

MYTHBUSTING – *undoing the headaches and heartaches inflicted by half truths.*

**ACTS 17:10-12** - *That very night the believers sent Paul and Silas to Berea. When they arrived there, they went to the Jewish synagogue. And the people of Berea were more open-minded than those in Thessalonica, and they listened eagerly to Paul's message. They searched the Scriptures day after day to see if Paul and Silas were teaching the truth. As a result, many Jews believed, as did many of the prominent Greek women and men.*

*"Listened eagerly."* Other translations say "enthusiastically."  
Their listening caused them to search scripture and fact-check Paul and Silas.  
This wasn't about due to a lack of faith. This was due to a love for truth.  
Half truths wouldn't do. They wanted God's truth and God's truth alone.

We are constantly receiving a flood of information.  
Not all of it is true. The need for accuracy has never been more *felt*, or sadly more *forsaken*.

A lot of what's shared isn't true. And when what's false is taken as fact, it can do damage.

The verse at the heart of the series that sparked the whole study:  
**GALATIANS 5:9 (AMP):** *"A little leaven [a slight inclination to error] leavens the whole batch [it perverts the concept of faith and misleads the church]."*

The question we should ask ourselves in light of this verse:  
How many of our missteps are the result of being misled by misconceptions?  
How much of our headaches and heartaches as the result of half-truths?

At the heart of New Years Resolutions is a healthy realization:  
Progress doesn't "just happen." It's intentional.  
A question to consider: *Where does intentionality begin?*  
Where must it begin to bring about change? And could it be we fail so often because we don't go deep enough? We often try to spark the change by starting different habits.

Yet consider the famous saying:  
*watch your **thoughts**, they become words;*  
*watch your words, they become actions;*  
*watch your actions, they become **habits**;*  
*watch your habits, they become character;*  
*watch your character, for it becomes your **destiny**.*

We all are concerned with our destiny. Our future. We worry about it. We plan for it.  
So around New Years- or other times in our lives- we try to work on new habits.  
But often the reason we fail is because we fail to keep going back on this list. We fail to dig as deep as our heart and mind- our beliefs and thoughts.

**Proverbs 23:7** – *As a man thinks in his heart... so is he.* = Our "doing" is rooted in thinking.  
There are some areas we need to stop **doing** now.

But often to do so we need to stop *believing* urban legends, half truths, and flat out myths.

**MYTHBUSTING** – a show where the hosts took questions, myths and urban legends that and put them to the test to find out which myths are true and which are not

*You only use 10% of your brain* – (superhuman capabilities if you use the other 90%) - FALSE.  
The problem isn't the percentage of your brain that you use.  
But often our problem is the percentage of space taken up by myths and half truths.  
Because what you believe absolutely determines how you act.

This is enormous in our walk with God.

When it comes to discipleship, especially in the modern church, sometimes we need to topple the half truths first in order to make room for truth in its fullness.

Churchy urban legends and half-truths that can hurt.

*“God never gives you more than you can bear” // “You’re never more safe than when you’re in the center of God’s will” // “God’s love is colorblind” // “It will happen if you have enough faith” // “Only God can Judge Me”*

These beliefs can keep us from careful thinking about complex issues.  
They can justify our own bias or established behavior.  
They can hurt and do damage when spoken to others.

What's distorted can derail you. It can derail others.

**FIRST ADAM** (Genesis 3)

### **PARTIAL TRUTH**

The more you look at scripture, the more you realize half truths are the enemy's native tongue. Satan hits the scene as a snake, with a forked, split tongue, and his words throughout scripture are split between truth and lies.

Satan uses half truths like Trojan horses.

They sound right and we let them in because they're pulled from what God's said.

Genesis 3 we see half truths.

God had told Adam: *You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil*

However, the enemy quotes Him as if it weren't a prohibition of one tree, but of them all...  
*Has God said, You shall not eat of every tree?* Intensifying the prohibition.

Eve gets careless with the words of God, either due to miscommunication by Adam or her own distortion: *“you must not touch it or you will die.”*

**2 Corinthians 11:3**

*I fear that somehow your pure and undivided devotion to Christ will be corrupted, just as Eve was deceived by the cunning ways of the serpent.*

Why? See verse 4:

*You happily put up with whatever anyone tells you...*

**Copy and Paste Christians.** People that operate from a mish mash of beliefs made up of a collage of Bible related quotations, blogs, and 1 minute sermon clips.

Verses and word pictures without context and bits and parts of the truth can't become our daily bread. It's like our plate of spiritual truths only has one of the seven food groups. We want all the feels and warm fuzzies and little else.

Jen Wilkin: *"Where the prosperity gospel offers us all the things. The Instagram gospel offers us all the feels."*

What does it feed? It feed something we're more and more prone to do in the digital age -- parroting our faith with bits and pieces picked up here and there.

My point is this: ***Far too many people read Bible verses but not their Bible.***

Less than 30% of all Christians will read the Bible from cover to cover.

We've forsaken the Bible in all its content and context.

## **2 Timothy 3:15-17**

*You have been taught the holy Scriptures from childhood, and they have given you the wisdom to receive the salvation that comes by trusting in Christ Jesus. ALL Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.*

Scripture >>> Salvation >>> Scripture >>> Growth

Faith comes by hearing the word of God. It's the gas in the tank.

Faith doesn't continue by something else. It comes by hearing the Word of God.

KEY WORD: **ALL**

**SECOND ADAM - Matthew 4** – Satan tempts Jesus three times with three verses.

Jesus responds with scripture's context.

The enemy's use of scripture shouldn't make us wary of scripture.

But it should awaken us to a reality: **Scripture interprets scripture.**

Two ways to check the veracity of half truths and churchy clichés.

How do they hold up in light of real life experience? ...but we're fallible in our own conclusions.

How do they hold up in light of scripture?

**2 Peter 3:14-18** - *So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him. Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him. He writes the*

same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction.

Therefore, dear friends, since you have been forewarned, be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of the lawless and fall from your secure position. But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Again we see the themes: Scripture, Salvation, Growth

**KEY WORD: *carried away*.**

Peter warns of distortions. These distortions can derail us.

**“Strongholds”** = we often jump to something demonic.

If you look at it’s use throughout the NT it is often speaking to distorted views, seeing incorrectly, and broken mindsets based on half truths.

David Wilkerson - *A stronghold is a mindset, value system or thought process that hinders your growth, the growth of others, and you exalting Jesus over everything in your life.*

GOOD NEWS – we have the **“power to demolish strongholds.”**

We have our weapon. The sword of the Spirit. The Word of God.

The Bereans understood the need for correct information.

They evaluated and compared the truth they heard to what was in scripture.

Many translations say that they were **“Open Minded”**

That doesn’t exactly fit our definition. The opinion of many these days would be to hold to one truth would be closed minded.

## **PERSONAL TRUTHS**

In a recent survey, 6 in 10 Americans agree that *“religious belief is a matter of personal opinion [and] not about objective truth”*— and even wilder - **in the Church? 1 in 3 (32%)** say the same.

Arrived at a “Post-Truth” society where that word recently went down as the word of the year, Meaning: *objective facts are less influential than appeals to emotion & personal belief*

The assumption in our culture is that as long as I do what’s good in my own eyes and I’m not hurting anyone, everyone should be good with it, including God.

It’s because of this “my truth” and “your truth” influence that so many people feel no need to dig deep into scripture to make sure they’re lined up with God’s truth. There’s no need to when “I’ve got peace about it” carries more weight than what the Bible actually says.

We like to think this is open minded. That you can have your own truth.

*“We have become so open to everything, that our minds are closed to the possibility something might be right, and something else wrong. [It is] the closing of the American mind through openness, tolerance for anything.”*

The Bereans were called “open-minded”- how?  
They loved God’s truth so much. They received eagerly. They just wouldn’t deal with half-truths  
In doing so they set the standard for spiritual myth busting.

I don’t think Paul was taken aback or insulted by the Bereans and their inclination to say “prove it” and fact-check his teachings next to scripture.

He encourages similar behavior in his letter to the Thessalonians 5:21-22  
***Test everything that is said. Hold on to what is good. Stay away from every kind of evil.***

God’s Word doesn’t just help us be a good listener.  
God’s Word helps us be a good preacher.

*I don’t preach...* We’re always talking to ourselves.  
And every thought you have is divinely inspired.  
Many are Trojan horses of discouragement. Half truths that become strongholds.

When Satan hits you with a half truth, finish it for him. Give him the full truth.  
Maybe the Enemy comes at you with the reality of Romans 7, we’ve been doing what we don’t want and failing to do what we DO want...  
Fire back the truths Paul writes in Romans 8  
Vs. 1 – there’s no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus.  
Vs. 37 – we are more than conquerors through him who loves us.  
Vs. 39 – nothing can separate us from his love.

*82% of Christian Americans only open their Bible at church.*  
(meaning 82% of Christians Americans plain aren’t opening their Bible)

We may hear and parrot verses. But we aren’t reading the Bible.  
We’re outsourcing the Word, our source of healing.  
We’re playing telephone with God’s Word, rather than hearing God’s voice for ourselves.  
We’re copying and pasting our hope from secondhand teaching.

We’ve been given the power to demolish strongholds.  
Power, the weapon we wield – the Sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

Too many of us have let it gather dust.  
As a result many of us are led by and preaching to ourselves bad theology made up of half truths, Churchy urban legends, and myths will only serve to cripple and derail your faith.

*So watch your thoughts, they become words;  
watch your words, they become actions;  
watch your actions, they become **habits**;  
watch your habits, they become character;  
watch your character, for it becomes your **destiny**.*

Each of us here has a destiny and purpose.  
Don't shape your destiny by starting with your habits.  
Start with your mind.  
Pick up your Bible- renew it.