

# Truth And Consequences

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Preacher: Pastor Scott Johnson

[ 0 : 0 0 ]     Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

[ 5 : 0 0 ]     Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Good morning, church. It is always a joy to be able to come together to worship our Lord together.

Amen. Whether you are with us here in the sanctuary or joining us online, whether you're joining us on Sunday morning or at another time, it is indeed our privilege, our blessing to be able to share this time of worship and praise with you.

My name is Scott. I'm part of your pastoral team and it is a joy to welcome you to worship at the Pendleton Center United Methodist Church. And as is our new tradition, let me start with the grace and peace of the risen Christ be with you.

Absolutely. Everybody take a moment, share that peace with your brothers and sisters in Christ as we discern God's moving among us. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Today, we are talking about truth and consequences. We're picking up literally right where the story we were talking about last week leaves off.

[ 6 : 0 9 ]     Jesus makes a declaration in his hometown and today we talk about what happens when it does. Something many of us have experienced ourselves, but our key here is what does that moment teach us about how we move through the world in Christ's name.

So that having been said, let's come before God in worship together. Let's enter a prayerful state and this will be our opening responsive reading. Oh God, in the midst of the cacophony of voices that crush our spirit and deny our calling, voices that say, who do you think you are?

We come to hear your voice of affirmation. We come to hear your voice calling us to be and do what you have called us to be and do.

Let this time of worship quiet our fears, soothe our bruised souls, and energize us for ministry in and with your beloved world.

Speak, Lord. We need to hear your truth. Amen. Let faith abide. Let faith abide. Let hope abide. Let love abide.

[ 7 : 2 5 ]     Here in this sanctuary. Here in our community. Here in our world. But most of all, here in us. Speak, Lord. We need to hear your truth.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

We know that words can have great power and there's a Scripture in Proverbs 18, verse 4, that says, A person's words can be life-giving water.

Words of true wisdom are as refreshing as a bubbling brook, which is probably why we're all so cautioned to speak truth in love. But Jesus comes and he speaks a truth that's extremely powerful, that does have some unintended consequences, but we know that we have the Bible to continue to refresh us with that living word.

So I invite you to stand this morning as we sing wonderful words of life. Sing them over again to me, wonderful words of life.

[ 8 : 54 ] Let me more of their beauty see, wonderful words of life. Words of life and beauty, teach me faith and duty.

Beautiful words, wonderful words, wonderful words of life. Beautiful words, wonderful words, wonderful words of life.

Christ the blessed one gives to all wonderful words of life. Sinnerless to the loving call, wonderful words of life.

All so freely given, moving us to heaven. Beautiful words, wonderful words, wonderful words of life.

Beautiful words, wonderful words, wonderful words of life. Sweetly echo the gospel call, wonderful words of life.

[ 10 : 18 ] Offer pardon and peace to all, wonderful words of life. Jesus, only Savior, sanctified forever.

Beautiful words, wonderful words, wonderful words of life. Beautiful words, wonderful words, wonderful words of life.

You may be seated. Good morning.

Good morning. Nice to see you all on this chilly Sunday morning. So we've been called to speak and live out the radical abiding love of God in the world.

We do so by offering all we are, all we have, and all we do, knowing that God will use us and our gifts to bring the community ever closer to being realized in this world.

[ 11 : 31 ] We ask you to be prayerful in your consideration of your gifts and your offerings this morning. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[ 13 : 55 ] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Lord, hear our prayers.

[ 16 : 30 ] We need you. We're tired. We're tired of this pandemic. We're tired of pivoting our plans. We're tired of the cold.

We're tired of the cold.

We're tired of the cold.

We're tired of the cold.

God, help us.

[ 19 : 08 ] We're tired of the cold.

Good morning. Good morning.

Good morning. Good morning. Good morning. Good morning. Our scripture reading this morning is from the book of Luke, chapter 4, verses 21 through 30. He began by saying, I tell you,

Amen. All the name of the ■ and you know, we're you, maybe we're good to know what to ask you, grad■■■■ in your life.

But he walked right through the crowd and went on his way. This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God. Would you join me for a moment of prayer, please?

[ 21 : 47 ] Loving God, we give you so much thanks for the gift that is this morning, for the brightness and clarity of your sunshine as we gather at this time. Lord, as we have opened our hearts to you in prayer and in song and hearing of your word, move powerfully among us now.

Plant a seed in each of us, the seed you know we need most, that will grow and bear fruit for the honor and the glory of your name. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord, we pray.

Amen. So, for those of you who were not here last week, we read the piece of scripture that's immediately before what you heard Jan read this morning.

And it gets to this point where Jesus makes this dramatic declaration. Today, this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing. Now, I want you to hear what Jesus said to the people, before this, so you understand what he's saying.

So, we're going to read that piece again. So, here's what he told them. The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me.

[ 22 : 56 ] He has sent me to preach good news to the poor, to proclaim release to the prisoners, and recovery of sight to the blind, to liberate the oppressed, and to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.

And so, after having read that from the book of Isaiah, he goes and he takes his seat in the synagogue, and then he tells them what you heard. Today, this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.

That's a big deal. And we talked about this from the standpoint of speaking your truth. Speaking your truth even when it's uncomfortable, and even when the audience around you may not be receptive to it.

Because that's what's happening here. And so, then the passage you heard this morning that Jan read for us talks about what happens after he has done that. Okay?

And so, we can see that sometimes speaking your truth, even in an audience that feels right, kind of feels friendly, can have some pretty unpleasant consequences.

[ 24 : 11 ] And that's where we want to sit today. Because our challenge is oftentimes, when we move through this world, as followers of Jesus, we get blowback.

We get a hard time. We get challenge. And the sad part about that, for us, is oftentimes that fear keeps us from speaking and living our truth the way we know we should.

And so, today, we want to talk about trying to stay faithful in the midst of those moments. Because those moments come pretty regularly. So, with that in mind, we have to know that we have to claim and profess our faith.

And we have to live it, even when it's hard. So, how does Jesus' example help us with that? That's what we want to talk about today. So, let's hear what happened to him again.

Let's take this scripture apart a little bit. So, he tells them the truth. Sort of drops his truth bomb in the middle of church. Because that's what happens, right?

[ 25 : 16 ] He's in synagogue. He's at worship. This is what the community does. He stands up. He reads. Then he goes and he sits down. And he starts talking.

Now, it sounds like it's all going to go okay for a minute there. Because if you're with me in the story, what we have happened immediately after is in verse 22, it says, everyone was raving about Jesus.

So impressed were they by the gracious words flowing from his lips. They said, this is Joseph, son, isn't it? Now, you can take that a couple of different ways when you read the whole passage.

Because it sounds like when you put the whole thing together that they were kind of, well, this is cool. Isn't this nice? Especially when you add the backdrop of having heard some of what he had already done in other places before this.

Because he's already started his public ministry at this point. He's done some teaching. He's done some extraordinary works. And now he's returned to his hometown.

[ 26 : 25 ] Luke puts this in a different spot than do other gospel writers. And that's why sometimes it's a little confusing. So he's here. And the people around him are like, hey, isn't that nice?

He's one of us. He's one of ours. And we got this guy here who can do all these things. Who can teach this way and who can heal our diseases. And he's just Joe and Mary's kid from down the street.

Now, Jesus being Jesus, he has to tell them what's wrong with how they're dealing with this. Because they are making an assumption that isn't the right assumption.

What they seem to be saying in the room shows that they really don't get what God is doing. And he has to tell them that. Because when you hear him say, what you hear him say next is this.

Then Jesus said to them, undoubtedly you will quote this saying to me, doctor, heal yourself. Heal yourself. Do here in your hometown what we've heard you did in Capernaum.

[ 27 : 35 ] I assure you that no prophet is welcome in the prophet's hometown. And I can assure you that there were many widows in Israel during Elijah's time.

But none of them were cleansed. When it didn't rain for three and a half years. And there was a great food shortage in the land. Yet Elijah was sent to none of them, but only to a widow in the city of Zarephath in the region of Sidon.

There were also many persons with skin diseases in Israel during the time of the prophet Elisha. But none of them were cleansed. But none of them were cleansed. Instead, Naaman the Syrian was cleansed.

Now, to put all that together, what Jesus is letting them know is, you guys seem to think that all this is just about you. As you seem to feel entitled to this in a way that isn't really what God is up to.

Yes, the message is for you, but it's not just for you. And you shouldn't presume that all of a sudden you have an access that other people don't have. Just look at the way God has moved. Listen to the way God has worked.

[ 28 : 43 ] Because you guys are thinking the wrong things about this. God is ready to turn the world upside down. And what I'm about to do is what's going on in Jesus' mind. And you guys are just not getting it.

So he's trying to wake them up. He's trying to help them understand. And, of course, when he tells them this, they're not happy. They are so not happy, in fact, that this kid that they were just raving about, this kid that they watched grow up, Joe and Mary's kid from down the street, they take him and literally run him out of town and try to throw him off a cliff.

So he was probably on to something. Now, what does that mean for us? Now, we may not have been literally dragged out to the cliff, but I'm willing to bet that each of us, in our own way, has been sitting maybe in a break room at work, sitting at the dining table with some family members, in a car with some friends, and something got said or something got done that pricked you in the spirit in a particular way.

Something that came up that was either not really what you knew to be true or right, according to what you know in your spirit by God.

And when that moment came, you had the opportunity to speak and live your truth. That maybe there was somebody who was hurting and they wanted to do something and you wanted to offer them the comfort that comes from a word that you know from scripture, or the spirit was pushing you to offer love in the face of a confrontation when others wanted to throw hands and you wanted to offer love instead.

[ 30 : 47 ] And it was time to speak and live your professed truth. And now what?

First is the courage to actually do it. But then, and this is really our issue today, is what happens when you do? Are you willing to risk what it means to be a faithful follower of Jesus in a world that's not always friendly to faithful followers of Jesus?

Because facing those consequences is usually what keeps a lot of us from doing what we know to be the faithful thing. We just don't want to risk it.

We don't want to risk the unpleasant conversation. We don't want to risk the relationship. We don't want to risk being thought of as the weirdo or the holy one or the Jesus freak among all our friends.

And so we end up just not doing anything. And that's hard for us to stomach.

[ 32 : 00 ] That's hard for us to live with when we're alone in ourselves. It also has those consequences out in the world because now an opportunity for someone to see who God really is didn't happen.

And that's hard. I think many of us have played the modern version of the game truth or dare, right? We know what that's like.

Where you're supposed to answer either a question or say something about yourself. And if you don't, you got to go do something unpleasant or something risky, something ridiculous.

There was this old game show on called Truth or Consequences. Some of y'all remember that? I mean, and it was the same kind of deal, right? They would come up, they'd ask you some ridiculous question.

And if not, you had to do some silly game show type of thing, right? Well, our point today is we need to talk about truth and consequences because it's not one or the other.

[ 33 : 03 ] You're going to have both because every choice has consequences. We know that. For example, I am parent to a teenager.

Now, I've survived two. Got one left. And every morning, especially in months of December and January, we usually have a conversation called something like this around the breakfast table.

She's gathering her stuff and she's on her way out the door and her mother is getting ready to take her to school. And one of us, meaning me or Jen, will say, where is your coat?

You know it's no degrees outside. It's literally no degrees outside. I don't want you to coat.

I'm just going to the car. And then, at some point in the car, we'll hear something like this. Oh, it's so cold.

[ 34 : 19 ] Every choice has consequences. Now, that one is a little silly and we can all laugh at it. But think about the consequences of the conversations we're talking about.

We know this. We get this. Of course, we all get it. And as we said, if this is a loved one across the dining room table, a co-worker across the table in the break room, or just a bunch of friends in the car on their way somewhere, and it's time for you to say what you know needs to be said or what the Spirit is nudging you to say, those consequences will come.

And we have to decide who we're going to be. Are we going to choose faith? Are we going to choose comfort? Are we going to choose the world? Because we don't want to get into these fights.

We don't want to be the weirdo. We don't want to be the freak. Truth and consequences. Now, what I want you to hear, church, is that we know what this is like, but this is actually an encouraging story because remember what you've already heard.

Not five minutes before Jesus says what he said, Luke tells us everybody was raving about it, and then once he drops his truth, they literally run him out of town.

[ 35 : 56 ] But the end of the story is not that they threw him off the cliff, but the end of the story is that as mad as they were and as many of them as they were, Jesus passes through the midst and goes on about his ministry.

Now, we don't know if that's a supernatural event or if he was just able to walk off on his own. But what I want you to hear in that is that God takes care of God's people.

And it's not something we just see in Jesus. All of our biblical heroes have these moments. Moses had to decide whether or not he was going to be faithful or whether he was going to stay in the house of Pharaoh.

Moses had to decide whether he was going to be faithful or whether he was going to stay in the comfort of being a shepherd at Midian. He chose faith. And yes, he had some pretty dramatic moments.

Yes, he had some pretty big fails. But he chose faith and he's still Moses. David had to choose whether or not he was going to stay a shepherd in Jesse's house or whether he was going to follow his anointing.

[ 37 : 19 ] David had to decide whether or not whether he was going to literally put up with repeated assassination attempts from the current king because the current king knew he was the next king. David had to decide whether he was going to fight back, whether he was going to take Saul out on himself or whether he was going to wait on his turn.

He chose faith and he's David. David had some pretty big fails. But he's David. Peter had to decide whether or not he was going to declare what he knew the spirit put on him to say and whether he was going to be the first person to say it out loud.

He chose faith. He had some pretty big fails, as we all know. But he's still Peter. And that's the point.

What I want you to hear, church, is that in the midst of all of these stories, in the midst of all of these moments, don't let the short-term fear talk you out of your long-term promise.

Because we worry about the moment. But God is playing the long game. And we don't often think of the long game.

[ 38 : 42 ] Because we're more worried about what our friends are going to do than what we're doing for our God. And because we get afraid of that, we forget who our God is to us.

And what is the message you send to God when you say, you know what? I just can't do this right now. I can't lose this friend. I don't want to have this fight.

And yet you immediately turn around to God with this huge list of what you want God to do for you. How does that work? But that's what we want to think about.

Because if we know God this way, if God has been this full of grace, if God has been this generous, and if you know the stories, if you know how God has worked in the lives of your biblical heroes, if you know how God has worked in the lives of those you love, if you know how God has worked in your own story, you know 100% that God is faithful.

And because you know that God is faithful, don't let short-term pain keep you from long-term gain. Choose to live and speak your truth.

[ 40 : 06 ] Because God will take care of you. Yes, it will hurt. Yes, it will cost. Yes, you may have to sacrifice. And that will not feel good.

But at the end of the day, remember whose you are. Remember who you have promised to be.

And remember who God is. Because when those things happen in your brain, those are the consequences that you must worry about.

Those are the consequences that matter most. And when you think about those consequences, the short-term ones pale in comparison.

So, go and live and speak your truth, trusting that the one who promised, the one who is with you, the one who has given you all that you ever need, all that you ever will need, and all that you are.

[ 41 : 14 ] Trust that he is faithful and true to you. Amen and amen. Loving and gracious God, thank you for the gift it is to know your truth as we know it.

Thank you for your presence in our lives, in our world. Thank you for the ways in which you continue to pour out grace upon grace, despite our failings, despite our fear, despite the fact that we sometimes choose poorly.

Lord God, as you know us better than we know ourselves, we thank you that you have chosen faith, that you have chosen faith in us, that you have chosen to love us in spite of who we can be.

So, Lord, please give us renewed strength, give us renewed faith, strengthen us as we go into the world, ready to speak and live your truth, that the world may come to understand, that those around us who don't know may come to know, that we may indeed hold you high for all the world to see, and let us trust that you, who hold all future in your hand, will take care of us, no matter how the world feels, and no matter how the world reacts.

Amen. Amen. As we said, one of the things we know for sure is that our God is faithful, and one of the ways in which God has shown us his faithfulness to us is by giving us this gift of Holy Communion and the Lord's table.

[ 43 : 05 ] Let us ready our hearts as we come to the table to share in what God has given to us. The Lord be with you.

Lift up your hearts. Lift up your hearts. Let us give thanks to the Lord. Our God. It is right to give our thanks and praise. It is right and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere, to give thanks to you, Almighty God, the creator of heaven and earth.

You formed us in your image and breathed into us the breath of life. When we turned away and our love failed, your love remained steadfast.

You delivered us from captivity, made covenant to be our sovereign God and spoke to us through your prophets who looked for the day when justice would roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream, when nation would not lift up sword against nation and neither would they study war anymore.

And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn. Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory.

[ 44 : 30 ] Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest. Holy are you and blessed is your son, Jesus Christ.

Your spirit anointed him to preach good news to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed and to announce that the time had come when you would save your people.

He healed the sick, fed the hungry and ate with sinners. By the baptism of his suffering, death and resurrection, you gave birth to your church, delivered us from slavery to sin and death and made with us a new covenant by water and the spirit.

At his ascension, you exalted him to sit and reign with you at your right hand. On the night in which he gave himself up for us, Jesus took bread.

He gave thanks to you. He broke the bread and he gave it to his disciples and he said, take and eat. This is my body which is given for you.

[ 45 : 44 ] Do this in remembrance of me. And when the supper was over, he took the cup and gave thanks to you and he gave it to his disciples and he said, drink from this, all of you.

This is my blood, sign of the new covenant. Which is poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Every time that you drink this, do it in remembrance of me.

And so in remembrance of these, your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice in union with Christ's offering for us as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again. Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here and on these gifts of bread and cup.

Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ that we may be for the world the body of Christ redeemed by his blood. By your spirit, make us one with Christ, one with each other and one in ministry to all the world until Christ comes in final victory and we feast at his heavenly banquet.

[ 47 : 05 ] Through your son, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy church, all honor and glory is yours, almighty God, now and forever. Amen.

And let us pray together the prayer that Jesus taught us to pray. Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.  
Amen. Amen.

[ 49 : 48 ] Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Our table is prepared and our Lord calls. Please understand that this is a gift from Jesus to you.

It's not about how you feel whether you come to the table feeling worthy or deserving. It's about who he is and his worth and he makes all things possible.

So as you come and receive his gift, please use the center aisle to come to the front, receive your elements and exit by the sides. There's a gluten-free station here on the far side of the sanctuary if that's what you need.

You can also receive prepackaged elements. Simply ask a server. They will give them to you. Come as the Lord calls. Amen. Amen. Amen.

[ 51 : 18 ] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.



Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Our closing song is part praise, part prayer.

[ 55 : 19 ] The opening line is, open the eyes of my heart, Lord. And as we open our hearts to know the truth, to live in that truth, and hopefully act out that truth to become the people that God knows us to be, I invite you to stand.

Open the eyes of my heart, Lord. Open the eyes of my heart. I want to see you.

I want to see you. Open the eyes of my heart, Lord.

Open the eyes of my heart. I want to see you. I want to see you.

To see you high and lifted up. Shine it in the light of your glory. Pour out your power and love as we sing, holy, holy, holy.

[ 56 : 46 ] Open the eyes of my heart, Lord. Open the eyes of my heart, Lord. Open the eyes of my heart.

I want to see you. I want to see you. I want to see you.

Open the eyes of my heart, Lord. Open the eyes of my heart. I want to see you.

I want to see you. I want to see you.

I want to see you. As we sing holy, holy, holy Holy, holy, holy Holy, holy, holy Holy, holy, holy I want to see you Holy, holy, holy Holy, holy, holy Holy, holy, holy I want to see you Open the eyes of my heart, Lord Open the eyes of my heart I want to see you

[ 58 : 39 ] I want to see you Remember the spirit of the Lord works in you The same spirit that empowered our Lord and Savior The same spirit that descended at Pentecost The same spirit is with us now So when it's time for you to speak and live your truth Trust that God will take care of you And that the consequence of that is always good Now in the name of God, our creator and king In the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and our Savior And in the name of the Holy Spirit, our counselor and our sustainer May God bless us now as we leave to love and serve God and all God's children Amen Amenacy, my today

A Business A Back A Power Thank you.

Thank you.