



Seven
Part 2 – Walk in Truth
Shay Robbins

Good morning, good morning. So, there was a lot of communication going on early this morning and Katie was very clear with me. She said, “It’s very important that you show up this morning.” It’s okay; the package has been delivered. It’s fun to be here with your guys. I truly consider you hard core. What a hard-core crowd. You guys are incredible. It’s fun to peak at everybody worshipping together. You know, you don’t need a crowd to go hard for the Lord and it’s fun just to be here with you guys and to know that God is here. He is honored by your praise and your glory. I was just praying before, even I came up here, that he would be blessed and he would be honored by our worship this morning.

We’re going to continue our *Seven* series. It’s my responsibility to come after Ted. He talked about walking in humility. Today we are talking about walking in truth. It’s going to be a fun topic this morning. I’ll go ahead and read our passage from Proverbs 6 that inspired the series.

16 There are six things the Lord hates, seven that are detestable to him: 17 haughty eyes, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, 18 a heart that devises wicked schemes, feet that are quick to rush into evil, 19 a false witness who pours out lies and a person who stirs up conflict in the community.

I’m going to speak to you guys this morning on two different levels. On the high end of things, we are going to talk about the **30,000-ft.** view of lies and truth because you and I walk around in an atmosphere that is filled with agenda. We’ve got the responsibility to navigate through the lies and through the truth to find what God has for us and how he wants us to live our lives.

On the **ground level**, we’ve got to deal with the responsibility to be honest ourselves. That’s a daily battle, with pride and insecurity, to be honest with the relationships around us. So, we’ll be talking about those two levels, so we’ll looking from 30,000 ft. and then from the ground level.

Speaking of the ground level, in the Robbins household... I’ve talked about this before, but we’ve got what we call Robbins Family Values. One of our strategies to breathe life and truth into our kiddos, as we raise them, is that each morning, during breakfast, Dad takes about five minutes. It’s not rocket science, it’s not overly complicated, you don’t have to have a degree in theology. We’re just taking the opportunity to be strategic, to be intentional with our family.

We have eleven Robbins values because Ashley and I couldn’t agree on six. Then recently we added another one and so we’re up to twelve family values. But, each morning, we’ll just cover one. So, we

want to be an “I’m third” family. We’ve got the Robbins stick together, we play hard and work hard, we do our best, but we aren’t afraid to make mistakes. One of the ones that we are constantly talking about in our home is that Robbins are truth tellers.

It’s been an issue, specifically with one of our kids that has a really hard time with lying because she doesn’t like to be wrong. She just has a really hard time admitting when she makes a mistake and so she’s very susceptible to lie so she doesn’t have to come face to face with her own failures. So, in those little conversations, we talk about how when we fail to tell the truth, we lose the honor and the trust that has been given to us. So, we give trust freely in our home and then we can lose it. So, rather than earning trust, we give it, but you do have the ability to lose trust, so we process through that conversation on a regular basis in the Robbins household.

One of the verses we go to when we talk about Robbins being truth tellers is this from Proverbs 12. **22 The Lord detests lying lips, but he delights in people who are trustworthy.** So, it’s important for us to understand that God actually hates lying; he detests it. Elsewhere in scripture, it is described as an abomination. He hates lying. So, from the 30,000-ft. level...

The other day, it was probably two weeks ago. It was during our Christmas break... We had an awesome Christmas break and really enjoyed time together as a family. One of our family values is work hard/play hard, so we teach the kids to do chores and help out with the family. In the evenings, Ashley and I will always divide and conquer. One will clean up the atomic bomb that is the dinner explosion. I mean it’s just unbelievable. It’s on the walls and the floor; it’s everywhere. One parent will stick around with the older kids and they’ll clean up the kitchen and then the other parent will take the littles and have bath time, and then we switch.

This evening, I had the bigs and Belle and Knox took out the garbage for me. It was actually a Thursday night, so on Friday morning, we have to have the garbage pushed out. We send them in twos to push the old green container to the top of the driveway to put it out by the road. They go on their little chore and they take out the last bit of garbage and push that up there. They come squealing back in.

I’m cleaning up in the kitchen and I hear Belle say, “Oh, that was so scary!”

I looked at them like, “Why was that scary?”

She said, “Because I’m scared of the dark.”

I said, “Well, why are you scared of the dark?”

She said, “Because the devil is in the dark.”

And I said, “Belle...” This is where, growing up with a preacher, things might sound a little bit different, okay? But, I hear her say that and I said, “Oh, but, Belle, Knox, Jesus is the light of the world. There is no darkness in him. And you are a city on a hill. Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your God in heaven.”

I saw their little spirits perk up, so the preacher really... I've got a receptive audience here, so I start going hard. I told them, "You've got the name of Jesus! You can call on the name of Jesus, the most mighty name of all names! Jesus dwells in you and when you walk into the darkness, you've got nothing to be afraid of because at the name of Jesus, every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that is in heaven, on earth, and under the earth! That all the earth may know that Jesus is the king!"

At this point, Belle and Knox, who are so scared of the dark, are jumping up and down in the kitchen. I just imagine... I'm screaming at this point. My wife is probably washing up the kids, wondering how in the world does this have anything to do with cleaning up the kitchen. I'm screaming "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty!" We officially overcame our fear of the dark that night.

It's a funny illustration, but it's just so true that when they went into the darkness... One of the lies that the devil wants to spin into our lives is he wants us to think that when we're afraid or when we can't see Him or when we're walking through a hard time or when we're scared in the dark, God isn't there. But, we know that isn't truth. That is a lie. So, there was no reason for Knox and Belle to be afraid as they took the garbage out. But, there was a little lie that was seeded in their heart and it caused that fear to well up in their heart.

As we talk about truth and lies, I use two childish examples, but the reality is that the battle of truth and lies is not a childish thing at all. As I mentioned before, you and I move through an atmosphere that is filled with agenda and the enemy is moving against us to twist and pervert our perspective in hopes of drawing us off course, in hopes of bringing us to destruction. So, this conversation is so important.

We're actually going to address three questions this morning on this topic. 1) Why is the truth so important? 2) What do we need to be aware of? 3) How do we walk in truth? How does that look practically?

Why is the truth so important? Sometimes, I think we give the devil too much credit and then other times, I think we give him too little credit. We live in a nation that was founded on Judaeo Christian values. And the Judaeo Christian value system stands on a rock. There is such thing as what we call absolute truth. It comes from the scripture and so there is clearly a right and a wrong.

But, as our nation as progressed, we are now living in what's called a post-Christian culture where secularism has overtaken traditional Judaeo Christian values. With secularism, in that way of thinking, truth is a moving target; it varies from person to person. As we are raising kids and we're personally navigating this every-changing atmosphere, it's incredibly important that we don't stand on society's values, but we stand on the values and the truth that we find in God and God alone. The ante has been upped. In the last days, you can only expect for it to become more and more difficult to stand upon truth, so we've got to fight for that in our lives.

I want to take you to the scripture and you're going to see how relevant the scripture is 2,000 years later. This was literally written 2,000 years ago. In Romans 1, Paul was writing, and he was talking about pagans, about Gentiles who had no faith in Jesus. He said, ***25 They exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen.***

Do you see that? Does that seem relevant to you in the world that we're living in? They exchanged the truth of God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator.

In our personal responsibility on the **ground floor**, it's important that we understand this principle that **when we produce lies, we worship and serve ourselves**. Do you see how that works? So, when you find yourself in a situation where if you compromise the truth, it is going to, at least initially, benefit you. Short term vision tells me if I can get what I want, it's going to work out better for me. We run into those decisions on a daily basis. We need to understand that when we make that decision, that little compromise, it might even be a white lie or a bending of the truth or a manipulation of how truth is presented, what we're doing is worshiping and serving ourselves. I don't know about you, but when I am sober and honest with myself, I realize that I am a lousy God. I don't want to be the God of my life.

Now, let's go to the **30,000-ft. level**. **When we believe lies, we worship and serve false gods**. That's what happened in that Roman context. An overarching message, a lie was spread and for those who chose to buy into it, they found themselves doing something that was very dangerous, and they found themselves worshiping and serving false gods.

Now, either way is bad news because ultimately both situations end up in idolatry. Whether it's on the ground level and I am the one who is producing the lies, or it's from the 30,000-ft. level where I'm believing in lies. Either ways, it amounts to idolatry.

So, why is truth so important? I want to take you to the Ten Commandments and see what the scripture says. The first commandment is that you shouldn't have any other God before Him. There is one true God. Then the second commandment is this: ***"You shall not make for yourself an idol or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. You shall not worship them or serve them; for I the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and fourth generation of those who hate me..."***

So, you see right there the consequences of believing lies and buying into them and finding yourself to be a worshiper of anything other than the one true God, that sin, will then fall upon the generations that follow you to the third and fourth generation. What that tells us is that God is serious about idolatry. He is a jealous God. He is full of wrath when we fall off course and we worship false gods.

But, watch this. On the other end of the spectrum, his love and his kindness and his goodness is as great as his wrath. Watch this. ***...but showing loving kindness to thousands, to those who love me and keep my commandments***. That *loving kindness* is such a cool word. It's the word *hesed*. It's a Hebrew word that's found throughout the Old Testament. It's a love that keeps giving and giving and giving and giving. It never stops. What that tells me is that if I love God and I keep his commandments, he's a God that wants to shower me with loving kindness.

Here's the principle that comes out of that: **We walk in truth when we love God and we keep his commandments**. I want to show you how when we twist that understanding, how far off course we can get. Just a minor tweak of the truth can bring us so far off course that it changes our belief and our faith in a loving God.

I just had this kind of a revelation within the last month and I've thought a lot about it since then. But, it's this idea of a **faith of abstinence versus a faith of abundance**. One is true and the other one is a lie. My perception as a young man of Christian faith was a faith of abstinence. So, as I considered going all in in the faith, my perception was that it was going to be a loss. I wasn't going to be able to do all the things that I wanted to do. I was going to lose popularity. I was going to lose out on relationships. I was going to lose out on things that looked fun, things that felt good. It was a loss all the way across the board. If I was going to follow Jesus, it would be a faith of abstinence, where things were taken from me.

But, then I discovered the truth that following Jesus isn't a faith of abstinence, rather it's a faith of abundance. In John 10, Jesus said, ***10 The devil comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and life abundantly.*** An abundant life or a faith of abundance is where the God of the universe is a giver. He gives me freedom from my guilt and my shame. He gives me a spiritual gift. He gives me health in relationships. He gives me faith, hope, peace, passion. He gives me meaning. He gives me a sense of belonging. He gives me a new family. It's giving, giving, giving, and his loving kindness. Who is the one who is the taker. It's Satan. He's the one who comes to steal, kill, and destroy. He wants to take that hope. He wants to take that love. He wants to ruin those relationships. He wants to taint my relationship with the Lord. He wants to rob us of eternal salvation.

There was a minor misunderstanding in my theology. For me, the results or the consequences were massive because I made a mess of things for a long time. Ultimately, I am responsible for that, but it was a lie and it was a really subtle lie that I bought into that that made a mess of things in my life.

As Christians who are seeking truth we want to **be aware of the enemy around us**. I've been reading an awesome book by a guy named Jocko Willink. I'm trying to remember what it's called. It's called *Extreme Ownership*. It's a leadership book and the principles are taken... He's a Navy Seal. He's had a decorated career in the military. He took these leadership principles that were tried and tested on the battlefield and he brought them back and now they are applying them to corporate America.

One of the things he talks about is having intelligence on the front end. Being as aware as you possibly can of the enemy and their schemes. When you walk into a situation, there are going to be a lot of unknowns. You can't know what's behind every single door that you're kicking in. But, you're a fool if you don't gather intelligence on the front end and are painstaking to understand who your enemy is and how they work. It's important for us, as Christians, not only to study God, but also to study your enemy to understand how he moves and the way he works.

What do we need to be aware of? 1 Peter 5 says this, and it speaks of the character of our enemy. ***8 Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.*** That's his mission. We know that we are in his sights. His goal in all of this is to devour people, to ruin lives, to be a taker.

John 8 says, ***44 "You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies."***

Again, we see the character of Satan that there is no truth in him, that he is a liar and, in fact, he is the father of lies. From the very beginning, we see how the enemy works to take people out.

There are two passages and we're not going to dive deeply into them. I'm just going to kind of summarize some of the ways he works that are revealed in the scripture. And what I want to do is put it on you to go to Genesis 3 and Matthew 4 and study it more in depth on your own, to read and ponder on how the enemy works.

In Genesis 3, we've got the very first sin. What Satan does is he goes in the form of serpent and he tempts Eve. He causes her to question the character and the goodness of God. He says, "Did God really say..." What happened was he struck a nerve of doubt in Eve. As she began to doubt, then he leveraged her own selfishness to be wise like God, to know what God knows, and to eat that which she was told not to eat. So, initially, he caused her to doubt and then he leveraged her own selfish desires to cause her to cave and to be disobedient to God.

He uses that strategy to this day in our lives and it's super important for us to know where we're susceptible. What's interesting is that each of us has a different story. We've made different mistakes. We were raised in different ways. There are certain things that I might be more susceptible than you are and vice versa. We need to become self-aware to know who we are and where we can get tripped up, where the enemy can find leverage in our life.

In Matthew 4, Jesus, before he starts his public ministry, goes into the wilderness, and fasts for 40 days. On that 40th day, the devil came to him and tempted him three different times. In the second temptation in particular he takes him to the top of the temple in Jerusalem. It's really interesting what the enemy did. He stands him up there and tells him to jump off the temple, and then he quotes Psalm 91. He says, "He has given your angles charge to bear you up in their hands lest your foot strike a stone."

Satan actually uses scripture to try and tempt Jesus to play into his hands. What's really interesting is that in the very next verse in Psalm 91, literally the next verse, it says, ***You will tread upon the lion and the cobra.*** We know that Satan is prowling about like a roaring lion and he showed himself to Eve in the form of a serpent. ***You will tread upon the lion and the cobra. The young lion and the serpent, you will trample down.*** Literally the very next verse shows the key to our power and victory over Satan himself yet Satan is so audacious that he would proof text, he would pluck one piece of God's truth and he would pull it out of context and he would twist it in order to have his way in our lives. We've got to be aware. What that means is that we've got to know God's word for ourselves. The scripture says to be shrewd as serpents and innocent as doves. We have got to know God's word.

Jesus responded scripture for scripture, but Jesus spoke it in context. ***You shall not put your Lord our God to the test.*** And that's how we respond. When the enemy moves in your territory and he begins to twist the truth, we've got to be sharp enough and prepared enough to pull out our sword and fight back.

Then the scripture says in James 4, ***Resist the devil and he will flee from you.***

How do we walk in truth? There are three bullet points in how we practically live this out. The first one is the **gift of the Holy Spirit**. The gift of the Holy Spirit has a number of different rolls in our life. Before you can ever understand God's Word, you've got to have the guidance of the Holy Spirit. I believe that the Bible is black and white, it shows us right from wrong. It shows us how to follow God. It shows us his character. But, we live in a world that's full of gray space. I can't go to the scripture and have it tell me directly how to respond in certain situations or how to speak in this specific conversation or whether I should turn left or right. But, God knew that, so he gave us the Holy Spirit to navigate those gray spaces.

Is the Holy Spirit important? Yes. Is God's word important? Yes. If you're missing one or the other, you are significantly outgunned. They work in tandem. For those of you who don't have a relationship with Jesus, you have no ability to discern the enemy's ways. That's a scary truth that we need to be honest with ourselves about. But, God loves us, and he loves you, and he wants to give you the ability and the strength to find victory in your life, to know right from wrong, truth from lies.

This is how it works. When we confess our sin to God and we admit, "God, I agree with you about my sin. I know that I am wrong, I am broken; there is all kinds of shame and guilt and destruction in my path that gives proof to that. I am ready to surrender my life to you." In that act of confession, we receive the grace of God that comes in the way of forgiveness. When you receive that forgiveness once and for all, the scripture says that you are filled with the Holy Spirit. In other words, God himself then takes up residence in your life.

In John 16, the scripture tells us that the Holy Spirit has many roles, one of them is that the Holy Spirit guides us into all truth. So, as we navigate these gray spaces and we lean into God through prayer and discernment of his Word and relationship with godly counsel around us, the Holy Spirit will help guide us into all truth.

Ashley and I have a contract on our home. We, as the owners, have to provide full disclosure to our buyers. That means that anything we know about this house we're going to fully disclose it, we're going to tell them about it, so they know exactly what they are getting into.

The Holy Spirit has another role of full disclosure. God takes up residence in his heavenly home and he wants to invite you into his family to take up residence in his home. But, as you navigate this life and you walk hand in hand, the Holy Spirit has been given to you to have full disclosure to understand how it works to walk with God, to be a part of the family of God and, someday, to take up residence in the home of God. The Holy Spirit is essential to walking in truth.

The second thing is that **we walk in humility**. It is not by accident that we talked about humility last week. We lead out with humility because if we are too proud to admit that we're wrong, too proud to recognize that we need to lean on God for help as we navigate the gray spaces of this world, in our pride, we will fumble, fall, and buy into lies. On a daily basis, we have to do as Peter charged us to: clothe ourselves in humility, to make the decision on a daily basis, "God, I need your help. I am prone to make mistakes. I am prone to buy into lies and I need your help."

Another thing that comes with humility is that when we make mistakes... Are we going to make mistakes? We are. There will be times in our life where we produce lies and other times where we believe lies, but in humility, when we go to God and we confess those things and we repent and turn from them, in that humility, we will be forgiven, set free, and he'll put our feet back on solid ground.

So, we have the gift of the Holy Spirit, we choose to walk in humility, and finally, **we saturate our heart and mind in truth**. The truth is found in God's Word. The Robbins Family Value – God's Word is truth. If you're looking for truth, God has laid it out before you, but we each have to take up personal responsibility that if this is truth and it comes from God, we've got to be able to handle it. We need to spend time in God's word, learning and understanding it. If that's a hard thing for you to get into, there are about 300 people in this congregation that are just hungry and chomping at the bit to come alongside you and spend time with you and help you in that process. Reach out for help and walk in truth.

The scripture talks about saturating your mind. Psalm 1 is one of my favorite Psalms and I love how the Psalm is kicked off in this way, It says, **1 Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers, 2 but whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditates on his law day and night. 3 That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither—whatever they do prospers. 4 Not so the wicked!**

As we go throughout our day, we should be so fixed on God's Word and his truth that we're running it through our minds on a regular basis, that we're filtering it through... The late, great Gary Smalley said, "You've got to run a thought process through your head thousands of times before it sinks down and becomes a part of your belief system out of which you act."

We've got to strategically and intentionally saturate our hearts and minds with the truth of God's Word.

As we walk in truth, let me give you this summation of this morning. The why: Why is truth so important? God is jealous for you. He wants to shower you in loving kindness. The what: The battle is real, the enemy is sinister, and we are susceptible. Finally, the how: How do we walk in truth? With the Holy Spirit as our guide, we walk in humility and soak in God's Word daily. God's Word is truth.

With that, I would like to invite the worship team out and I'm going to read one last scripture to you. Ephesians 2 says this, and this is truth and I want to speak this truth over our church this morning. **1 And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, 2 in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. 3 Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest. 4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), 6 and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, 7 so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.**

Let's pray.

Lord Jesus, we thank you for truth. I just want to ask, God, that you would help us to be wise, that your Holy Spirit would give us discernment and wisdom as we navigate a challenging culture and a challenging environment that's full of deception from the enemy. I want to pray in the name of Jesus that we would be truthbearers, that we would hold the Word of God high, that we would speak truth into our own personal hearts and minds, and then we would speak it into the hearts and minds of others.

I pray that we would be intentional with our family and our children. We pray, Jesus, that Woodland Hills Family Church would be a body of believers that walk in truth.

It's in Jesus' name we pray, amen.