

**March 13th, Fierce Dedication to Reality**  
**Part 3 in the series ‘Truth Be Known’**

What were some things from last Sunday’s message that resonated with you?

Was there anything you wrestled with?

Why do you think humans are often susceptible to ‘chronological snobbery’ – a term coined by CS Lewis, referring to our innate bias to think we’re smarter than people who came before us? Can you think of any particular truths from the Bible that completely invalidate chronological snobbery?

Were you surprised to hear that recent data indicates the average IQ level has been falling in the West since the 1990s (opposite of the ‘Flynn Effect’)?

What do people usually mean when they say “Be true to yourself.”?

A: Today it is seen as not only the right, but even the responsibility of everyone to give full expression to their passions and desires, whatever form that expression takes. And that to not give full expression to it is to live a lie, to live an inauthentic life.

**READ Genesis 3:1-7**

Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden’?”

**2** The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, **3** but God did say, ‘You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.’”

**4** “You will not certainly die,” the serpent said to the woman. **5** “For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

**6** When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. **7** Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

Can you remember what Pastor Jim believes is one of the primary reasons that humans are so prone to deception?

A: because what we want is often in conflict with what is true. What we *want to be true* is often at odds with *what is actually true*.

What does Genesis 3 suggest about the ability of humans to recognize deceit?

Why and in what ways do you think today's culture perpetuates the idea that people *are* what they desire, whether those desires be their dreams and personal goals, ambitions, passions, sexual desires, desires for wealth or abstinence from any of these things etc?

How does God want us to pursue and view our desires?

A: He commands us to pursue all of those things - desires, dreams, ambitions, passions - in a very specific context - that context primarily being relationship with Him. Because he knew that if we pursued any of those things outside of relationship with him, they would destroy us. They would become our god. They would become our master. And the day we pursued their fulfillment apart from Him we would surely die.

According to the Genesis 3 narrative, what are the three fundamental elements behind all deception? The first one is "Don't trust God - He's not who you think he is."

A:

- You can be whoever you want to be, you can be like God, or be your own god. Make your own truth (your own reality). (*God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God.*)
- You should follow your own desires, and if ever your desires run contrary to God's desires, well, you do you. Be true to yourself. Follow your heart (your desires). (*...the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good ...and pleasing ... and desirable , so she took some and ate it.*)

How can we learn what's true and avoid being deceived?