

Fake News About You
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“Just who do you think you are?” We usually hear that question asked in a sarcastic manner when someone thinks we’re acting in a way that’s above our “place” and they want to put us in our place.

But I’m asking the question today in a different manner. I’m asking it because it is one of the most important questions you will ever answer. How you answer determines how you live now and what you expect in the future.

You see – the most important things about you are your beliefs: What you believe about God and what you believe about yourself. There are many voices trying to tell you who you are – but the most important voice to hear is God’s – who does He say you are?

We’re in a sermon series called Fake News: Replacing Lies with the Truth. I think you’ll like my sermon topic today because I am preaching on Fake News about You. You may think – “You don’t even know me that well or you don’t know me at all – so how can you preach a sermon about me?” I can preach a sermon about you because God knows you better than you know yourself. And He reveals a lot about you in His Word - called the Bible.

In this series we’ve talked about our enemy – Satan – who is a liar. He lies to you about God and he lies about you to you! Today, I want to help you discern those lies and then to replace them with God’s truth found in the most amazing book ever written! God’s book - The Bible! 2 Timothy 3:16-17 says:

All Scripture is inspired by God, and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

This means God is the source of the whole Bible. We know the Bible is the Word of God by several different ways. I don’t have time to tell you today about the 100% accuracy of the Bible. Or how archaeology proves the truth of the Bible. Or how the thousands of Fulfilled Prophecies shows its divine origin.

But the main reason we know the Bible is the word of God is that it has changed our lives. We’ve all heard the statement from the Bible – the truth will set you free. But most people don’t know the first part of that from John 8:31-32 says:

If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

In other words, knowing God's word leads to knowing truth which leads to freedom.

Many of us have been addicted – but we've been set free by God's word!
 Many of us have been depressed – but we've been encouraged by God's word!
 Many of us have been hurt – but we've been healed by God's word!
 Many of us have been lost – but God's word showed us the way!
 Many of us had doubts – but the word of God built our faith!
 Many of us had fears – but the word of God gave us courage!
 The Word of God has changed our lives.

The Bible is the word of God and the Bible says that God is all about you! So – what does the word of God say about you? We're going to look at the fake news about you and replace it with truth.

Fake News #1 - You are not important

I want to start with this one because this is VIP Sunday. On this day we are celebrating the fact that you are important to God and you are important to us. Jesus said in Matthew 10:29-31

Are not two little sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father's will. Moreover, the very hairs of your head, all of them, have been counted. Therefore, stop fearing. As for you, you are of more importance than many sparrows.

Jesus tells us that we are important to God. Then why do so many of us feel unimportant? Because of the lies of the enemy. And many times he lies through other people who make you feel unimportant and worthless.

That's Fake News #2 – You are worthless

People might've told you that you are worthless, but God would never say that. How do you know how much you are worth to God? Well – how do you know how much anything is worth? By how much someone is willing to pay for it. And God was willing to pay for you the highest price ever paid for anything or anyone in history!

Twice in 1 Corinthians Paul tells us: *You were bought with a price.* 1 Peter 1:18-20 tells us what that price was:

For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect. He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake.

Jesus Christ paid the ultimate price for you: His own blood – His own life!
That's how much you're worth to Him!

Fake News #3 - You are an accident

No matter what anyone may have told you, you weren't an accident. God created you! Psalm 139:13-18 says:

For You created my inmost being; You knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from You when I was made in the secret place. Like an open book, you watched me grow from conception to birth; all the stages of my life were spread out before You. All the days ordained for me were written in Your book before one of them came to be. How precious are your thoughts about me, O God. I can't even count them; they outnumber the grains of sand!

By the way – this proves that when people try to justify abortion by saying that human life begins at birth, not conception – they are spreading fake news! God says He formed you in your mother's womb and He has a plan for everyone before they are ever born! Don't buy into the lie that killing a baby is just killing a fetus. It is killing a person created and loved by God!

Here's an amazing Scripture. In Jeremiah 1:5 God says: *Before I formed you in the womb I knew you...*

God knew you before you were born and even before you were conceived! God determined your ethnicity – gender - when and where you were born. Acts 17:26 says:

From one man He made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and He determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live.

God knew exactly what He was doing when He made you. He made you “just right.” Red or yellow, black or white, all are precious in His sight.

Fake News #4 - You have no purpose

The most fundamental question we can ask is this: “Why on earth am I here?”
“What is my purpose in life?”

Do you know the most common answer given when people are asked what their purpose in life is? “I don't know.” That is so sad when Colossians 1:16 says:

... everything, absolutely everything, above and below, visible and invisible, everything got started in Him and finds its purpose in Him.

God makes everything with a purpose. Every plant has a purpose, every animal has a purpose; every person has a purpose. That means that God has a purpose for your life. And you'll only find it in Him! Ephesians 2:10 says:

For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

“His workmanship” is best translated “His work of art,” much as an artist creates a picture. We are an “original” with no one exactly like us; God didn’t clone us.

That means that you are uniquely created by God and there is something He created you to do and when you find that – you will be great at it! I know that because Jeremiah 29:11 says

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”

God wants you to have hope for your future. His plans for you are good. One thing that holds many people back is believing this:

Fake News #5 - You have no gifts or abilities

Not true! The Bible teaches that every Christian is gifted by God! Romans 12:6-8 says:

In His grace, God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well. So if God has given you the ability to prophesy, speak out with as much faith as God has given you. If your gift is serving others, serve them well. If you are a teacher, teach well. If your gift is to encourage others, be encouraging. If it is giving, give generously. If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously. And if you have a gift for showing kindness to others, do it gladly.

Notice that each of us is gifted by God to do certain things well. And those gifts are not all up-front on-stage gifts. In fact, most of them are not. Some of the most needed gifts in the church are serving, giving, encouraging and showing kindness to others. Could it be you are gifted to do one or more of those things?

If you don’t discover and use your spiritual gifts, then something will be lacking in the church and in your life!

Fake News #6 - You are not loveable

You may not feel loved by anyone else, but God loves you unconditionally. The most famous verse in the Bible, John 3:16, says:

God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

That's the good news. God loves you! That's why He sent Jesus.

And the good news is that God's love for you never changes. He loves you on your good days as much as your bad days. He loves you when you feel it, and He loves you when you don't feel it. He loves you when you think you deserve it, and He loves you when you think you don't deserve it. You can't make God love you any more than He already does and you can't make Him love you any less than He already does. *God is love.*

To make it even clearer to us, God sent His Son, Jesus Christ to earth as a human. Sometimes when you have something important to communicate – you can't send a representative. You must communicate it personally. That's why God sent Jesus to earth.

If our greatest need was information, God would have sent us a teacher.
 If our greatest need was technology, God would have sent us a scientist.
 If our greatest need was money, God would have sent us a banker.
 If our greatest need was pleasure, God would have sent us an entertainer.
 But our greatest need is forgiveness, so God sent us a Savior.

God did not send an angel or a prophet or a politician or an ambassador – He sent His Son. That's how much God loves you! Not only does God love you, but God is with you.

Fake News #7 - You are alone

Many people are very lonely, but I'm here to bring you some good news today: God will never ever abandon you. Hebrews 13:5 says:

He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."

You may not feel it, but it has nothing to do with feelings. God is with you all the time. One of Jesus' names is Emmanuel, which means "God with us."

On the best day of your life – God is there.

On the worst day of your life – God is there.

No matter if anyone else is there – God is there.

Many of us have been abandoned at times in life. Abandoned by parents. Rejected by friends. Divorced by a spouse. Left behind by others. All of us have experienced the pain of rejection at some time. Maybe it was racial prejudice or gender bias or religious intolerance. But God will never reject you. God will never abandon you. God will never forsake you.

Whatever you're going through right now, God knows, God cares, God understands and He's going through it with you. You are not alone! God loves you and God is with you.

Fake News #8 - Everyone is against you

No matter who is against you, God is always for you. It's one thing to know God is with you. It's quite another thing to know God is for you. He's on your side. He wants you to win. He wants you to succeed.

Some people believe that God is always mad at them and against them. But God is for you. Romans 8:31 says:

If God is for us, who can be against us?

No one is more "for you" than God. God is not mad at you, He's mad about you. When we make mistakes, God doesn't rub it in, He rubs it out! He came to erase all our sins, mistakes, failures and regrets.

Many people think God is angry and condemning. But the Bible says in John 3:17 –

God did not send His Son into the world to condemn it, but to save it.

That's why the message of Jesus is called good news. It's good news and it's for everybody. It's good news if you're Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, Muslim, Mormon, Hindu, Buddhist, Baptist or nothing. God says, "I love you, I'm with you, I'm for you. I sent my Son to die for you and faith in Him will change your life forever."

If that's true – how should we respond? Some people look at me and say – you're a pastor – you grew up in church – you can't really understand what I'm going through. Maybe not. So here's someone who does – someone who was not raised in church. My wife – Deborah –

As Joe said – I did not grow up in church. My stepfather was an alcoholic and my mother suffered from depression. I don't remember them telling me that they loved me. But I do remember them telling me I would amount to nothing.

I don't remember them hugging me. In fact – the only time my stepfather touched me was when he sexually abused me. I felt alone – rejected – worthless – unloved – unlovable – and hopeless. I was in much pain and I tried to escape that pain by taking drugs.

Then one day I woke up and this thought came to me – I don't want to end up like my parents. I want to be different. I think I'll go to church. I had gone to church with some neighbors when I was a child and I thought the people there were nice. So I smoked a couple of cigarettes – got dressed – and walked to church. That day changed my life forever!

That day I heard the good news that:

even if everyone else rejects me – God accepts me.
 even if everyone else is against me – God is for me.
 even if no one else loved me - God loves me!

In fact – He loves me so much that He sent His only Son to die for me.
 I found out that if I put my faith in Jesus Christ:
 I would be forgiven for everything wrong I ever did.
 I would find the peace and joy that seemed to elude me.
 I would receive eternal life and I wouldn't have to fear dying anymore.

When I gave my life to Christ and started studying His word – His truth set me free! One of the major things it set me free from was the lies I believed about me.

Fake news told me I was unlovable – but God said He loved me unconditionally.
 Fake news told me I could do nothing, but God said I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me!
 Fake news told me I was worthless – but God showed me how much I was worth – the blood of Christ!
 Fake news told me I could never change – but God made me a new creation in Christ.

On top of all that – I found a new family in my church.
 A family that loved me and accepted me just like I was.
 A family that was patient with me as I learned about God.

I have never ever been the same since that day. I became a new creation in Christ. I became part of the family of God.

Sure – I still have struggles – but now I have the power of God and the word of God and the family of God to help me through. There are things I must overcome, but God says that through Jesus, I am more than a conqueror.

And here's the good news – just as God changed my life as a 16-year-old girl – He can change your life today!

Just as I learned that God loves me – you can know God loves you!
 Just as I learned that God is with me – you can know God is with you!
 Just as I learned that God is for me – you can know God is for you!

If you will turn to Him – He will turn to you. He will forgive you and give you what you are looking for in life.
 God is all about you!
 He created you and destined you for greatness!
 He loves you so much that He sent His Son so you can be forgiven.
 If you give your life to Him today – He will give you a brand new life!
 Because God is all about YOU!!