



Sermon Discussion Questions
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Series: Fake News

Week 3: There are Many Truths!

1. ICE BREAKER: Pastor Dale referenced the movie *A Few Good Men* and the well-known quote that most people know: "You can't handle the truth!" To start your group time off today, share one of your favorite movies.
2. Read our Scripture for this week, John 4:1-26:

¹Now Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that he was gaining and baptizing more disciples than John—²although in fact it was not Jesus who baptized, but his disciples. ³So he left Judea and went back once more to Galilee.

⁴Now he had to go through Samaria. ⁵So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph. ⁶Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about noon.

⁷When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, "Will you give me a drink?" ⁸(His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.) ⁹The Samaritan

woman said to him, "You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?" (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.)

¹⁰Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water."

¹¹"Sir," the woman said, "you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water?" ¹²Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his livestock?"

¹³Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, ¹⁴but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

¹⁵The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water so that I won't get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water." ¹⁶He told her, "Go, call your husband and come back."

¹⁷"I have no husband," she replied.

Jesus said to her, "You are right when you say you have no husband. ¹⁸The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true."

¹⁹"Sir," the woman said, "I can see that you are a prophet. ²⁰Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem."

²¹"Woman," Jesus replied, "believe me, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. ²²You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. ²³Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. ²⁴God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth."

²⁵The woman said, "I know that Messiah" (called Christ) "is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us."

²⁶Then Jesus declared, "I, the one speaking to you—I am he."

This is probably a familiar story to you. What are you noticing anew as you read it again today? Why was it so controversial that Jesus was speaking to the woman at the well? What do you think the woman was thinking?

3. So far in this series, we've talked about the idea that although some claim there is no absolute truth, no one actually lives this way. We also read Jesus' words in John 8:32, *"Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."*

What are your thoughts on our discussion about truth and how truth is addressed in our world? Have you seen any connections to your everyday life? If so, what? What do you feel like God is teaching you so far?

4. We began today's message by learning that truth will always ask something of us. If there is truth (and we believe that there is), it requires something of us.

What does it mean that truth asks or requires something of us? If we believe that Jesus is the truth, what does that mean for the way that we live? What other kinds of truths in our lives require something from us?

5. Pastor Dale presented this "Working Theory":
 - 1) If there is a "truth" we can know that moves us to freedom,
 - 2) And if this truth is found in our faith,
 - 3) Then what we believe about faith and how we practice faith is really important...singularly important, really.

Respond to this working theory. Do you agree or disagree, and why? Talk about the difference between what we believe about our faith and how we practice our faith. What implications does this theory have on our lives?

6. Dallas Willard wrote, "Spirituality (the practice of faith) wrongly understood or pursued is one of the major sources of human misery and rebellion against God."

React to this quote. Do you believe this to be true? Why or why not? Give a personal example, if you have one, of a time you feel that you wrongly understood or pursued spirituality.

For the next 2 questions, reread John 4:12, *"Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his livestock?"* and John 4:20, *"Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem."*

7. In these verses, the woman at the well references important places in her faith. She saw her current faith as attached to a certain place.

Talk about a geographic place that is important to your faith. Where did your faith first start or become real to you? How has your faith grown beyond that place?

8. In addition, in the same verses, the woman talked about her faith in relation to a space (in time), and specifically in the past tense. Many of us never move beyond the “residue of remembered religion” and “inherited faith.”

Where do you notice past tense in John 4:12 and 4:20? Define what you consider to be the residue of remembered religion and inherited faith. Do you see any of this in your own life currently, or have you ever navigated this? What can we do to make sure that our faith is alive and present?

9. Reread John 4:21-24. Jesus tells the woman that neither the Samaritans nor the Jews have a complete monopoly on the truth. Rather, there is a third way that we will worship, “in the Spirit and in truth.”

What do you think it means to worship “in the Spirit and in the truth”? Sometimes, those outside of the church may lean more towards ‘spirit,’ while those inside of the church lean more towards ‘truth.’ Do you have a natural leaning? Which way and why? How can we be shaped into true worshipers, full of both Spirit and truth?

10. PRACTICE: At the beginning of the message, Dale underscored an important question for us all to think about:

Is the thing we think is bringing us freedom, actually setting us free?

Take a few quiet moments as a group, and spend time in prayer. Ask God:

- Where am I seeking freedom?
- How can I be set free?

Listen to the Holy Spirit, journal as you listen, and share what you heard with your group.