

# (Radical Jesus) 9 Radical Truth

by Glenn Meldrum

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*The truth is under attack in a spiritual war between God and Satan, and the church must love the truth to avoid deception and perpetuate the rebellion.*

**Duration:** 26:11

**Scripture:** Jeremiah 6:14

**Topics:** "Radical"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of recognizing and obeying the truth. He refers to Isaiah 59:14-15, where it is stated that justice, righteousness, and truth have been compromised in society. The consequence of rejecting truth is highlighted, as those who depart from evil become targets. The preacher also uses the analogy of the deformed man to illustrate how people often resist and even hate the truth because it obligates them to change their sinful ways. Ultimately, the sermon calls for repentance and obedience to God's moral and spiritual laws.

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## Transcript

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Last week in our study on the Radical Jesus, we began looking at the Radical Truth. No one likes being lied to. Everyone wants to be told the truth.

Even the worst of liars hate being lied to. In spite of this general principle, most people do not want to know the truth about God and eternity. They would rather believe lies about eternal realities rather than believe the truth and be changed.

Some of the opening thoughts of last week's lesson focused on how the truth does not change and in the end will always be victorious. From there we moved on to see that the truth became human and had a name. Of course, you and I know who I'm talking about and that is Jesus.

Jesus is the author of all truth and is himself the truth. So if we want to know that truth, we must look at Jesus and learn what he taught. Finally, we looked at how true followers of Jesus will always be lovers of

truth.

This week we will examine the fact that the truth is under attack. All of humanity is part of a spiritual war that is raging on this planet right now. Everybody is part of this war, whether we know it or not and whether we like it or not.

All of humanity has chosen sides in this war because it is impossible to be neutral in this fight. There are only two sides to this confrontation, gods and the rebellious opposition that is an anarchy against the only and rightful king, Jesus. There are only two sides to this confrontation, gods and the rebellious opposition that is an anarchy against Jesus, the only rightful and true king.

To understand this spiritual war, we must go back in time to a point that is not known and even to a place that is outside of our world. What I am talking about has to do with a real historical event because we cannot name the year or even the location of the outbreak of this war does not mean it did not happen. All we have to do is take an honest look at the world we live in and see the signs of this war raging all around us.

Not just that, we can take confidence that the event really happened because of the credibility of the eyewitness. In Luke chapter 10, we find the account where Jesus sent out 72 of his disciples to preach the good news, heal the sick and cast out devils. We are told in verse 17, the 72 returned with joy and said, Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name.

Jesus replied with an astounding statement, I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. Jesus was not saying that he had a dream or vision of the event, but that he was an eyewitness of the first crime ever committed, which was an attempted coup d'etat against almighty God. The overthrow of the kingdom of God was an absolute failure because it is impossible to overthrow a being that is all-powerful.

It was Jesus himself who hurled Satan out of heaven with such force, it was like a bolt of lightning. Maybe the first crack of lightning was actually Satan's head smacking the earth at the speed of light. Lucifer's great rebellion, along with many angels, was the first recorded act of rebellion.

From that faithful event, Satan has continued his terrorist rebellion against God by focusing his attack upon mankind. Satan's hatred of God is directed at those that were made in God's image. The statement that Jesus made is also just one of many times that he declared his divinity.

In this case, Jesus asserts his divinity by speaking of his pre-existence before he became human. Reincarnation is a lie, it has never happened and never will happen. Jesus was not reincarnated, he has always been.

There has never been nor will there ever be another human that has pre-existence other than Jesus and that is because he is the eternal God. Satan's rebellion did not end with his being hurled out of heaven, he perpetuates his rebellion here on earth. In the book of Genesis, we are only given a little snippet of the historical event of Satan's temptation of Eve and her yielding to that temptation and thus committing the first act of sin for a human being.

Eve then tempted her husband Adam and when he yielded to the temptation, the judgment fell. Satan's desire was to take the rebellion he started and spread it to the only creatures that God created in his own image. He wants to take that which God created in his image and mutate them into his own hellish image of anarchy, rebellion and God-hatred.

Unfortunately, he has been very successful in compelling people to fight on the side of hell. It is also important to note that we are not at the end of the story. The war that Satan started against God still rages today.

When hell in the world rises up against true followers of Jesus, we need to recognize what it is and where it comes from. We know that the world can only act like the world and the hordes of hell can only act in the way that is keeping with their evil characters. Some of the deadliest attacks against Christ's kingdom have come through lukewarm and apostate Christians.

Such people pervert the word of God in a vain attempt at justifying their sinful practices and to condone the evil practices of others. Just look at how the apostate church supports and promotes homosexual marriage. They purposefully reject the plain teaching of scripture that unequivocally condemns such sinful practices.

The rebellion Satan started has advanced to renegade religious leaders and their followers. It is the traitorous acts of the apostate church that helps fuel the militant homosexual movement today. Through the apostate church's compromise, they have given false legitimacy to this evil.

By rejecting the truth, the apostate church has advanced the lies of hell which will bring further pain and suffering to multitudes of people. Jesus and the rest of the New Testament authors purposely and ardently warned us that in the last days there would be false prophets and teachers that would deceive many. How could this happen? Because a vast portion of the church would cease to love the truth.

It did not take long after the founding of the church before liars and deceivers entered the church causing great havoc. Satan could not stop the church from coming into existence, but he could slow the growth of the church down by stripping her of power through false doctrines and immorality. Take, for instance, the greedy preachers who get rich off of the ignorant and gullible.

They manipulate people for their own selfish evil motives. They use enough truth to make people think that they are preachers of righteousness, but they incorporate enough error to deceive the people. Here is a simple fact.

If the church really loved the truth, then these greedy charlatans would not be prospering today. It is the fault of the church that we have a problem with false prophets and teachers. The only reason such frauds get away with their evil practices is due to professing Christians that do not love truth, but want their ears tickled through tantalizing lies.

The error these swindlers preach feed the fleshly desires of people, so they listen to the lies and even give the liars their money. What a sad thing that people would pay to be lied to. Another expression of false prophets is seen in much of the motivational pop teaching of the day.

These fashionable false prophets proclaim nothing but peace, peace, when God is urgently calling for repentance. The Lord condemns such preachers through the prophet Jeremiah. In chapter 6 we read, From the least to the greatest, all are greedy for gain.

Prophets and priests alike all practice deceit. They dress the wound of my people as though it were not serious. Peace, peace, they say, when there is no peace.

Are they ashamed of their loathsome conduct? No, they have no shame at all. They do not even know how to blush. So they will fall among the fallen.

They will be brought down when I punish them, says the Lord. That's a scary prophecy against preachers and false teachers today. The spirit and message of the false prophets and preachers of Jeremiah's day is still present today.

The great danger of modern false prophets and teachers is that they cloak their error in New Testament language. These motivational speakers have rejected the preaching of the cross that brings people to true saving grace through the gift of repentance and the life-changing power of grace. They offer a message of cheap grace that sounds good.

But it is actually worthless and powerless to transform lives for the glory of God. The pop message of cheap grace keeps people from the message of true grace that brings people to repentance. Jeremiah said it this way in chapter 8 verses 11 and 12.

They dress the wound of my people as though it were not serious. Peace, peace, they say, when there is no peace. Are they ashamed of their loathsome conduct? No, they have no shame at all.

They do not even know how to blush. So they will fall among the fallen. They will be brought down when they are punished, says the Lord.

This is a similar message to that which I just read in chapter 6. In both cases, the Lord rebukes the false prophets, priests, and teachers because they were so brazen in their sin and deception that they could no longer blush. The lies these leaders preach dresses the wound of the people as if their spiritual maladies were not serious. God does not want to remodel our sinful nature.

He wants to crucify it because only after death can there be resurrection life. To pretend that the church only needs a small band-aid on a small boo-boo when she is really eaten up with spiritual cancer is insane. The church is not in need of a false teaching of peace, peace that maintains a status quo of a backslidden people.

This is a time when only the most loving message will do. Jesus preached this loving message as did John the Baptist and Peter, Paul, James, and John and Jude. What is that message? Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near.

All the false prophets and teachers that propagate motivational messages of peace, peace in all of its various forms would not fill the puppets of this land if people were lovers of truth. The lies and rebellion that Satan has advanced for years, that is cloaked in religious jargon has found a welcome place in a vast number of churches in this land only because the people have rejected the truth. Jesus said it powerfully in John chapter 3, verses 19 through 21.

This is the verdict. Light has come into the world, but men love darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed.

But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God. When people believe religious lies, when they think that they are right with God when they are not, then they only want messages that will soothe their conscience and justify their

compromise. Another extremely deceptive heresy of our time claims that for people to receive a guaranteed place in heaven all they have to do is accept Jesus.

This sounds good and noble. It has a ring that echoes of compassion and it can be preached in a way that seems very loving. But a sweet sounding lie delivered with sentimental appeals is still a lie.

Whenever preachers and church folk promote a version of Christianity that does not require people to give up everything to follow Jesus, then they are actually perpetuating lies. How can we get around the radical truths Jesus preached such as in Luke 14 33? In the same way, any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple. This is a non-negotiable criterion of discipleship where Jesus clearly defined true discipleship as giving up everything.

And if we will not give up everything to follow him, he plainly declared that we cannot be his disciple. The message that Jesus taught here is very clear and there is no way we can give another meaning to it if we want to be faithful to the text. What is the simple meaning of his statement that he will never accept half-hearted devotion? This is nothing new according to sound Bible doctrine since there is no place in Scripture where half-hearted devotion is acceptable to God.

If his greatest commandment is to love the Lord with all of our heart, mind, soul, and strength, then the greatest sin is not to love him with all of our heart, mind, soul, and strength. God has never allowed room for compromise. Never! The pop teaching on grace today is not the grace revealed in Scripture, so it is not the grace of God.

Grace that allows us to practice sin is not God's grace, but a counterfeit grace, a damnable grace, which is a grace that comes from hell, not from heaven. God's grace is always victorious. It delivers people from sin and will never allow them to practice sin.

Such perversion of biblical standards has permeated the vast spectrum of churches, even influencing those that claim to believe in the inerrancy of Scripture. This deception is like rat poison, 99.97% pure grain, but it's the 0.3% that kills. Let me share one example of what I'm talking about.

After preaching a Sunday morning service at a New England church, a deacon handed me a note and asked me to respond to it through email. It was written by a young woman who was very angry over the message I had just preached because I had confronted the horrendous evil of fornication that is engulfing the American church today. She attempted to justify her own promiscuity by using arguments that actually came out of the pagan belief of moral relativism.

In this letter, she alluded to Scripture and grossly distorted the biblical truths of grace. What makes this event even more tragic was the fact that this woman was training to be a youth pastor. She was attending a well-known two-year discipleship program that normally has a good reputation.

The sin that she practiced will be incorporated into a perverted false religion that she will then teach to the youth. She will not only be guilty of her own rebellion against God, but of propagating lies and evil to young people. That's a very dangerous thing to do.

My wife responded to the letter by emailing her a very compassionate response that was founded upon the truth of Scripture. We never heard back from her. I do not understand how people can practice sexual sin in all of its deviant form and think themselves right with God after reading a verse like 1 Corinthians 6, 9-10.

Do you not know the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor male prostitutes, nor homosexual offenders, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor slanderers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. That's pretty clear preaching right there.

Or what about 1 John 3, 6? No one who lives in Him keeps on sinning. No one who continues a sin has either seen Him or known Him. Whenever people forsake the radical truth of Scripture, they will believe lies of one sort or another.

Whenever people believe lies, they will then advocate those lies through both word, deed, and life. At this point, they become messengers of hell and enemies of Christ, whether or not they claim to be Christian. They are advancing the war of rebellion first started by Satan.

Almost 3,000 years ago, the Lord spoke to Israel through the prophet Isaiah, boldly confronting their sin and rebellion. The same message the present-day church desperately needs to hear, and it is found in the 59th chapter of Isaiah. Verses 14 and 15 read, Justice is turned back, and righteousness stands afar off, for truth has fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter.

So truth fails, and he who departs from evil makes himself a prey. The reason the people forsook the truth is because they had forsaken God, who was to be their first or principal love. This comes out very clearly in verses 12 and 13.

For our offenses are many in your sight, and our sins testify against us. Our offenses are rebellion and treachery against the Lord, turning our backs on our God, fomenting oppression and revolt, uttering lies our hearts have conceived. The Lord pronounced the worst of all judgments upon Israel for their gross and evil backsliding.

This is stated in verse 2. Your iniquities have separated you from your God. Your sins have hidden his face from you. Much of the American church is suffering under the same judgment for the same crimes, but they do not comprehend it.

They have forsaken the truth like Israel of old, and like Israel of old, they have learned how to do church without God. They have mingled the ways of the world into their religion, just like Israel did. They thought that they were right with God because they practiced the prescribed rituals, and people do the same thing today.

Churches can have song services, yet never worship God. They can hear messages while never hearing a sermon that has been preached under the anointing and power of the Spirit. They can have programs while never doing genuine ministry.

People can equate success according to the number of people that attend the church or the programs they offer. But such a measurement of success speaks nothing about whether the truth is preached and people are being saved and disciplined. Why is so much of the American church in such a despicable condition? Isaiah told us, because truth has fallen in the streets.

For truth to fall in the streets of our nation, it first has to fall at the altars and aisles of our churches. And before the truth could fall in our churches, it had to first fall in our homes. What is the idea of the truth falling in our streets, churches, and homes? It means that people are forsaking truth for lies.

They are throwing the truth out so they can pursue and practice sin. We cannot live out the truth and practice sin. It's just that plain and simple.

Why? Because we are told by Jesus that we cannot serve two masters. How will we ever be imitators of the radical Jesus if we will not embrace all of the teachings of Scripture? People that think they have the right and ability to pick and choose what truths they want to believe are grossly deceived. Are they smarter than God? Do we know better than Him what is right and wrong? To pick and choose what we will believe out of the Bible is to continue the rebellion Satan started.

At the core of his rebellion was a desire to be worshipped as God, to have the divine right to determine what is true and lie, what is moral and immoral. Every time people forsake the truth of God's Word and the moral and spiritual standard He established through His divine right as God, we play the part of God and claim we have the right to do what only God has the right to do. This is a repeat of the rebellion Satan began, and he is perpetuating in the hearts of rebellious people today.

To pick and to choose what we want to believe is comparable to telling Jesus that we like some of Him but not all of Him, that we reject those portions of His person that make us uncomfortable so we can cling to those attributes that make us happy. That is not Christianity but idolatry. It is creating a false god in our own image.

This is exactly what Israel of old did as recorded in 2 Kings 17, verse 33. They worshipped the Lord, but they also served their own gods in accordance with the customs of the nations from which they had been brought. For the people to worship other gods while claiming to worship the Lord tells us that they rejected whole portions of God's Word that they did not like and only served the Lord in pretense so they could receive His blessings.

But they loved the worship of idols because it sanctioned their practice of sin. The truth does more than just expose sin and evil in our lives. It obligates us to conform to its rules and principles.

Most people do not consciously realize that the truth obligates them. Yet we cannot escape from this dimension of the truth. On an everyday basis, people submit to truth as it relates to the natural world, such as the law of gravity, aerodynamics, or the workings of electricity.

For the most part, we take many of these truths or laws for granted because we just live them out from day to day. But when it comes to the moral law that God has written on the hearts of all people, we may feel an obligation to obey them, even if we do not understand what is going on. Deep inside, we know that murder, stealing, and sexual sins are wrong.

When we rebel against the obligation that truth places upon us, we do violence to our conscience. Under such circumstances, the only way we can cope with those acts of rebellion that do violence to our conscience is to either repent or harden our heart, which then silences the voice of truth so that we can practice sin. There are only two choices when it comes to how we respond to truth.

Either we obey it or rebel against it. The rebel may try to fight against the law of gravity by jumping off a high cliff, but when he hits the ground, it will be obvious who was right and who was wrong. Unless you submit to other laws that God established, when you jump off a cliff you will die, such as jumping off while wearing a parachute.

When it comes to the moral and spiritual truths that have also been established by God, people think that they can break them without any real lasting consequence. There are vast numbers of people that foolishly think that since they embrace those portions of Scripture that make them happy, they must be right with God. But just like the man that jumps off a high cliff without a parachute will find very quickly that to defy God's law always has consequences, so it will happen just as assuredly when people defy God's moral and spiritual laws.

The moment of reckoning may be different for the man that defies the law of gravity to the one that defies God's moral laws. The one will happen at the moment of contact with earth, the other at some later date. The delay of the consequence does not mean that the consequence will not come.

What will we do when the Word confronts the sin and compromise of our lives? At that moment we are obligated to obey God's moral and spiritual laws. God's love is revealed to us through such commands that call us to repent when we sin and to change our ways. Here is the reality about the truth we fallen rebellious humans are prone to resist and even hate.

Truth obligates us to conform to its demands, but we do not want to submit because we love our sins. So we reject the truth. We hate the truth.

Let me take you back to the parable of the deformed man that I gave some weeks ago. The village people that represent the human race did not have a clear point of reference of what it meant to be normal until the deformed man was born. Remember the deformed man is actually the perfect and faultless Jesus that came into this world to seek and to save what was lost.

Since all that the village people knew about life and the reason for being was perverted and their twisted concept of existence had been passed down for generations past counting, they could not recognize that the deformed man was normal and that they were the deformed ones. When the reality of who they were broke into their lives, they rejected the truth because it caused them spiritual, emotional, and intellectual trauma. We do not have a problem practicing sin until it afflicts upon us the consequences that sin always produced sooner or later.

It is just a simple fact that if the consequences of our sin is not severe enough, then we will still practice the sin even when it is ruining our lives. The perfect example of this is the alcoholic or drug addict. They will practice their sin until it burns them bad enough so that they will want to change.

When the village people finally came to realize the truth that had always been there, they refused to recognize the truth and choose a cling to lies, traditions, and superstitions that characterized their community for generations. We are no different from the deformed village people because we are the village people. Whether we like it or not, sin will always be evil no matter what the church or secular culture assert.

It is fresh in our minds the horrendous decision the Supreme Court made where they rebelled against God and the Constitution by legislating from the bench. This has become a terrible problem in our government. Through their evil act, they legalized homosexual marriage and legitimized what God has unequivocally condemned.

But that has not changed God's moral law that declares that those who practice such sins will not inherit the kingdom of God. And the fornication that is practiced more and more in the church where people live

together outside of matrimony is still a damnable sin no matter what a preacher says contrary to the word or what he fails to say that allows people to practice a sin. Truth is the master that commands us, not a slave subject to opinions or social engineering.

Through the stupidity of wickedness, here I am using one of Solomon's phrases, we think ourselves wiser, stronger, and more righteous than God. Through the stupidity of wickedness, we rebel against God's laws thinking that we know what is better for ourselves than the rest of humanity. Sin only makes us stupider, and this is what happened to Adam and Eve when they rebelled against God.

How can we be so foolish as to think that the same lies Satan used on Eve will produce different results than what Adam and Eve experienced? The war that Satan started against God is still raging today, and he has drawn mankind into that fight. Central to this war is truth, defended by God and his holy people and fought against by the hordes of hell and the children of this world that have embraced Satan's lies. We must understand that the truth is not our property.

It belongs to another. It belongs to God alone who is the author of truth. The Lord entrusted us with the truth and demands that we rightly invest it in our lives and to those that surround us.

There are no ifs, ands, or buts about it. We will give an account to him who owns the truth and who is the truth. The judgment that every person will face will be based upon absolute truth.

For this reason, we must be careful not to diminish or alter the truth in any way. Where we spend eternity directly depends on whether or not we obey the radical truth that Jesus has given us.

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