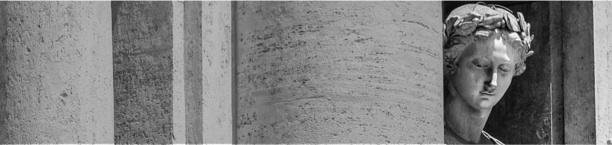
In 2006 the documentary, An Inconvenient Truth, was released. The movie chronicles former Vice-President Al Gore's campaign to educate us about global warming. I do not possess the scientific knowledge to defend the supposed merits of the film or to substantiate the scientific errors its critics have raised. It is the premise of the film's title that has always grabbed my attention: that there is truth that we would prefer to ignore or live in blissful ignorance of.

 The Gospel, at its center, is an "inconvenient truth" because the Gospel of Jesus cannot be separated from the inconvenient truth of God's judgment for the sin we are responsible for. Paul, in Romans, highlights that we have corrupted worship with idolatry; mismanaged our stewardship of God's creation, and fractured society through our assertion that we know better how to order life and relationships. The "inconvenient truth" is that humanity is guilty of destroying the very life giving-world whose creation expressed and extolled the wonder, majesty, beauty, and compassion that IS the very heart of God. Instead, we have enslaved lives, broken lives, impoverished lives, and taken lives intentionally and unconsciously because we want to be gods ourselves. The inconvenient truth is that our understanding of God, life, authority, freedom, and love is fundamentally wrong because we do not want to face the Truth.

LifeGroup

Resource Guide

# for the week of 18 May: The Truth That Ruins Us

This "inconvenient truth" warns us that there IS a final judgment to come because

* the love of God cannot be separated from His justice;
* the grace of God cannot be separated from His judgment; and
* the mercy of God cannot be separated from His righteousness.

Christians are a people who  have embraced this "inconvenient truth" and allowed Him to ruin us with it!

Enjoy your LifeGroup! Mark

# This week’s Bible reading:

Romans 2.17-3.8: … *28 For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh. 29 But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter; and his praise is not from men, but from God.*

*"Let God be true but every man a liar" is the language of true faith.*

– A W Tozer

*The truth that makes men free is for the most part the truth which men prefer not to hear.*

– Herbert Agar

*The truth will set you free...  
 or it will make you really mad.*

Jack Wellman

*Fallacies do not cease to be fallacies because they become fashions.*

*– G K Chesterton*

Getting to know one another better...

If God said to you, "Choose any talent (i.e. painting, singing, sculpting, carpentry) that you do not have and I will make you great." What talent would you choose?

Read Romans 2.17-3.8. In Romans 2.17-23, what actions does Paul identify that a Jew may take confidence in for their salvation and standing before God?

# Reflecting on Romans 2.17-3.8

… on truth

In Romans 2.17-23, how is a "religious" or "spiritual" person guilty before God and deserving of His judgment?

How can Paul speak so confidently in Romans 2.1-3.8 about judgment -- even judgment of "moral people”.

Romans 2.24 is a paraphrase of Isaiah 52.5 and an allusion to Ezekiel 36.20-23. How is Israel at fault for causing God's name to be "blasphemed" among the nations?

Read verse 29. How is circumcision a “heart issue” when a child is actually circumcised when they are 8 days old? Why do you think God commands that a child be marked with the sign of His faithfulness and our surrender before our “heart” can respond?

In Romans 3.1-8 Paul asks 3 questions. How would you answer them?

3.1: What is the advantage of being a Jew?

3.3: When people who represent God are unfaithful does that mean God is unfaithful since He says He will act through them?

3.5-8: Is God's judgment unfair since it is our sin that highlights his righteousness?

# Reflecting on Romans 2.17-3.8

In the USA, we tend to read these verses "individualistically" rather than as a community. Paul is addressing a "people" rather than a collection of "individual persons". This is very hard for us to grasp. In the Old Testament, Paul’s context for this passage, God judges His people as a whole even though there are individuals who are faithful before him. The righteous person is not necessarily spared the righteous judgment that falls upon the people.How do you feel about this? Why seek to be a godly/faithful person if it may make no difference in God's judgment upon a people?

Does Paul's discussion of judgment make you feel insecure? Uncertain? Anxious? Fearful? Why or why not?

Read Isaiah 57.1-2. The context is God's judgment upon Israel. What does this mean for you? Is this insight satisfying? Comforting?

Paul quotes Isaiah's indictment that God's people is causing the nations to be hostile to God. How can our LifeGroup be a people who give God a "good name" in our city and county?

Does giving God a "good name" in our cultural setting mean avoiding certain "inconvenient truths" like sin, judgment, repentance, or surrender?

It is easy to reduce our faith to righteous external acts or markers that tell us we are faithful. These verses warn us against trusting in the practices of spiritual devotion. Paul is not dismissing outward acts or spiritual disciplines. He is saying that they only have value if they are outward/visible expressions of an inward/invisible relational truth. How can our LifeGroup encourage our "internal" growth as a people who then express this relational faith "externally"?

My prayer requests (think of what you want to share in advance)

# Praying for my group...

# Highlighting...

**Sunday June 15th is Graduation Sunday**We honor our graduates in the service. If you, or a student in your house, are graduating please let us know. We need details: what you are graduating from, the degree (if you received one), and what you might be doing next. Contact the office at 858-565-4808.

**Summer Camps @ Faith Community!**

We offer a few options for children and youth during the summer months. There is Weird Animals Day Camp, The Village and Adventure Mountain week long camps, Science Camp, Boys Camp, and Uncommon, for Jr. High and Sr. High students. Please register at: [www.faithsandiego.org/camp](http://www.faithsandiego.org/camp).

# Upcoming...

**Xtreme Faith (4/6th grade club)** – Today after service at the picnic tables!

**Third Sunday**-Today @ 6:30-8pm – a time of prayer in the Worship Center

**Family Sunday**- May 25; A time when the children join us in church for the morning

**Office Closed**- May 26 in observance of Memorial Day

**Living Your Strengths**- Sat. May 31 9am-12noon in the Children’s Center

**Inspired Hands**- Sat. Jun 7 9am-2pm in the Fellowship Center

**Weird Animals Kid’s Day Camp**-Jun 16-20 9am-12pm ages 4-6th grade