**Truth Currents** **2-12-21**

Do you find yourself regularly overwhelmed by global crisis and national problems? Do the headlines seem to ruin your day more often than not? Well then, let’s talk.

Truth Currents is designed not to be a commentary on current events. It’s designed to be an opportunity for us to consider how to think Biblically about what happens in the world around us. How do we think according to Biblical principles so that we can evaluate the events of our day?

When I was considering what to talk about on this week’s Truth Currents, I was glancing through a list of headlines and I decided to just jot that list down because it just seemed overwhelming in the options of things to discuss. For example, just this week we’re watching the impeachment trial of former President Donald Trump. There is consideration by the Biden administration of new travel restrictions between states targeting Florida. In other words, punishing Florida for not following “the science” that was *so successful* in California and New York. We’ve been watching the distribution of COVID vaccinations and listening to the debate about whether to take those shots or not take the shots.

We’re coming up on one year anniversary of this motto, “*Two Weeks to Flatten the Curve*.” Not only are we a year down the road from that initial two weeks, but now the CDC tells us we ought to wear two masks instead of one. Makes me wonder why masks, if they’re so effective when they’re doubled up why are they not made that way in the first place?

There are politically correct name changes on some of our teams and products that we’re used to. We’ve seen the Washington Redskins become the Washington Football team. There’s a creative name. The Cleveland Indians have announced that they’re going to change their name. And of course, we’ve lost Aunt Jemima syrup.

The Federal Reserve chairman tells us that the 6.3% unemployment number is probably not accurate. He says, “*Americans are unemployed at close to 10%*.” We’ve watched conservative celebrities being purged from Hollywood as they’ve lost their employment, sometimes just for saying what just a matter of months ago was settled consensus.

The Biden administration has talked about opening schools up. And yet, we find out this week what they really mean. The success in their minds for opening schools is that 50% of the schools in America will be open at least one day a week by April. That hardly seems like a successful re-entry into normal life. The science says, “Let kids go back to school,” but the ideology not so much.

The headlines tell us that Fox News is rearranging their schedule and firing some of their celebrities. CNN is on the chopping block as a potential sale item by AT&T. The Robinhood app tells us just how volatile the Stock Market is. There are unprecedented losses in the energy sector today as the President’s policies regarding the Keystone XL pipeline have devastated an entire American energy industry.

We’re used to mask mandates, mandatory lockdowns, corruption. We now see in vaccine distribution the economic losses of all of this pandemic. And now we know that California churches have had to appeal all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court just to be able to unlock their doors and have worship.

At some point it starts to get to you. I don’t want to talk about any particular one of these items. I want to talk about all of them. They all are representative of a broken world. And as Christians, in order for us to approach these kinds of topics, in order for us to see the headlines, to listen to the news, and not just throw up our hands in exasperation. Not just curl up in a fetal position in fear for the future. We have to have the ability to draw on a Biblical resource that maybe is not available to those who do not know Jesus Christ.

You see, visible events have to be evaluated by invisible standards. Visible circumstances have to be dealt with with invisible resources.

Let me read you some verses from a letter that the Apostle Paul wrote. We call this letter 2 Corinthians. And the fourth chapter he has some verses where he actually gives us a Biblical framework for living the Christian life in a broken world with all that goes on around and how to fight the temptation to despair. In **2 Corinthians 4:7,** first of all he says we are “*treasures in clay pots*.” That’s a fascinating description for Jesus followers because what the Apostle Paul does is that he describes us as fragile and weak containers that hold inside of us a priceless treasure. That’s a pretty good description if you ask me. There is something eternal in us. There is the presence of God Himself, who has taken up residence in His people. But as far as we go, this external shell that we call a body, it seems to always be breaking down. It seems to always be subject to the frailties of mortal life. He says we’re treasures in clay pots.

But this is what he describes and this is where the paradox of being as fragile as we are but having this eternal reality inside of us. He says in verses **8** & **9**,

*“we are* afflicted in every way, but not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; we are persecuted, but not abandoned; we are struck down, but not destroyed;”

It’s fascinating. What he’s saying is that affliction is serious, but for us it’s not fatal. Perplexity is real, but because we have the Spirit of God there’s always an ability for us to find our way. Persecution is fierce, but the Lord stands with His own. And there is a mortal blow that is devastating and yet destruction does not come. It’s a mystery how such fragile vessels, such breakable containers can face the reality and not break.

You see, the drama of the Christian life is breathtaking. In fact, I think it’s the greatest drama on the planet. The drama is that He’s sends us out as sheep among wolves and yet the sheep win. Death is all around us, but by our very presence in this life, others are given eternal life. There’s no spectacle like it in the whole world. The only answer is that phrase that Paul uses in this letter. He says, “*of God*.” You see, the only explanation for how we can sustain ourselves in the face of these kinds of circumstances that surround us in this generation is that there is something “*of God*” happening in us.

We are frail and weak containers, but we are privileged to carry a great treasure. And as we experience pain and suffering and difficulty the reality is that God receives glory, and that other people are impacted by what they observe in us.

Three more verses, verses **16-18** of this chapter. Because of what God is doing in us despite our own weaknesses Paul says in verses **16**, “*Therefore we do not give up*.” Listen, that’s a verse I want you to hold on to. Doesn’t matter what the headlines are. Doesn’t matter what CNN tries to promote. It doesn’t matter what any other news network tries to put out. The reality is, whatever comes we do not give up. Why? Because our success is not based on whether we win elections or succeed in certain social programing. Our success is that God is doing something transformative in us and that has a salt and light impact within our sphere of influence.

Because of what God is doing in us Paul says we do not give up. (**16,17**)

“even though our outer person is being destroyed, our inner person is being renewed day by day. For our momentary light affliction is producing for us an absolutely incomparable eternal weight of glory.”

Now think about that. We know from the life of Paul that he had a laundry list of tragedy and disaster and persecution and imprisonment that followed him everywhere he went. And yet, Paul looked at the difficulties of his life and he said, “*it’s nothing but a momentary light affliction*.” Well listen, there is nothing momentary or light about our troubles unless we do what Paul did, which is frame the way we see our troubles from the perspective of eternity.

How is what we’re going through in this generation momentary? Because no matter how long you live, it’s just the blink of an eye compared to eternity. How is what we’re experiencing just “*light affliction*?” Well, because you have to compare it to what’s coming for God’s people, an eternal weight of glory. This translation says an “*incomparable weight of glory*.” You see, we’ve got to read the headlines. We’ve got to know what going on in our generation. But we have to read the headlines, we have to study the events from a Biblical perspective and a perspective that sees things in this world in the light of eternity.

The fact of the matter is, what we experience is light and momentary only by comparison to what’s coming. That’s why Paul finishes with verse **18**. And he says this…

“So we do not focus on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.”

Listen, Truth Currents is about helping you think through specific current events. That’s what we do week by week in this commentary. But occasionally it’s important for us to just remember what we’re doing here. We’re not trying to come up with answers to all the problems of our generation. We’re trying to see things from the perspective of faith. A Biblical perspective that puts things in their right place by contrast to what is waiting for us as the people of God.

You say, “*Well it’s hard to have an eternal perspective*.” Sometimes it is hard. But let me tell you, it’s something that we do by practice. That’s why I encourage you to be in the Word of God. That’s why I encourage you to put the truth of the Word, let it be implanted in your mind. Because you see, whatever we put in our mind is what determines the way we think. And the way we think determines the actions that we take. We have to quit letting the world set the agenda for our mental processes. We need to absorb the World of God so that we think with the mind of Christ, so that we act as the people of God.

Listen, there’s a long list headlines here. Any one of them could make a separate Truth Current, but what I want you to do is just look at the headlines and say, “*You know, none of that is going to get me down. None of it is going to throw me for a loop. Whatever happens, there is a day coming when I will be with my Lord. I’ll see Him as He is, John tells us, and we will be like Him.*”

I like talking about current events. I like helping you think properly about current events. But sometimes it’s important for us to step back from current events and say, “*Let’s spend some time in the Word of God*.” **That** is the key to living a life with all of the fragile and potentially broken parts of humanity. It’s because we have this treasure trapped inside of us. And God has put us here to put that treasure on display.

Current events, there’s always a new list. The headlines change daily. Today, why don’t you curl up in warm spot with the Word of God and spend some time with some revelation that doesn’t change at all. It’ll do you good.

This is Truth Currents.