



grow. pray. serve.

Reveille UMC Weekly Guide

March 1-7, 2021

Sermon by Lead Pastor Dr. Pete Moon

Third Sunday in Lent

Sermon Title: "Telling the Truth Still Matters"

Notes from sermon on 2/28:

To pray for this week:

Family Focus Question

Do we tell the truth in our conversations?

Are we careful not to spread things that are not true on our social media outlets?

Questions for Small Groups

1. How does it make you feel when someone says something about you that is not true?
Can you give an example?
2. What is the role of the Ten Commandments today? Do we still follow them even though we have the New Testament?
3. Can we hear the words as encouragement to speak positively instead of negatively about people we know? Think of someone about whom you can gossip in a positive way.

Monday, March 1: Read Exodus 20:1-17

This week, we go back to the basics. Today we read what is arguably the basis of our entire moral code – the Ten Commandments. With rules this foundational and seemingly straightforward, one would think it would be difficult to misinterpret, bend, or justify ignoring them, but in reality we do this all the time, and have for millennia. The Ten Commandments say many things, but our focus this week will be the ninth commandment: "You shall not bear false witness."

There are many easy ways to violate this commandment in this contemporary world. The very notion of truth has been considered relative by powerful cultural forces, and there are many ways to tell half-truths or misleading truths. Why is telling the truth so important? What would change in our society and world if everyone told the whole truth and nothing but the truth? Where are we violating this commandment in our lives today, and what is one action step we can take to improve?

Tuesday, March 2: Read John 2:13-22

Today's passage is one of the more shocking ones in the gospels. We aren't used to seeing Jesus this angry. Why was Jesus so patient and kind with tax collectors and prostitutes, yet filled with rage over people setting up a marketplace? One clue may be to examine what was being sold in the temple: cattle, sheep, and doves – the very things observant Jews needed to sacrifice in order to observe Passover. A common historical interpretation is that many of these merchants and moneylenders were dishonest and in cahoots with the temple priests, telling people their doves and sheep they brought to the temple for sacrifice were not "pure" enough, so they needed to buy one of theirs. The very place people came for spiritual guidance, safety, and purity became a place of deceit and deception. We have all seen the incredible damage that happens to the Kingdom of God when we learn spiritual leaders have lied, cheated, and abused. How much more important is it for us as believers to be honest, given the kingdom we are representing and promoting?

Wednesday, March 3: Read 1 Corinthians 1:18-25

Let's be honest (that's what we've been talking about all week anyway, right?) – the message of the cross is a hard one for many to believe. "For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God," Paul writes. There are many "stumbling blocks" to people in need of the cross's incredible gifts of grace, forgiveness, and redemption. Our words and actions need to never be one of them. If our honesty, transparency, and integrity can be counted on by everyone, people will be much more likely to believe in the "why" that drives us: the cross. Where might our habits and words be a stumbling block for others? Are we speaking and behaving in a way that encourages seekers to trust in Christianity, Christians, and the cross?

Thursday, March 4: Read Psalm 19:1-6

We can seek and recognize the truth of God's love and power every day just by walking outside. When we are discouraged by the moral relativism, fake news, spin doctoring, and biased reporting of everything around us, we can find solace and renewal in the simple and magnificent truth of the beauty of creation that "pours forth speech" and "declares knowledge." What do we know when we go outside and look at nature? What undeniable truths are evident in the colors of a sunset or the song of a bird? Today, let us go outside, regardless of the weather, and take a moment to center ourselves in God's loving words to us through the beauty of God's creation.

Friday, March 5: Read Psalm 19:7-14

The second half of this psalm calls us to turn inward to the truths of God's written word to find clarity, purity, and constancy. How often are we returning to scripture as a "reset button" whenever we find ourselves drifting into moral relativism or finding excuses to bend the rules and bend the truth? Yes, there is plenty of ambiguity in the Bible, so it's not as easy as randomly opening the book and picking one verse in isolation to obey. We've all seen the dangers in that. But when we gather together to study God's Word, we discover life-changing, eternal truths we can base our life and eternal life on. Are you part of a Bible study group that is helping you discover these truths, ask the hard questions, and become transformed? If not, reach out to Kelley Lane or stay tuned for upcoming studies, including "A Hop, Skip, and Jump Through the Bible" to begin this journey.

Saturday, March 6: Scripture Memorization: Psalm 19:14

"Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable to you,
O Lord, my rock and my redeemer." (NRSV)

Sunday, March 7: Let us prepare our hearts and minds for worship in praying our Prayer of Common Confession: *Almighty God, you have commanded us to not bear false witness but we are guilty of violating your command. We exaggerate and stretch the truth to make a point. We impulsively pass something on through social media despite dubious origins. We speak negatively about other people so that we look better. By your grace, lead us into a better way. Bring us into your truth, remind us that we already are secure in you, and we don't need to try to lift ourselves up at the expense of others. This we ask in the name of Jesus, AMEN.*