evidence that it is or is not true.

Because if evolution is true, that means that over billions of years, before there were birds, there were reptiles. Eventually there were birds, but it didn't happen all of a sudden. It happened over billions of years where certain reptiles would begin to take on just a little bit more bird-like characteristics.

They didn't know they were bird-like because they didn't know what birds were. They weren't there yet, but that's what they were becoming. Natural selection apparently was very wise and knew how to direct them.

But eventually you have a creature that's almost half bird and half reptile. It's still not a bird yet. Eventually it'll be something like 70% bird and 30% reptile.

You've got to have all these transitional forms, all these intermediates, or else there's no evolution. Now, the most honest evolutionist scientists, I've got a list this long of their quotations about this, they say, you know, the fossil record should, if evolution is true, should show us these gradually graded transitions from each, from one species to another, and frankly the fossil record doesn't provide them. We haven't found them.

They don't exist. When you talk to someone who's either not a knowledgeable evolutionist or not an honest one, and you debate them, and I've debated them, I know they say, oh no, there's plenty of transitional forms. Really, what are they? Well, there's this Archaeopteryx thing, it's kind of bird-like.

Yeah, but most evolutionists don't believe it was a transitional, they believe it was a bird, a full bird. It had feathers, it was a bird. An unusual bird to be sure, but still a bird.

Where are those things that are transitions between something that's not a bird and something that is a bird? Well, they don't exist. You know, they'll talk about how, well, there's all these transition forms between a land animal and a whale. Really, show them

to me.

I've seen their pictures. Okay, well, I see animals that are different from each other, and just like I take all the cars in the parking lot and arrange them with the ones that are most like each other in their body form, nearest each other, and the ones that are least like each other at opposite poles, and you could see kind of a gradual likeness, but that doesn't mean any of those cars evolved from any of the other cars in the parking lot. That God made all kinds of different creatures, we know.

Many of them extinct, but to find a creature that has some traits a little bit like a land animal and some a little bit like a sea creature, like a dolphin, but you don't find, for example, a dolphin with feet of any kind. Well, you haven't proven your point, and what you need is actual very slight gradations documenting the whole process, and they don't exist. Now, what I'm saying is all evolutionists, that is if they're scientists and experts, they know very well those transitional forms don't exist.

I mean, they do believe that some of these animals they have found are transitional forms, but they know what they really need is hundreds of transitional forms between every two major groups, and what they might have is one, two, or three that they identify as transition, but that doesn't work. That's not how evolution would happen. Darwin himself said that, he said the most damning objection to his theory was that there have not been found fossils of transitional forms.

He wrote that back in the 1800s. He thought paleontologists would find them, and they found a lot, but they haven't found those, and you can find honest paleontologists, experts on the fossil record to this day who are evolutionists who will come around and say, yeah, that's one area we're still lacking. There just is no transitional form, not really anything significant.

Stephen Jay Gould, the late Stephen Jay Gould, atheist professor of biology at Harvard and paleontology, he didn't teach paleontology, but he called himself an amateur paleontologist, but he was considered to be like the greatest, most influential evolutionist in America until the time of his death. He was outright plain on it. He said, we just don't have transitional forms.

You'll find all kinds of evolutionists who tell you they do, but they aren't there, and it's true, they aren't there, but there are people who know that, but they won't tell the truth about it, because they have an agenda. Now, I want to know, not does somebody know the truth only, but are they honest about the truth? Are they willing to let the facts speak? Are they willing to draw conclusions from what the evidence really says? Now, when I look at the Bible and the story of Jesus in the Gospels, I have to ask myself, did these people know what they're talking about, and were they honest, or did they have an agenda? Well, I have every reason to believe they knew what they're talking about. The early church identifies them as people who walked with Jesus and knew Jesus, and

so forth, so if anyone knew, they would, but are they honest? You see, a lot of people say, well, they just said those things like the miracles, and as Jesus said, just because they believed in him.

Well, yeah, well, believing in Jesus doesn't automatically make you a liar. The question would be, why did they believe in him? If they're making up fake stories, then they wouldn't believe in him, right? If they knew he didn't really do those things, then they wouldn't really be believers, right? They wouldn't have the reasons for believing in him that they would have if he really did and said those things. If Jesus didn't say and do those things, why did they think he did? Or did they not think he did? Were they just liars? There are people who know facts, but don't want you to know the facts, and so they'll shade the truth.

This is what we have to ask ourselves about anyone who writes or speaks on a subject that we think is important to know the answer to. Are they an authoritative witness? Do they know what they're talking about, first of all? Secondly, are they wanting me to believe something despite the fact they know that it may not be true? Do they have an agenda? That's what you have to ask about anything, and yes, that's about the Bible. No one has found any evidence yet that the biblical writers, first of all, didn't know what they're talking about, or secondly, that they weren't truthful people.

In fact, the people who wrote the Gospels, all of them believed what they said pretty strongly. They all died as martyrs, the possible exception of John, but he was willing to die as a martyr. According to tradition, he was actually dipped in boiling oil.

That should have made him a martyr, but supernaturally he survived it, so he died a natural death later on. But these people who gave testimony, they were willing to die for their testimony. Now, I was debating some atheists on an atheist podcast called, I think it was on Infidel Guy.

No, it was more than one atheist podcast. There's one called, what do they call themselves? The Rational Response Squad, or something like that. It sounded to me like a bunch of college students who didn't know much of anything except how to mock religion, but they had me on, interviewed me, and so forth.

One of the points I made was about the Gospels, because they didn't believe they were written by whose names are on them. I said, well, first of all, there's no evidence they were written by anybody else. Secondly, there's historical evidence they were written by these people, because those people who preserved them, preserved also the knowledge of who wrote them, and they would know.

But I said that the writers of the Gospels certainly believed what they wrote, because they were willing to die for it. I said they were willing to die for their testimony. And one of these atheists said, well, there's lots of people who are willing to die for their beliefs.

Muslims will blow themselves up for their beliefs. It doesn't mean they're right. And I said, you didn't hear me.

I didn't say these writers died for their beliefs. They died for their testimony. There's a big difference between a testimony and a belief.

People can believe for no reason at all, but they can only testify to what they've seen. If you go to court as a witness, and you're giving testimony, you say, and they say, well, was this guy there at that time? Did he have a gun? And you say, well, you know, someone told me he did. They'll say that's inadmissible, hearsay evidence.

We only want to know what you've seen. And the apostles claimed that they had seen the resurrected Jesus. They'd seen the life of Jesus.

They were either liars or not liars, but they died for their testimony. And liars who know they're liars usually are willing to draw the line somewhere and say, okay, okay, you know, take the spears out of me, take the arrows out of me, stop burning my eyeballs with a hot poker. I'll just tell you the truth.

We didn't really see him. Not one of them broke down. That's very much against human nature.

They obviously believe what they wrote. The question is, were they deluded? Well, the things they said were hard to be deluded about. They touched him after they saw the holes in his hands.

They watched him die. They saw the blood come out of him when his heart was pierced. I mean, there's, it's so much harder to believe anything other than Christianity when you know the evidence.

But some people are willing to do that hard thing. I'll believe anything except Jesus. Well, the problem is Jesus is the truth.

And when you decide you're not going to believe Jesus, you're not going to believe the truth. And if you don't believe the truth, there's not much left. There's only lies.

And we are in a battle for the truth. So the devil has a great deal to gain by deceiving people because that's the only way he captures them. If they know the truth, the truth will make them free.

It's not only Jesus who said that. Paul said something very interesting about that, too, in 2 Timothy chapter 2. When he talks about our involvement with unbelievers, he says in 2 Timothy 2.24, a servant of the Lord must not quarrel, but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient in humility, correcting those who are in opposition. If God perhaps will grant them repentance so that they may know the truth and that they may come to their

senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will.

The people who don't know the truth have been taken captive by the devil. They can be released from the snare of the devil if they acknowledge the truth and come to their senses. And Paul says they might acknowledge the truth and come to their senses if we gently and patiently and persistently correct them.

Now the problem is someone who doesn't love truth doesn't really want to be corrected. A person who doesn't love truth is kind of trying to avoid any unpopular truths, any inconvenient truths. But people say, well, we shouldn't tell people who are same-sex couples getting married that that's not right because that's not loving.

As Christians, it's supposed to be not judgmental, it's supposed to be loving, we're supposed to be on their side. I am on their side. That's why I don't want them to get into something that's going to destroy their souls.

Now some of you say, oh, isn't that a little extreme saying that's going to destroy their soul? Yeah, it's extremely dangerous what they're doing. It's not an extreme statement. What they are doing is extreme.

And for that to be pointed out to them may make them extremely uncomfortable, but it doesn't make them better off not knowing. You know, sometimes people say, I just rather not know stuff that makes me uncomfortable. Well, some things that make you uncomfortable, you know, if you go to the doctor and he sees that you've got aggressive cancer, but you don't want to hear it, so he won't tell you.

He knows it'll make you sad, you know. Oh, this patient probably doesn't want to think they have cancer. It'll probably ruin their day.

I might make them sad, might make them uncomfortable. I'll just not tell them. Because why? I love them.

Because I love them, I don't want them to be uncomfortable. Well, a doctor who's like that is of no use at all. Jesus was a doctor.

He said those who are well don't need a physician. Those who are sick, I'm not come to call the righteous, I'm come to call the sinners to repentance, which means they need to repent, just like a sick person needs to get well. And Jesus is the one who's come to the sinners, the sick, and he comes not to condemn them, not to hate them, but to heal them.

See, a lot of times, I'm afraid Christians sometimes themselves are more threatened than they should be about, you know, whatever the mood of the society is. They're afraid if they stand strong on the truth, well, and this is a very realistic fear, their relatives

might not speak to them anymore. Their children might abandon them and disown them.

They could truly lose their job. They, you know, there is a cost to be paid if you stand for the truth, and a lot of people are afraid to do that. But if you love people, you've got to be afraid not to tell the truth.

When you see somebody that's destroying themselves by the deception and delusion they're in, to not tell them that, to not try to rescue them is not loving. But sometimes we're just afraid, oh, they'll call us a hater. So we need to be gentle, we need to be patient, we need to be loving.

And because we're loving, we need to correct them in gentleness, correcting them. Now, there's some people, no matter how gentle you are, they're going to be injured by correction just because they're snowflakes, frankly. They've got very thin skin.

They've never been told they were wrong. You know, David had a son like that named Adonijah, and he ended up dying miserably. But the one thing we are told about Adonijah is, in 1 Kings, is that when he was raised, his father never challenged him or anything.

His father never said, why are you doing that? You know, he was raised without parental guidance. He was raised without ever being told he was wrong. And then he, of course, assumed he was not wrong and did something terribly wrong and got killed for it.

Now, a parent often doesn't want to tell their child that they're wrong, because children don't want to be told they're wrong. But smart children will say, OK, I don't want to hear this, but if I am wrong, I guess I better learn. Not all children are wise, but there are wise children.

That's why some of us learn. Some of us were corrected when we did things wrong and believed things wrong were children. Our parents correct us, and we're smart enough to agree with it.

There's not enough children who are raised in homes where the parents will correct them. And I'll tell you, one of the factors in that, I think, is the fact that there's so many single parents. I know this because I was a single parent for many years.

And the truth is that when a husband and wife are a united front against foolishness in their child's life, the child can't play one parent off the other. And when the parent says, you can't do that, that's wrong, they can't just run off to the other parent who will affirm the child. But when you've got divorced couples and they're sharing custody or whatever, then what often happens is the child likes to be with the parent that affirms them and doesn't like being with the parent who does not affirm them.

I just heard a case yesterday, I don't remember what the situation was, but a woman had

lost custody of her daughter because her daughter wanted to be a guy. Her father and his new wife affirmed her and her transgender, the mother did not. This was a liberal Democrat mother, but she wasn't entirely stupid.

And her mother knew that, and by the way, I don't mean, I know what that sounds like it implies, and it does, but I don't mean to be insulting. I honestly don't. I just have to, I mean, you call it as you see it, I'll call it as I see it.

It's my truth. And this woman was a liberal Democratic professional woman, but she did not believe her daughter was a guy. Her daughter had never shown any transgender tendencies ever, and she was like in her teens and just decided to turn on, oh, I'm a guy now.

Now, her father was willing to go with that, and the mother was not. And so, as it turned out, the mother lost custody. The daughter won't speak to her anymore or whatever.

Well, no wonder parents nowadays don't want to correct their children, especially if there's another parent that will let them live without correction, and the child can pick these days, do I want to be corrected or not corrected? Do I want a parent that will affirm everything I feel or a parent that will correct me or change or challenge me on things I feel? This is the world we live in where a huge percentage of young people are being raised in broken homes, and the single parent who has the higher standards is the one who is at risk of losing custody if they say things that the child doesn't like. And so, many parents are afraid to do so. And all I can say is if you're a parent in that condition, you've got to do it anyway.

You've got to do it anyway, but I think we need to start younger. I think a lot of people have teenage kids right now. You know, they think, well, my son is already, you know, almost over the edge.

It's a little late if I say this, the truth to him, he'll never speak to me again. Well, there is a price to be paid for truth. It is probably true that many parents, if they speak the truth without compromise to their young adult children or whatever, that they, in many cases, they will lose that child for a while.

Maybe permanently, but they won't lose their own soul. And if they don't speak the truth, they'll lose their own soul and their child's soul. Now, the child has a free will.

The child can lose their own soul if they want to, but you don't want to be the one who contributes to that by enforcing lies and delusion, turning them over to the captivity of Satan. They may not want to be set free by the truth, and that's going to be their choice. Their child reaches a certain age where you don't have control over how they think or what they do, and therefore, they might reject you, and that's one of the most painful things a parent fears, and it's very intimidating.

The children can, especially in divorce cases, the child can manipulate, can intimidate the parent. You let me do what I want to do, or I'll go live with dad, or I'll go live with mom. She affirms me.

And then you think, oh, now what am I going to do? Well, you're going to tell the truth, because even if your child rejects it, your child is going to come face-to-face with reality someday. It might be 20, 30 years down the line that you're suffering from their rejection of you, but if they ever come to the knowledge of the truth, they'll be glad that you told them the truth. They'll say, you know, my dad, my mom, I hated them for telling me that, but I realize now they were right.

Whereas if you didn't tell them the truth, they'll say, now I know the truth. Why didn't my dad tell me that? Why didn't my mom tell me? Didn't they know? My parents knew I was going the wrong way, but they didn't tell me. It's a you're kind of damned if you do and damned if you don't kind of situation.

It's the horns of a dilemma, but when you're on the horns of that kind of dilemma, you just have to tough it up and say, okay, listen, I'm going to have to tell you the truth. I'll speak the truth in love. I'll speak it patiently.

I'll speak it sympathetically. I'll realize that what you think is right, you really do think it's right, and I want to affirm that you have the right to decide at your age what you will believe and that I'm not going to bully you about it, but I'm not going to tell you a lie. You don't lie to people you love, and if you love them, you'll tell them the truth.

You tell it again sympathetically, lovingly. You're not going to be a hater. They might say you're a hater anyway.

I don't care how nicely you say it. Some rebels are just a you're a hater. Well, I don't hate you.

I'm sorry you think that I do. I would have thought that our history of our relationship would have told you that I don't hate you. I didn't hate you then.

I don't hate you now. If you hate me, well, that's on you. I'm not the hater, and if they reject it and reject you, that's about the most painful thing can happen to a parent.

Even the prospect of it happening is painful enough that it intimidates a great number of parents, even Christian ones, I think. In fact, I think even pastors are intimidated by this, not so much about their children, although maybe that too, but their congregations. Well, if I tell them the truth, then next week there'll be about a third as many people in the congregation.

Well, what's wrong with that? If the people who don't want the truth are gone, you've got a great congregation there. God give every congregation that quality that only the

people are there who want the truth. Yeah, a lot more warm bodies means a lot more paper in the bag that's passed around.

Means more job security for the church staff. But those are not the things that Christians are supposed to be motivated by. Certainly not pastors.

But let's face it, pastors are human, and there are pastors who are intimidated by that. They say, I know that if I speak on this subject, if I speak about drunkenness and that those who are drunkards will not inherit the kingdom of God, I know I have a deacon over here who gets drunk sometimes, and it's going to be uncomfortable. I might lose him.

If I if I speak about the dangers of greed and covetousness, I've got a very rich donor over here. He might feel like I'm going to go to another church and give his money somewhere else. Well, let him.

You can't control what others will do. You only can control what you do, and you're going to answer to God for what you do, not for what they did. If you're less popular, if you've got less money in your pocket, if you lose your job, if you do that because you're obeying Christ, speaking the truth, you're standing in the battle.

That's where the battle is. If there's no threat to you, you're not in a battle. If there's no danger, you're no hero.

To be valiant for the truth means that you're valiant enough that when there's a real cost to be paid, you're willing to pay that cost. Not happy to, but ready to. Anyone who goes to battle does that.

Anyone who goes to war does that. They figure, I don't really want to die out there, but I'm willing to, or else I wouldn't be in the service. I wouldn't have joined the service if I wasn't willing to die.

What's the point of joining the military if you're not willing to die? That's kind of a stupid choice to make. It's a risky profession. Or police or anything like that.

You get into that work, you've got to be willing to die. It doesn't mean you want to die. It doesn't mean you're suicidal.

You may hope to live to come home to your family safely until you retire and beyond, but you have to be willing to lose everything or else you're not a soldier. Paul said to Timothy in 2 Timothy 2, he says, Endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. He says, No one who fights in a war concerns himself about the things of this life so that he might please him who called him to be a soldier.

You're in the army now. It's a battle between the ideology of error, Satan's kingdom, and the ideology of Christ, which is, of course, God's kingdom. I'm going to give you one

more scripture, then I'm going to give you a break here.

There's a scripture in Proverbs 23, 23. It says, Buy the truth and do not sell it. Also, wisdom and instruction and understanding.

Now, buy the truth and do not sell it. Now, this is not talking about actual financial transactions. I actually know of a ministry that had a conviction they would not sell their materials because their materials were the truth and this is forbidding you to sell the truth.

That's maybe true. I mean, I don't sell my materials either, but that's not what this is. It's not talking about published truth, you know, pamphlets, books, and they don't sell those.

They didn't have those back then. To buy it and not sell it is really a figure of speech. It means obtain it at whatever cost.

When you buy something, you pay a cost and you receive it back. Get the truth for yourself and no matter what it costs, buy it. Jesus said the kingdom of God is like a pearl of great price that when someone found it, they happily sold all they had to buy that pearl.

That's, it's worth it. There's nothing worth more than the truth because truth is, Jesus is the truth, but also the ramifications of truth to every aspect of life and society and impact and ministry. There's nothing more important than the truth.

Buy it and don't sell it. Now, just like buy in this case is a metaphor for obtain it at a cost, same thing with sell. Don't part with it no matter what someone promises you in exchange for it.

There are some things that just are not for sale. My grandfather used to say everything's for sale, but I don't think everything is. I won't sell my wife or my children for any price.

In fact, I won't even sell my integrity for any price. You put a gun to my head and say, you tell me Jesus is the Lord, I can shoot you in the head. Fire at will, you know.

I'm not going to sell it. I'm not going to cave into it. People may offer you a promotion.

They may offer you all kinds of things. They might offer to still be your friend. As long as you compromise the truth, don't sell it.

Don't sell out. Because if you have a price, in all likelihood, the devil will find it and pay it so that he can get you back. You've got to say, this is a non-negotiable.

What I know to be true, I will not deny. I will not compromise. I don't care what benefits seem to be in it for me to do so.

And I'm going to, no matter what I have to pay or sacrifice to get the truth, I'm going to get it. It might cost everything. It might cost my family.

I've lost family over the truth. Not my birth family, but wife and children and so forth. And frankly, I wouldn't have lost them if I wanted to go woke, if I wanted to go the other way.

And I don't think I've lost them for good. Some I've lost for good. I don't want them back.

But the children I'm talking about, I don't think I've lost them for good. They're coming back around. But the point I wanted to make is that you should buy the truth.

This should be your motto. I will buy the truth. I don't care what the price is.

I'll pay it. I will not sell it. I don't care what price is being offered.

I won't take it. Because possession of the truth is what's going to determine whether you live with God or live away from God in this life and in the next life. And so we need to battle for the truth.

And we need to battle for it, not just in our own souls. Like, oh, I'm tempted to give up the truth. I don't want to lose the truth.

Well, certainly that's an important first front to fight. But you've got to get settled where that's not even an issue. For me, that's been settled for 50 years.

If I know something's true, no one's going to get me to say otherwise. I don't care what they threaten. I don't care what they promise, what they bribe.

I'm not interested. I'm not interested in anything except the truth. Never have been since I've been a young adult.

And I'm not. I hope that doesn't sound boastful. It's just a fact.

That's just it should be true of every Christian. It's not really a boast. It's like I'm a Christian.

That's what Christians are. People who are not willing to give up the truth. But more than that, if that's where I'm at, that's my foundation.

I'm settled on that. The next question is, how many other people can I get to buy the truth and to sell the delusion? Part with that. That's my warfare.

That's my battle.