

April 3rd, Our Treasure Map
Part 6 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?

Pastor Jim shared the example of someone who becomes two months behind on their rent and then, thinking drugs will help them escape reality, comes off the drugs a month later to see they are now three months behind on their rent. Can you think of any other examples of ways people try to escape reality? They can be extreme examples or, common, everyday examples which apply to many people.

Why do you think humans often try to escape reality? And, do you think trying to escape reality can be equated with choosing deception?

Why do you think people who have little interest in reading the Bible or learning about how it came to be are keen to read, watch and for some, even to believe a book/movie like 'The DaVinci Code'?

Why is the 'Telephone' game we all played as children an inaccurate analogy of how the New Testament came to be?

A:

- 'telephone' is a game: the goal is to end up with a funny outcome, not to be accurate
- scribes were doing the copying of the texts whereas 'telephone' is not a professional skill
- multiple copies of the texts were spreading throughout a vast geography; if a scribe were to add or make something up in one copy, it could be checked against the other copies.

Dr. Sam Lamerson of Knox Theological Seminary states, "It seems to me that if you throw out the historical reliability of the New Testament documents, one must become an historical agnostic. If you're not going to accept the New Testament as historically reliable, you cannot accept any writings as historically reliable, because we do not have the same amount of backing for any other ancient document that we do for the New Testament."

Is this surprising to you/what are your thoughts on this statement?

Discuss this statement from Sunday's message: **The Bible is not the foundation of the Christian faith. The Christian Faith is the foundation of the Bible.**

If the Christian faith is not based on the Bible, what is it based on?

A: Christianity is based on an event - the resurrection of Jesus.

If the Bible is not the source or foundation of Christianity, why then spend so much time talking about how reliable and historically authentic it is?

A: it's a treasure map! The reliable map. The Bible is the record of the words Jesus has spoken to us. It is a record of the things Jesus said, what he did, and what he taught, all of which provides us with a new mental map by which to navigate life. And it is a beautifully effective, reliable, trustworthy one.

John Mark Comer in his book 'Live No Lies' writes, "The emotional/familial/societal/political meltdown we've been living in for years now is daily proof of the fact that our mental maps are off, that we're drifting further and further into dangerous territory."

READ Psalm 119:97-108

Oh, how I love your law!

I meditate on it all day long.

98

Your commands are always with me

and make me wiser than my enemies.

99

I have more insight than all my teachers,

for I meditate on your statutes.

100

I have more understanding than the elders,

for I obey your precepts.

101

I have kept my feet from every evil path

so that I might obey your word.

102

I have not departed from your laws,

for you yourself have taught me.

103

How sweet are your words to my taste,

sweeter than honey to my mouth!

104

I gain understanding from your precepts;

therefore I hate every wrong path.

105

Your word is a lamp for my feet,

a light on my path.

106

I have taken an oath and confirmed it,
that I will follow your righteous laws.

107

I have suffered much;
preserve my life, Lord, according to your word.

108

Accept, Lord, the willing praise of my mouth,
and teach me your laws.

How does the Psalmist view the Word of God and what can we learn from this psalm?