

Dive! FBCD Women's Ministry

Dwell Differently by Natalie Abbott and Vera Schmitz - Chapter 1 (We Need Truth)

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God's words are not "some magic spell to say over yourself to ward off bad thoughts. No, these verses are so much more than a mantra: these are the very words of God, who is all wise, all loving, and all good. They are deep and true and powerful" (Schmitz, 2024, p. 23).

WHAT IS THINKING?

Literarily, thinking is the process of using one's mind to consider or reason about something.

Scientifically, thinking is the firing of neurons in the prefrontal cortex of the brain.

- Fun Fact: The average human brain contains 86 billion neurons!

Philosophically, there is great debate about what thinking actually is.

WHAT IS TRUTH?

Literarily, truth is that which is in accordance with fact or reality.

Descriptively, truth is non-contradictory, absolute, discovered, inescapable, unchanging, and reliable.

Biblically...

- **"The sum of your word is truth**, and every one of your righteous rules endures forever" (Psalm 119:160).
- **"...your word is truth"** (John 17:17b).

WHAT IS THE WORD OF GOD?

"The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of

Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation." – Baptist Faith and Message 2000

Core Characteristics of the Word of God:

1. **Inspiration:** The words of the Bible are God's very words.
 - "All Scripture is breathed out by God" (2 Timothy 3:16).
2. **Inerrancy:** God's Word is free from error.
 - "...it is impossible for God to lie" (Hebrews 6:18).
3. **Infallibility:** God's Word is incapable of error.
 - "Your law is true. ... All your commandments are true. ... The sum of your word is truth" (Psalm 119:142, 151, 160).
4. **Authority:** The God who speaks the Word is omnipotent.
 - "'I am the Alpha and the Omega,' says the Lord God, 'who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty'" (Revelation 1:8).
5. **Necessity:** God's Word is necessary for eternal life.
 - "So Jesus said to the twelve, 'Do you want to go away as well?' Simon Peter answered him, 'Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God'" (John 6:67-69).
6. **Sufficiency:** God's Word contains everything we need for life and godliness.
 - "All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work" (2 Timothy 3:16-17).
7. **Clarity:** God's Word is clear in its teaching about salvation.
 - "Have you not read...?" (Matthew 12:3, 5; 19:4).
 - Any lack of clarity does not lie on the side of the Scripture but on the side of the reader.
 - "Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of your law" (Psalm 119:18).

Practical Functions of the Word of God:

1. **Stability**
 - As truth, God's Word is unchanging and reliable. We can stand on it without fear.

- “Who cares if you learn every verse in the Bible, but they don’t actually seep way down deep into your heart and transform you?” (Schmitz, 2024, p. 24).

2. Protection

- “In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance...” (Ephesians 6:16-18a).
- The Bible is not just a beloved book with a few nuggets of wisdom. The words of the Bible are our fighting words!
- It’s not “enough to just acknowledge the lies we so often believe. More than that, we desperately need to ground ourselves in the truth” (Holcomb, 2021, p. 1). God’s Word is truth, and it is our best - an only - defense against the lies of the enemy.
- “[The devil] was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies” (John 8:44).

3. Guidance

- “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path” (Psalm 119:105).
- We must align our thinking with the truth of the Word of God.

The Sure Promise of the Word of God: “God’s Word changed us. It didn’t necessarily change our circumstances, but it changed us from the inside out because it gave us solid ground to stand on when the shame storms started rolling in. It was a **shelter** and a **shield** and an **anchor** and a **light** and a **balm** and a **song** that we began to sing into the shadows. We realized that God isn’t lying when He says that His Word is alive and active, sharper than any double-edged sword. He isn’t blowing smoke when He says that just like the rains that fall from the heavens don’t return to the heavens until they cause the earth to bud and flourish, so is the word that goes out of His mouth. It will accomplish the purposes for which He sent it (Isa. 55:10-11). ... That is a PROMISE, and I dare you to believe it” (Holcomb, 2024, p. 2).

“So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, **‘If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free’**”
(John 8:32).

When we abide in God’s Word, we **dwelt differently**.

Questions:

Was there ever a time when you really clung to a Bible verse or one of God's promises? What specifically about that verse spoke to you and your situation?

What are your hopes for memorizing God's truth?

Prayer:

God,

Would you meet me here? Would you help me be honest and vulnerable, so I can see my true self and all of my stuff? You already know it all, and you want better for me. Here are some of the negative thoughts I struggle with:

Will you help me memorize and meditate on your words so that I can find freedom and joy? Help me really understand and believe in your true words. They are powerful because they are from you. Please use them to work change in my heart and actions. Specifically, these are my hopes:

They are the deep things of my heart and the things only you can give. I trust you with them. And I pray with expectancy, knowing that you see me, you hear me, and you love me. O God, do what you alone can do in my life.

Amen.

References:

Holcomb, E. (2021). *Fighting Words*. B&H Publishing Group.

Abbott, N. and Schmitz, V. (2024). *Dwell Differently*. Bethany House Publishers.