

True or False

by John McGregor

The sermon emphasizes the importance of knowing God and being in a right relationship with Him, and encourages listeners to confess their sins and ask for forgiveness.

Duration: 29:22

Scripture: Judges 16:17, 1 John 1:6

Topics: "Truth"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher reflects on a past experience of watching a video of himself preaching in 1990. He recalls a man named Henry Donaldson who attended the meetings but was later revealed to not know the Lord. The preacher emphasizes the importance of truth and warns against lying about our fellowship with God. He also discusses the significance of communion as a place of forgiveness, truth, and cleansing for believers. The sermon concludes with a call to prayer for those who may not know Jesus and a reminder to seek forgiveness and a new life in Him.

Transcript

Somebody in the church here told me a while back Growing older is necessary, but growing up is optional. So I've chosen to rest on that statement and Not grew up. We want to spend a few moments together just in the Word of God before we celebrate communion or the Lord's table together and It's the Lord's table Anyone who knows the Lord Jesus as Savior is most welcome to participate at the table I want to read the first chapter of 1st John a little book toward the end of our Bible just 10 verses in the chapter and We want to think upon a part of it primarily this morning Just in preparing ourselves for meeting the Lord in celebration 1st John chapter 1 Says that which was from the beginning which we have heard which we have seen with our eyes Which we looked upon and have touched with our hands concerning the Word of Life the life was made manifest and we have seen it and testified to it and Proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was made manifest to us That which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you So that you too may have fellowship with us and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ We are writing these things So that our joy may be complete This is the message.

We have heard from him and proclaim to you that God is light and in him is no darkness at all If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness we lie And do not practice the truth But if we walk in the light as he is in the light We have fellowship with one another and the blood of Jesus his son cleanses

us from all sin if We say we have no sin we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us if we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness If we say we have not sinned we make him a liar and his word is not in us father this is indeed your word and We're so grateful for it because it is a guide for life And it is so much more and so this morning as we come to your word We're thankful for its record and for its truth Pray that you would speak to our hearts and strengthen us And as we come then to the table may it indeed be done in remembrance of Jesus of his life his death his resurrection Because it is in Jesus name that we ask it Amen, so as we Think about this short chapter.

Let me just begin by saying this Sometimes people say to me. I don't know if there is a God or not and I don't know that it really matters and So I'd title this Brad'll be shocked because I never put a title on the message, but here it is true and false Let me say this if there is a God Nothing could be of greater importance than to know him and to be in a right relationship with him Because we could have all things in this world and end up in eternity with absolutely nothing And so as you read these verses with me this morning You see the Apostle John who was the youngest of those men who walked with Jesus is in a situation as he writes He says the things that I have known and seen and heard and I know that they're true I share them with you So that you can have fellowship with God And you know, it's a wonderful thing to be in fellowship with God That is to say to know that there's nothing between you and him and that you are forgiven and free because of what Jesus did on the cross for you and for me and As we look in this text we see he's really talking a great deal about what is true and And Oftentimes, you know, we don't really want to accept the fact that Jesus died for me It's okay if he died for the whole world, but I'm not so bad or I'm not so good and I don't want to personalize that truth You know when big fella six-foot-four but like Michael here Tom Johnston would talk to me about Jesus I ran away from it as much as I could because I didn't want to face the reality that what he was saying is actually true that there is a God and he wants to be in your life and in mine and to be known as Savior and to be followed as Lord And as you look at these few verses just this morning for a short time with me I want you just to think about this Are you in fellowship? with God Do you know? his salvation Are you free from those things that would separate you from God?

You see my Bible teaches me that there is only one answer for guilt and Guilt makes us do all kinds of foolish things It drives us to violence and it Causes all sorts of things in our lives and if only we could get rid of it and start all over again And that's exactly what the gospel of the Lord.

Jesus is a bind That's why John says I share this with you so that our joy might be complete Because when someone trusts in Christ the joy of the Lord becomes their strength and they know there's nothing anymore between them and The one who is the creator and sustainer of all things So as I think about this true or false thing, I wanted just for a few moments this morning to get us to think about the second half of this first chapter and It's talking to those who have Trusted Christ and who have fellowship with him and did you ever ask yourself? Why did Jesus? give us communion and You know, he did I've been preaching from the gospel of Luke and in Luke 22 There's the inauguration of the communion service Jesus is Conducting a time with his disciples called the Passover feast But you know, he ends the feast and he institutes or inaugurates this Service that we call communion Why would I say that? Because in Luke 22 17, it says Jesus took the cup and he gave it to them and said Share this among you. That's a McGregor paraphrase. You can check it out in your own version and then just three verses later It says After this, he took the cup and you see the first cup that he offers in Luke 22 is the end of the Passover There's no longer any need for it because the real Passover lamb The Lord Jesus Christ is about to allow people to nail him to a cross so that forgiveness and the dealing with human guilt can be Finalized and that's why

you'll find his last words on that cross.

So enlightening it is finished and so when we say salvation is a free gift we're saying it because Jesus did everything that was necessary to pay the price for our sin and our guilt and to give us true and wonderful forgiveness Just in case you were going to sleep on me He gave us this service because he knows us. Oh so well and He knows we live in these human bodies and he knows that we have our moments Did anybody live this past week perfectly? Jeremy just give me that No, not one of us. That's why Jesus gave to us this table Knowing our nature and our need That in our nature we would fail we would make mistakes and our need is for forgiveness because we hurt each other and we hurt ourselves and we Need a way to deal with those things and that's exactly what he's given to us here so very quickly Let me just outline a few things here from verses 6 through 10 You see knowing our nature and our need If you look at verse 6 it says if we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness We lie and do not practice the truth Remember my title? truth true or false And here's something that we can do We can lie Ever done that? Behold an Israelite indeed in whom there is no guile Yeah, you know the most common lie, don't you the checks in the mail? But in verse 6 it tells us we can lie about God When we say that we have fellowship that we're walking with him and we're actually not then That's a lie and you'll find great biblical examples Samson walked with God served God, but when he disobeyed God and You remember the incident his hair was cut off his strength was gone It says Samson got up as at other times and he was gonna clean house, but he had no strength left What was it? It was the lie that I'm really walking with God but God had stepped back hadn't he? Samson had Taken that step of disobedience and there was no strong fellowship there.

And I think about Simon the magician in Acts chapter 8. He had professed. Yes I know Jesus and let me be baptized but When he says to Peter listen, I got a few bucks here somewhere. Give me the gift of the Holy Spirit Peter says to him your money perished with you.

You thought you could buy the gift of God Well, that's pretty strong talk, isn't it? But you see what was happening is he was living a lie He was saying well, I've gone through the motions. Therefore Everything must be okay But the scriptures are so clear going through the motions Don't do anything it's when God changes the heart That we know we are saved and in fellowship with him It's when God changes the heart that we know I can't be mad at that person anymore I can't be desiring my own way anymore. I Got to give this up and make this right and Be right with God first of all King Saul would be another illustration of it.

You remember him? He did almost what God said but almost is not quite and Probably my favorites in this whole area of how we can lie about God are some guys in the Acts of the Apostles called the sons of Sceva and They're a great family unit They're working for God and they're saying in the name of Jesus whom Paul preaches we command you evil spirits to come out and The person that they are trying to work at Loses it jumps on them beats them up rips off their clothes and they go home naked and wounded Wouldn't you think that a victory? But I missed a little piece of the story didn't I? The demonic spirit within them that person said Jesus I know and Paul I know But who are you you see things have to be right between us and God There has to be that peace that forgiveness that cleansing Otherwise, we're gonna squabble with one another and we're gonna squabble with life in general and nothing will ever be right It's about Daily worship and nearness and the presence of God ruling in our hearts and lives It's about just walking with God Moment by moment. So can I ask in my little Irish way this morning is Jesus real in your heart. I Love what an old preacher used to ask people he would say what has Jesus done for you? And you know, the answer is not Just that he died on the cross, but that he cleansed me and he's changed me and he is changing me So it is possible as verse 6 says that we can lie about God let's go to Just read

through verse 7 and verse 8 if we walk in the light as he is in the light We have fellowship with one another and the blood of Jesus his son cleanses us from all sin You see how important it is just to walk with God And to walk with him day by day and moment by moment because in that there is Cleansing from all sin You mean those hidden lies yeah You mean those hidden things that nobody knows about he will cleanse.

Yeah You mean there is an answer for the way that I feel about myself. Yeah, he cleanses Indeed, that's what that table was set up to remind us of that His body is given as a sacrifice in your place and mine and his blood is shed so that we might be cleansed and free and To be able to walk in that sense of freedom verse 8 Says if we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us So the second thing about true or false is We can lie to ourselves Ever done that when we say there is no sin. It says the truth is not in us and deceit of deceiving self is one of those worst things to deal with so hard to deal with I was Preaching many years ago.

And in fact, I was reminded of it a couple of nights ago because I I have some VHS videos that got a bit damp in our wet summer and spring and whatever and Before I threw them out. I checked what would run and what wouldn't and I was watching this younger version of McGregor preaching in 1990 in Pennsylvania in a tent and It reminded me of a man who was there. He was an usher Henry Donaldson He was there every day every night at these meetings and I said to his pastor.

He he's so faithful And he said yeah, but he doesn't know the Lord I went to his house and had lunch with that man and Saw he had citations from the US Army for his service in the Second World War And as I talked to him about it, he cannot just clammed up as often veterans do they don't want to talk about those incidents from the past and eventually I asked him about an incident that was cited on the citation and I said to him Henry Did you liberate the camp at Butch and Walt?

Yeah, I'm a little bit of a history buff So I said Henry How many guys survived the action out of your unit? He said Just me You know Henry believed he couldn't come to Christ Because he carried the guilt of walking away when others didn't And he all those years in between had lied to himself That Jesus would save anybody but not him and in those wonderful moments of sharing Jesus with him, I Just said to him You can't be more righteous than God and he says in verse 9 that if you come and confess your sin He'll forgive it And you know that night Henry walked to the altar in the middle of that meeting and The choir quit singing and the people just stood and kind of Because he'd always said I'm glad it's for those others, but it's not for me But it is for you We can lie to ourselves and we we can do that in Durban in South Africa in August, I shared a message with a group of 27 or 28 Anglican clergy and One of the clergy came to me afterwards and said you were talking just about me.

I'm just going through the motions see This table is about a real Savior Who answers real needs? we can say You know that it doesn't matter if we keep our anger or lust or lies or rebellion or envy or Selfish ambition or drunkenness or any of those things? But it does he came to cleanse he came to make that new beginning possible he came to save and as he saves he also Draws us into that lovely fellowship with himself Verse 10 Says if we say we have not sinned we make him a liar and his word is not in us So we can lie about God and we can lie to ourselves But we can also call God a liar Imagine doing that And yet it happens And when we fail to live for God when we live in defeat It's like we're saying God is not enough But Jesus is enough that's the whole point And we can spend so much energy looking and looking and ah if I can just get this And it comes out just like dry dust that falls through our hands and every dream and every longing that we had just evaporates But all my friends What a marvelous thing it is to be able to get up in the morning and say Lord Let me put my hand in your hand today Where are we going today Jesus?

What is it that you want to do in me? In this day Wow, there's a last thing I want to mention before we meet at the table We can just confess Who we are and what we are Don't you love verse 9 if we confess our sins He's faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all of it That's another what kind of moment when you know, there's nothing that the Lord can't deal with But that every part of it He's willing to cleanse and to deal with he will forgive He's faithful to do that he will cleanse he will give us all that we need in him you say yeah, but that's okay for those religious people and and you know, it's okay for preachers and elders and people who are kind of special, you know, but but nobody knows about my circumstances and No, I love this little thing. I'll just read it to you It's kind of a snapshot picture of the disciples and if you read Luke 22 You'll see that right after the Lord has given them the Lord's Supper.

They have a fight. Who's the greatest? Who's the most important? So, you know, it's not about how perfect we are it's about how perfect he is and that is the truth Memo to Jesus son of Joseph from the Jordan management consultants Thank you for submitting the resumes of the 12 men. You've selected for management positions in your new organization sounds reasonable All of them have now taken our battery of tests and we've run the results through our computer We've arranged for each to have personality Interviews with our psychologists and vocational aptitude consultants the complete profile on each is included for your careful study It is our staffs opinion that most of your nominees are lacking in background education and vocational aptitude For the type of work you are undertaking They do not demonstrate a team concept.

We would recommend that you search for people of experience in managerial ability and proven capabilities Simon Peter is Emotionally unstable and given to an offensive temper, but Jesus met him at the table Andrew has absolutely no qualities of leadership How'd he get in there brothers James and John sons of Zebedee plays personal interest above company loyalty Frankly, they're mama's boys You remember mama said listen, I want one on the right hand one on the left, right? Thomas Demonstrates a questioning attitude that would tend to undermine morale. That's why we call him doubting Thomas We feel it is our duty to tell you that Matthew has been blacklisted by our greater Jerusalem better business bureau James the son of Alpheus and Thaddeus have definite leanings toward the radical and register high on the manic depressive scale One of the candidates does however show great potential He's a man of ability and resourcefulness meets people well It has a keen business mind It's highly motivated and as well as ambitious and responsible We recommend Judas Iscariot as your controller and right-hand man Now I've read that before I know But what a picture it gives us It's the Lord's table and it's the place where we Sometimes failing human beings as we are find forgiveness find truth find cleansing and so this morning let's just go quietly for a moment or two of prayer and As we go to prayer, do you know that your sins are forgiven? Has Jesus done that work of salvation in your heart and in your life There's only one way to find out if it's true Will he really forgive and give me a new life? The only way you'll know is to go to Jesus and to ask him And just quietly in your heart this morning if you don't know him Right where you are from your heart to his you could say God Are you real Would you forgive me Would you cleanse my life Would you come Lord And live in me And certainly for most of us this morning. There's been that moment when we've done that But this is also a moment where you can just come before the Lord and say father I Don't want to lie about you.

I don't want to lie to myself. I want to live the truth I Want to know that there's nothing between you and me and nothing between me and my brothers and sisters So Lord, I just ask you to touch my heart afresh and anew with your spirit In Jesus name we pray

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