

Nobody Like Jesus Part 2

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Preacher: Kevin Smith, Senior Pastor

[0 : 00] John chapter 14. Once again, we're meditating on verses 4 through 6. Hear now the word of the living God. Jesus said, and you know the way where I am going.

Thomas then said to him, Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way? Jesus said to him, I am the way and the truth and the life.

No one comes to the Father except through me. That is the word of the Lord. Please be seated.

Thank you all. Thank you. Exclusivity.

It is the act or practice of shutting out all others from a relation, a process, a location, etc. For instance, some examples.

[1 : 16] The vows of marriage speak of exclusivity, permanence, and total self-giving. In other words, when you're married, you say it's you and me forever, nobody else allowed in.

It's exclusive. When my wife was having our children, there were programs that encouraged mothers to maintain breastfeeding exclusively.

No formula or solid food for sometimes for six months of their infant's life. Exclusivity. Only mother's milk.

When I was in grade school in Philadelphia, we had a school, we had two schools, one called Boys High and one called Girls High.

Well, later someone sued so that girls could go to Boys High. But before that, Boys High was a school that was exclusive to boys.

[2 : 26] You see, some people are really put out or really put off by exclusivity. They feel entitled to whatever others have or experience.

And there's some truth to that. But there are examples, as I gave, where exclusivity is not wrong. Sometimes it's required.

The more important or more intimate the relationship, the more exclusive it becomes. Heaven itself is not open to all ways or all ideas.

There's a path to heaven. There's a path to glory, to paradise. And that path is exclusively found in the Son of God.

Because there's nobody like Jesus. Last time we began focusing on this, the Lord's response to Thomas here.

[3 : 36] And that bold question, I mean, bold statement and question. Laura, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way? So we've been looking at where and way.

That's the question. Where and way. So we focus on what our Lord meant by saying he is the way. That is the big question that he's answering here.

He is the narrow gate. He is the narrow path. It's uncomfortable at times. It's even hard at times. But trusting in Jesus leads exclusively to life in the Father.

So let's continue. Jesus is now the only truth. Now see, our Lord seems to go beyond what Thomas asked him.

But really, he's giving a fuller answer to Thomas' question. The way is the path to the truth and the life. Jesus now is the truth.

[4 : 39] And that's with a capital T. Now, I feel like we have to stop here for a minute, just for a second. Because our culture will accept truth in science.

Even calling some theories truth. But moral truth or religious truth, not so much.

We even question history now. We say history is written by the victors. We are told we can't know what is true.

So we say these, you've heard this before, truth is relative. Or another way of saying that today is we speak my truth and your truth.

My truth and your truth is relative truth. That means truth is subjective. It depends on the context. It depends on the viewpoint of the person.

[5 : 38] One source says it this way. This can lead to a situation where different people have conflicting understandings of what is real or factual.

Which can be a source of conflict and misunderstanding. Oh my, really? Really? I can claim I'm being abused.

You can say I'm not being abused. I can say this is my truth. And you can say, okay.

Okay, it's your truth. But the question still remains, am I being abused? Or it gets even worse. We're both right.

Is there an absolute standard that says, in this case, what abuse is? But we say truth doesn't matter.

[6 : 41] It's what feels right to you. Even though our opinions and feelings may conflict. You feel one way.

I feel another. But it doesn't matter. Because we can't know truth. You know, the Bible is brilliant. Isaiah is lamenting in Isaiah 59. He says, justice is turned back. Do I have that on the screen? Isaiah 59? No?

Yes? Okay, there we go. Justice is turned back. And righteousness stands far away. For truth has stumbled in the public squares. And uprightness cannot enter.

Truth is lacking. And he who departs from evil makes himself a prey. The Lord saw it. And it displeased him that there was no justice.

[7 : 43] You see, without truth, you cannot have justice. Because justice makes things right. And determines what is right by law.

But the truth of what is right, God says, is lacking. Even in Israel, this is nothing new. Even in Israel, a few couple thousand years, 3,000 years ago, they struggle with what is truth.

We don't know. And then the prophet says, if you stand for truth, you will become prey. What does that mean?

If you stand for truth, you will be hunted. And you will be attacked. People will tell you today, who are you to judge? No one's opinion is more valid than someone else's.

You truth people. You're fundamentalists. Like those terrorists.

[8 : 51] You are abusive for saying something is morally or spiritually true. Which means you are now dangerous in our culture. We must now tolerate.

Tolerance means agree with today. That's what tolerance means. You must agree. Every moral viewpoint is fine.

Even if they contradict. Tolerance, right? Tolerance. Tolerance. But when some people tell you you're not tolerant, what they don't understand is that they've just made a moral absolute statement. You can't have it both ways. The problem is, saints, is we can't help ourselves. We need moral and spiritual absolutes because we are made in the image of God.

And God is the truth. Again, Isaiah cries out, Isaiah chapter 5, Woe to those who call evil good and good evil.

[10 : 06] Who put darkness for light and light for darkness. Who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter. Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes and shrewd in their own sight.

This is confusing. The prophet said, what's wrong with the people of God? He's talking about the people of God. Not alone the culture in which they live and we live.

Here's the thing. Without absolute truth, we lose what is right and wrong. We can't tell the difference, he says. He says, woe to us.

That means sorrow and trouble is our lot if we can't tell right from wrong. He says, we are wise in our own eyes. What does that mean?

We make it up as we go along. Right. Right. Right. Right. It's all good. There are no moral, ethical, or social absolutes.

[11 : 05] What is your preference? Rules today. It's all my truth. Hmm. But when it comes to it, no one can live like that.

You know, the eggheads, the talking eggheads will tell us all these things. And then we, the common folk, we suck it up eventually because it trickles down to us. And from academia or from philosophy, wherever.

And we suck it up and we start talking about my truth and your truth and there's no absolute, more absolutes. We start talking this way and we try, but you can't live it. Why can't we live it? Here's an example. Get victimized. Let's, let one of these talking heads who say there are no moral absolutes and no ethical standards.

Let them get victimized. Let someone, let a drunk driver slam into one of their children's cars and put them in a hospital. And those eggheads will go, we want justice.

[12:07] That was wrong. Well, God forbid even somebody, you know your love gets murdered. Injustice, then a cry will always be, we want justice.

Behold it, there are no moral absolutes. Why is me taking his life wrong then? He was in my way. Why is me taking your stuff wrong?

I wanted it. How can you tell me that's wrong? There are no moral, it's all relative. It's my, my truth is I wanted your stuff.

I needed your stuff. My truth is I wanted to take your life because I was angry at you. That's my truth. Who are you to tell me? It doesn't work.

Justice and recompense is cried out for. But based on what? Public opinion.

[13:18] The public group think. Here's the problem. We agree this year that that's wrong. Ten years from now, we could disagree that that's wrong.

Now it's right. Not even ten years, maybe five years. The group could change its mind. And the loudest voice will a lot of times win.

There's no truth. It's slain. It's stumbled in the streets. It's slain in the streets. No more absolutes. Yet there's something inside of me.

You know it's true. Something inside of me that cries out murder, rape, theft, violence, driving drunk. It's wrong.

Something in me says it's wrong. What is it? What is it? Why? Could it be that in reality there is a God of truth?

[14:30] And in Christ and in God's word, Jesus says we will find absolute truth that we can hang our lives on. Now what is absolute truth?

I've got to define my term. What is absolute truth? A statement or belief that is universally true. It's unchanging and applies to all people in all places and in all times.

We can hang our lives on that. That's a rock under my feet. It doesn't move. No matter how much how you feel about it.

It's truth. It won't move. And Jesus says to Thomas, I am the truth. Actually, Jesus is the very definition of truth.

You see, our culture is like the Roman governor, Pilate, who later this evening will give Jesus over to crucifixion. Pilate asks Jesus if he was a king in chapter 18 of John.

[15:38] He asks him, are you a king? And Jesus says this in chapter 18 beginning in verse 37. You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born.

And for this purpose I have come into the world. To bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice.

And Pilate was honest. I appreciate his honesty here. I can almost see him shaking his head. What is truth?

What is truth? That's where we live now. What is truth? Christian philosopher Francis Schaeffer said this. We have both feet planted in midair.

Jesus says truth is not a thing. It's a person. It's me. I am the absolute truth. Notice he didn't say a truth. It's the truth. Truth meaning he is reality.

[16:46] Reality is the world or state of things as they actually exist. It's the way things really are. And Jesus says reality is found in me. The Old Testament actually combines the word, the way of the Lord, which we looked at last week, the way, with the truth of the Lord.

Psalms 86, 11. The psalmist says, teach me your way, O Lord, that I may walk in your truth. Unite my heart to fear your name.

Listen, a united heart is an undivided heart. And he wanted his heart single-minded, singly focused on the Lord, that he might fear him, that he might stand in awe of him, that he might reverence him, that God might be the ultimate reality in this life.

Pray for that. Because that means we will be focused on what is true and find it in God.

Truth. God's truth is found in Jesus. Reality. The way things really are. Therefore, truth is what God reveals about himself, about his creation, including us, and about his ways.

[18:14] For God is the creator of reality. Wow. That's deep to me. I don't know. I'm going to get God created reality. Wow. Isaiah 65, 16.

He who blesses himself in the land shall bless himself by the God of truth. Who who takes an open land shall swear by the God of truth. God is the God of truth. The God of reality. He determines what is real.

He's also the one true God. Meaning the only God who exists. And who carries us. Isaiah 46. As opposed to the idols of the nations who have to be carried because they cannot move and cannot answer.

God says this. Even to your old age, I am he. And to gray hairs, I will carry you. I have made and I will bear.

I will carry and will save. Remember this and stand firm. Recall it to mind, you transgressors.

Remember the formal things of old. For I am God and there is no other.

[19:16] I am God and there is none like me. Declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things yet done. Saying my counsel shall stand.

My truth would be one way of saying that. And I will accomplish all my purpose. You see the Jews would be. God was critiquing the Jews.

Well, I'm sorry. The Jews were being critiqued because they worshiped an invisible God. The nations kept saying to them, what? Your God is invisible.

And they would point to their God. There's our God. Statue of Dagon. Statue of Malik. Statue of, you know, Baal. There's our gods. We can see our gods. And you worship an invisible God.

How do you know that's even real? But God reminded the Jews. Oh my goodness. To not be put off by that. Because it is irrational to worship idols who can do nothing to help you.

[20:22] Psalm 115. Big one. Why should the nation say, where is your God? See? He's invisible. Where is your God? We don't see him. Our God, they would say, is in the heavens.

He does all that he pleases. Now, critique the nations. Their idols are silver and gold, the work of human hands. They have mouths, but do not speak. Eyes, but do not see.

They have ears, but do not hear. Noses, but do not smell. They have hands, but do not feel. Feet, but do not walk. And they do not make a sound in their throat.

Those who make them become like them. So do all who trust in them. This is why idols fail.

Idols are the works of our hands. They are pictured with faculties. But they really have none. They cannot do anything.

[21:21] They cannot keep any promises that they make to you, to help you. Idols are deaf and blind and mute, and you will become like the idols you worship.

Deaf, blind, and mute to the reality of God. Now, I know what you're thinking. We always think the same way. For the most part, we don't make idols of wood and stone or precious metals.

I was in Bali, and I saw Hindu gods that they did make of stone and mortar. And some of them were terrifying to look at. I have pictures terrifying to look at.

But we don't do that in general today. Today, our idols are a bit more imaginative. But they still fail. Money and what it buys.

Sex and sexuality. And all its thrills. And having it my way. Power. Ambition or advancement. People.

[22:26] Family. Entertainment. Listen. Any good thing can become an idol. What are idols? Anything. Anything. That we seek for ultimate identity, satisfaction, and hope, and safety.

That is not the living God. What are you looking to today? For your identity. Ultimate identity.

Your ultimate satisfaction. Your ultimate hope and your ultimate safety. What are you looking to for that? That, if it's not the living God. The truth.

Then it's an idol. And you are a worshiper of that thing. And Christians are not immune from that.

We are always dealing with the idols in our lives and culture.

We're susceptible. We grew. We were born in this stuff. And see, here's the thing. When you value an idol. Meaning you worship it.

[23:29] It gives you. You think it gives you. What you really want and need. What happens is. You become like it. We are like what we worship.

Our lives become saturated with the attributes of our idols. Example. If your false god is money. I'm taking an easy one. If your false god is money. You will spend much of your time.

Overworking. Dreaming and thinking. About ways to make it. Sometimes. Sometimes. If your god is money. You will be willing to cut legal corners.

And take other risks. To make it. You're never satisfied. Until you have more of it. And you may say. You're doing it for altruistic reasons. I'm doing it for you family. I'm doing it. They may have. I may have more to give to the church. And to other causes.

[24 : 29] We have a way of deluding ourselves. Because in reality. It's all about us. And our passion. And rubbing our idol. More.

You see it in young folk. When they get married. And they put themselves in deep debt. Why? Because they want to live like mom and dad. Right. See.

I came from that. And I got to have that. And then you. What happens. You put yourself in all kinds of trouble. And you have become an idolater. You see.

You feel like someone. When you have money. When you have the things that money can buy. You feel like someone. It makes you feel like you've made it. You can walk down the street.

In the old neighborhood. With your head up. But it's a trap. Like all idolatry. It's a trap. Jesus as Lord said it.

[25 : 30] In Luke 12.15. He said to them. Take care. Be on your guard. Listen. These are words of. You got to be watchful. Take care. Be on your guard.

Against all covetousness. For one's life. Does not consist. In the abundance. Of his possessions. More.

Means. I'm living. It could mean. You're dead. Many times.

In our culture. More means. Something's wrong. I'll just give you the address.

First Timothy. Six. Seventeen to nineteen. Write that down. Theologian. Tom Wright. N.T. Wright. Big quote. Long quote. I got to read it though. It's really good. His new book on spiritual.

[26 : 28] And religious. Finally. Somebody wrote a book. On this subject. Extracting insight. He gives. I think. From Psalm. One fifteen. Eight. Those who made them. Become like them.

So do all who trust them. He's commented on that passage. The devastating conclusion is this. Is. Idolatry. Brings. Dehumanization. Idolatry.

Means. Self-destruction. Because you become like. What you worship. We humans. Were made in the image. Of the creator. If we worship. The God. Revealed in Jesus Christ. We will be. Begin to resemble him.

But if we worship. Something else. Something in whose image. Humans are not made. It will start to show. It will show. It will most likely show. On your face.

Sooner or later. It will certainly show. In the way you treat yourself. In the way you treat. Other human beings. You are choosing. Decay and death. Because those things.

[27 : 23] Decay and die. That is what. Idolatry produces. The state of being. Ex-human. A creature. That was made to share. The glory of the creator.

But is consistently. Chosen to worship. Something else. And share. Its illusory. And transient. Splendor. That is perhaps. The meaning of hell. Some humans.

Fairly. Obviously. Arrive there. Sooner than others. Worship. Of things. Worship. Of creation. Is death. And the road. To hell. That is. Well.

Briefly. So what is Jesus. The truth about? He is the truth. The truth about what? Well. I have hinted at it already. But I will just. Toss out one for now. He is the truth about.

[28 : 21] First of all. God. Humanity. Creation. Morality. And religion. He is the truth about all that stuff. And the world that our Lord lived in was a world like our world. A world of many gods.

Many religions. Many philosophies. Jesus drops a bomb here. Do you understand? He dropped a cultural bomb.

He dropped a no. Don't say that. He dropped the mic. He. He. He exploded. That culture with this statement.

He's the truth. Not a truth. Not one among many. But the truth. Anything other than him. Might contain some truth. But it's mostly error.

Here's the truth about God. And Paul put it this way. Colossians 2. 1 to 4. For I want you to know how great a struggle I have for you and for those at Laodicea.

[29 : 20] And for all who have not seen me face to face. That their hearts may be encouraged. Being knit together in love. To reach all the riches of full assurance. Of understanding and the knowledge of God's mystery.

God's mystery. What is God's mystery? Which is Christ. In whom. In Christ. Are hidden. All the treasures. Of wisdom and knowledge.

And I say this. In order that no one may delude you. With plausible. Sounding. Arguments. In Jesus. In Jesus. The fullness of the deity dwells in bodily form. In Jesus. In Jesus. In Jesus is the great mystery. That which has been revealed.

Something that's been kept secret. And has now been revealed. What has been revealed? God has revealed himself. Jesus. Jesus.

[30 : 21] Jesus. In him we find the knowledge of God that we seek. In him is wisdom. Right living. In him is knowledge. Because the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge.

Jesus. Jesus. Is the truth about God. God. And if anyone wants to know God. You got to look at Jesus. You got to come to him.

Because only in him will you find a reality about God. God. Now. Is all this an academic. Or head knowledge.

Discussion. I hope you don't say that. Because if you do. You haven't been listening. In our world of pain. And sorrow.

Uncertainties. And death. What do we need to know? We need to know. That we know. The truth.

[31 : 27] When Jesus is leaving the disciples. Their world is being shattered. They're terrified. They're like. You can't. You're leaving. Where are you going? You can't leave us. And what does he do? He says to them.

I'm the truth. Because that's what we need to hear. When our world is falling apart. You need to know the truth.

That's found in Jesus. Because only in that truth. Will you find stability. When the world is. When everything is going. When your finances are tanking.

And you wonder. How are you going to pay your bills? When you're. When you are. When you have an illness. And you're wondering. If you're going to get over it. What do you want to know?

I hope you want to know the truth. That is that Jesus. Is the way. The truth.

[32 : 27] And the life. It's in Jesus. What you need. Humanity. Is found in Jesus. And once you have him.

You need to look nowhere else. Everything else. Falls to the ground. Idols. Idols.

They can't hear. They can't speak. You have to carry them. You have to mold and shape them. You have to earn them.

You have to hold on to them. Because they might walk away from you. Idols. But Jesus is the truth. Father. Thank you. Thank you for Jesus. You could have left us in darkness. You could have left.

That Roman culture in darkness. In their great philosophies.

[33 : 32] That they loved. And sometimes. Some of them were pretty good. But a lot of them were not. You could have left them in that dark. You could have left the Jews. Trapped in darkness.

Thinking that.

They could earn their way to heaven. You could have left the world. You could leave America. Right now. Trapped. In this paganism. In which we live. You could leave us trapped.

But Lord. Thank you. That you haven't done that. You've sent your son. Who is the way. The truth. And the life. And Lord. Let that truth. Shine in our hearts now. Lord.

Jesus. Help us to. Help us to come to you. For truth. So that we don't believe the lies. Of this culture. So that we live no lies.

And we speak no lies. And we trust in no lies. Thank you that we have the truth. In Jesus name.

[34 : 27] Amen.