

24-1127wc Transcript

24-1127wc - *The Truth Project - Tour 0, Scott Reynolds*

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24-1127 Wed. Class - The Truth Project - Tour 0

Transcript (0:04 - 32:29)

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Teacher: Scott Reynolds

(0:04) I sent out in the program three links. What I'm planning on doing is three things. (0:11) Reading a letter from James Dobson that introduces Del Tackett.

And Del Tackett then (0:20) writes about nine pages. So it's a rather lengthy statement, but it sums up what the Truth Project (0:28) is about really and the significance of what's going on with the Truth Project. Why it's even (0:34) there and what we need to be doing in our society today and our culture.

So we'll be doing that. (0:43) And then there are two videos, introductions to Lesson One. One's on Del Tackett and the other (0:51) one is about what Lesson One's about.

And then next week we'll actually get to Lesson One. (0:59) So with that in mind, I'm going to read a letter from James Dobson in its entirety. (1:08) James Dobson has a one-page intro and then Del's material starts.

And then at the end, (1:16) James Dobson finishes up with a paragraph or two. So James Dobson writes, Dear Friends, (1:22) I want to share something with you today that is a source of excitement. And remember again, (1:27) that's dated September, the letter, September 2006.

So we're talking 18 years ago from the (1:35) letter. So James writes, I want to share something with you today that is a source of excitement for (1:42) the entire staff here at Focus on the Family. Our enthusiasm is centered on a new \$2 million (1:49) DVD production featuring the work and teachings of Dr. Del Tackett, president of our Focus on (1:56) the Family Institute.

This 12-part series titled Focus on the Family's The Truth Project (2:03) opens and explains the scripture in a way rarely equaled. Since I had little to do with its (2:09) creation, I can tell you with complete candor that God's ordination appears to be on this product. (2:17) I was literally in tears this morning as Shirley and I watched the DVDs and heard Dr. Tackett talk (2:23) passionately about the eternal verities or truths found in the Word.

He went on to illustrate how (2:31) they provide ultimate answers to every question posed by the great philosophers of history. (2:38) I'm confident that the gospel of Jesus Christ will come alive for you as well, (2:43) as Del weaves together the central theme of truth throughout the series. The primary purpose (2:51) of this study, which Del has been preparing for many years now, including teaching it in a seminary (2:57) setting, is to facilitate transformation among those who are exposed to it.

That inevitably (3:07) occurs when a person comes face to face with God himself. It happened to Isaiah when he had such (3:15) encounter. The prophet described it this way.

In the year that King Isaiah died, I saw the Lord (3:23) seated on the throne, high and exalted, and the train of his robe filled the temple. (3:29) Oh, it's me, I cried. I am ruined, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people (3:35) of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the Lord Almighty.

One of the seraphs flew to me (3:43) with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar. With it, he touched my (3:50) mouth and said, See, this has touched your lips. Your guilt is taken away, and your sins atoned for.

(3:59) Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? And I said, (4:06) Here am I, send me, Isaiah 6 verses 1, 5 through 8. We in our day call that transformation. Let me (4:16) pass the pen over, of writing this letter, let me pass the pen over now to my colleague of Focus (4:23) on the Family, Dr. Del Tackett, and ask him to tell you more about the Truth Project. I believe (4:29) you will find it even more inspirational than my words have described.

What a great privilege it is (4:39) for me to temporarily pick up the pen that has blessed so many people for so long. My admiration (4:45) for Dr. Tackett began years before 1999, and I had the honor of joining him here at Focus on the (4:53) Family as one of the Executive Vice Presidents. That admiration has only grown as I have worked (4:59) closely with him and observed him over these past seven years.

There is no disparity between (5:05) what you see in public and who he is in real life. That is the definition of integrity. Dr. Dobson (5:13) lives it every day.

The fight to save the family, which Dr. Dobson was initially called (5:19) too years ago, is really part of a larger battle, an overarching struggle that has raged (5:27) from the very beginning and one that confronts us from every quarter today. This is the fundamental (5:34) battle. Let me frame it for you.

When God created the cosmos, he called it all (5:42) good, a statement that is ethical and pragmatic. That is, God's creative work was both ethically (5:50) good, consistent with his character and nature, and qualitatively and practically good. It was (5:59) exquisite, and it worked perfectly.

This included, of course, the most marvelous and unique creation (6:06) of all man. Up to this point in the story, there was no conflict. There was no battle.

(6:13) However, all that changed and changed drastically with the entrance of an enemy, an adversary, (6:20) who was determined to turn the story upside down and destroy the goodness of God's creation. (6:26) But it was the ethical aspect of the good that this enemy hated the most,

anything that reflected (6:34) and bore the image of God. Jesus called this villain no less than the father of lies.

Listen (6:41) to his description. He was a murderer from the beginning and has nothing to do with the truth, (6:47) because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, (6:54) for he is the liar and the father of lies, John 8, verse 44.

That's not a pretty dossier for the (7:02) serpent, alias Satan, the devil. Now, I'm not a person who sees a demon behind every bush, (7:09) but I spent more than 20 years in the United States Air Force, and one thing I clearly learned (7:15) about military tactics is that you must understand who your enemy is. In 2 Corinthians 2, verse 11, (7:25) Paul makes an interesting statement.

We are not unaware of Satan's schemes. I'm afraid that the (7:34) vast majority of God's people in our culture today are unaware of our enemy's schemes. That is why (7:42) we are not faring well in the battle.

In a recent survey, George Barna found that a scant (7:49) 9% of born-again Americans holds a biblical worldview, and that only 27% of self-identified (8:01) Christians even believe Satan exists. If the roaring lion who prowls about, seeking whom he may (8:11) devour, 1 Peter chapter 5, verse 8, can convince his prey to believe that he doesn't exist, (8:20) or to remain ignorant of his schemes, then there will be many who will find themselves in grievous (8:26) turmoil and unaware as to why. Let me give you a practical example.

Let's visit the bedside of a (8:37) young woman who has wasted away the skin and bones, barely weighing 70 pounds. Is it cancer? (8:46) Is it some rare disease that is broader to this point? No, it's bulimia. There's a deeply held (8:52) belief in the lie that no matter how thin she gets, she still perceives herself as fat, and if (9:02) she is fat, she is unacceptable and without significance in a world that promises her (9:09) love and affection if she would just lose a few more pounds.

This is the battle, (9:18) cosmic battle between truth and lies. You want to peek into the home of a broken man who is (9:26) experiencing the devastating consequences of an addiction to the lies of pornography? (9:32) How about pairing into another home where a young father is struggling to raise two kids alone (9:40) because his wife believed the lies that motherhood is a worthless task, that real (9:47) significance comes from the corporate world? Would you like to slip into a child's bedroom at night (9:54) and listen to her silent cries because her parents believe the host of the world's lies and are (10:00) going through a bitter divorce? Would you like to follow me into a small room in an abortion (10:06) clinic and watch the horror that results as a young woman acts out her belief in a lie? (10:13) Should we speak of spousal abuse, child abuse, rampant sexually transmitted disease, (10:20) gambling addictions, drug addictions, homosexuality, the attack against marriage? (10:25) Which direction would you like to turn? Weeping and wailing are everywhere, testifying that (10:33) believing lies results in heartbreaking calamities. In the garden, Satan countered God's word, (10:43) God's truth, that the only thing that Satan is good at is lies.

Laid before Eve is counterfeit (10:52) truth claims, and unfortunately, she and Adam bought them. The resulting consequences, which (10:58) God had warned them about, came to pass. The nature of man became sinful and he died according to the (11:05) word of the Lord.

The promise of Satan, you will not surely die, proved to be a lie. It's as promises (11:13) always do. The rest is history, recorded not only in scripture but everywhere.

The actions of man (11:20) have been chronicled, sin and evil, our present reality. This is the basis for viewing the world (11:29) in the terms of a fierce battle. The conflict between good and evil is not only real, it is (11:38) up close and personal to every one of us.

Listen to how God describes the internal battle as he (11:44) speaks through Paul in Galatians chapter 5 verses 16 and 17. Live by the Spirit and you will not (11:53) gratify the desires of the sinful nature, for the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the (11:59) Spirit and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each (12:06) other so that you do not do what you want.

When we piece together the overwhelming evidence from (12:15) scripture concerning this conflict, it is clear that we are indeed dealing with the struggle (12:21) between truth and lies. Sin is often referred to as deceitfulness. In stark contrast, Jesus (12:30) refers to the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of truth who will guide us into all truth.

The Word of God (12:38) is described as truth. Christ proclaims that it is the truth that sets us free. Scripture proclaims (12:46) that we are sanctified by the truth and Jesus confessed before Pilate that the reason he came (12:52) to the world was to testify to the truth.

This is the cosmic battle. Unfortunately in our culture, (13:01) the lies of the world, the flesh and the devil bombard us from every quarter and when we fail (13:07) to recognize them as lies and instead accept them as true, the consequences are significant (13:15) and devastating. Sadly, the vast majority of believers in our culture are ill-prepared to (13:23) fight in this battle.

We suffer from the same pathologies the world does and statistically (13:30) at roughly the same levels. Divorce, sexual addictions, eating disorders, depression, (13:36) worry, apathy, discontent, anger, abortion, poor media, viewing habits, pornography, and so on. (13:46) How can this be? Quite simply, we are falling for the counterfeits.

I know of only one way to change (13:54) this. Romans 12 verse 2 points to the solution. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this (14:02) world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

Is this a hollow promise from God? Can (14:10) renewing the mind really bring about a true transformation that will keep us from conforming (14:17) to the world? I believe it can. I have seen it happen over and over again. Every semester, (14:23) 88 top-notch college students come to focus on the family for its semester-long institute.

(14:31) God deeply transforms them there, and I have seen it happen to my seminary students. I have seen it (14:38) happen in Egypt where I taught not long ago, and I have seen it happen to high school kids and (14:43) retirees, black and white, rich and poor. But the numbers are too small to have the pervasive impact (14:51) that we need.

Dr. Dobson asked me to tell you about Focus on the Families, the Truth Project. (14:59) Well, I just did, at least the heart of it. We are in a battle for truth.

The consequences of (15:06) following the lies of this world are wreaking havoc upon God's people and our culture. Focus (15:13) on the Family has made a high-stakes commitment to do something about it. We have taken the key (15:18) elements of the more than 300 hours of material that I have been teaching to students at Focus (15:25) on the Families Institute and New Geneva Theological

Seminary and have created a DVD-based (15:32) small group curriculum that is designed to build a comprehensive, systematic, biblical worldview (15:40) within those who participate.

If this sounds like a sales pitch, it isn't. This is because (15:47) you can't call Focus to purchase the DVDs. This is in 2005.

You can now. That's how I got mine, (15:57) by ordering them from Focus on the Family. But what follows here that was specific to 2005 (16:06) gives you an idea of how they expect this program to be worked.

So we are not openly distributing (16:15) the Truth Project curriculum at this time. Allow me to explain why. (16:21) We are convinced that the cultural transformation we seek will not come as a result of a neat (16:29) product.

It must come through deep work, the deep work of God. I pray for each of my students by (16:37) name. Why? Because I know that transformation does not come from me, but from God.

And that is (16:45) why we are implementing the Truth Projects in small groups, where the hosts will be praying (16:51) for each of the students in their homes, praying not only that individual hearts will be transformed, (16:58) but that some of their guests will stand and commit to opening the home for others in a small (17:05) group setting. And this way we hope that the message will multiply and reach thousands, (17:11) maybe millions. So you can't call us to request a copy of the Truth Project, but you can now.

(17:18) Instead, we are holding short conferences, and they are still doing that, around the country to (17:24) train those who want to host a small group. We have held four such gatherings so far in Charlotte, (17:31) Rockford, Colorado Springs, and Seattle, where it has been clear that God is blessing our efforts. (17:38) There has been a buzz in each crowd, and I have spoken with many who felt compelled to be there.

(17:43) In Seattle, people flew in from all over, from as far away as Florida, Canada, and even Shanghai, (17:52) China. Our challenge to each person is to consider opening their home to lead just one small group (17:59) and to dedicate themselves to praying for their guests by name. That's the deal.

This is really (18:06) a partnership between focus and you. The rest is just a matter of trusting God for the results. (18:12) We have a full schedule of conferences in the fall, Boston, Washington, D.C., Minneapolis, (18:20) Atlanta, Orlando, and Anchorage.

If the Lord is tugging at you to be part of this exciting (18:25) adventure, please join us. There is one central theme running through the truth project. The (18:31) truth that we seek and the truth that stands directly opposed to the lies of the world, (18:36) the flesh, and the devil is found ultimately in the character and being of God himself.

(18:44) That is why, over and over again, the DVD curriculum begins and ends with him. (18:49) Let me give you an example of how this works, and in doing so, shed some light on one of the (18:55) prevalent lies that has infected many believers in our culture today. To do so, we need to go back (19:02) in time about 3,500 years or so.

Twelve men had been selected, one from each of the tribes of (19:11) Israel. When they departed the camp, I suspect there might have been no shortage of butterflies (19:16) in their stomach. Sent out as spies, they were to capture a first look at the land (19:23) the Lord had promised to them, a land flowing with milk and honey.

Their mission represented (19:30) a significant chapter of an amazing story that stretched all the way back to the days of Abraham (19:35) and before. Now the land of promise lay before them, and these twelve men had been tasked (19:42) with spying it out. This secret mission promised to be one of the more climatic in Israel's history.

(19:51) Behind them lay a pathway filled with dramatic episodes. The rescue from Egyptian slavery must (19:56) have seemed like a lifetime ago. The realities of the locust, the Nile becoming blood, the frogs, (20:02) and the angel of death may have seemed like distant dreams to them.

Yet since that time, (20:09) they had witnessed a myriad of the most notable moments. The parting of the Red Sea, the pillar (20:15) of fire, the tablets of stone, the manna, and the water from the rock. It was all there, (20:21) memorial stone after memorial stone, confirmation after confirmation that the Lord was their God (20:28) going before them in might and power.

Now they were finally at the end of their long journey, (20:34) one step away from the much-awaited Canaan, the land of promise. No doubt many a fireside (20:41) conversation in the desert had turned to it. How often had children snuggled close to their (20:46) parents asking for yet another bedtime story about the land flowing with milk and honey.

(20:52) Now they were on the doorstep, and these twelve leaders had been chosen to take the first peek (20:58) at this hidden treasure. But something terrible happened. Something changed the picture.

(21:05) Something dimmed the gleam in the eyes of the Israelites and doused their giddy expectations. (21:11) You can read about it in Numbers chapters 13 and 14. It's not a pretty story.

(21:17) The men spied out the land according to plan. All twelve of them saw the same things. (21:23) And although they each shared the same experience, their reactions were very different.

(21:30) Ten men returned to the camp in fear and trepidation, while only two returned emboldened. (21:37) Ten recommended that Israel abstain from the battle, while two advised that it advance. (21:44) Why the disparity? How did this happen? There was no question that the land was indeed flowing (21:51) with milk and honey.

Men had even returned with a cluster of grapes so large that it had to be (21:57) carried on a pole. There were giants in Canaan too. Ten of the spies saw the giants from man's (22:04) perspective.

Too big, too strong, and too frightening. They returned to camp uttering (22:11) words of fear to the whole congregation. The other two spies, however, saw the challenges in Canaan (22:18) from God's perspective.

The giants were big, to be sure, but their guide was bigger than a million (22:24) giants. How can twelve men, all seeing the same thing, return with such contrasting perspectives? (22:34) The answer to this question is of the utmost importance to us today, because it speaks to (22:40) the heart of almost every reason why some Christians shrink back in fear while others (22:48) march

forward in boldness. It has nothing to do with a good or poor self-image, or whether or not (22:57) someone has achieved self-actualization.

It has everything to do with our beliefs about God (23:03) and our thoughts on who He really is. Ten Israelite spies thought victory was impossible, (23:12) because they believed success was dependent upon their own strength. They thought that the giants (23:19) were too big, too strong, and too many, and that the consequences of fighting the giants would be worse (23:25) than the consequences of treating God with contempt.

The other two spies believed victory (23:32) was possible, because they knew success was dependent upon God, not themselves. They were (23:40) convinced God was greater than an entire universe of giants. These two men feared the consequences (23:46) of disobeying God more than they feared the giants in the land.

They put their faith fully in the (23:53) Lord, and He blessed them for it. In stark contrast, the ten spies wandered 40 more years in the (24:00) desert because of their lack of trust in God. They died in exile and never entered into the land (24:07) flowing with milk and honey.

Where do we stand today? Do we side with the ten or with the two? (24:17) When you look at our culture, what do you see? Do you see unconquerable giants? Do you see (24:23) impossible odds? Do you see a myriad of reasons to become fearful? Without a doubt, there are (24:31) giants threatening us in spades, but we need to see them from God's perspective, not ours. (24:38) Slavery was a huge giant in the late 1700s when William Wilberforce became a Christian (24:45) and began to see it for the evil that it was. He was a sickly man, yet he persisted (24:53) in coming before the British Parliament year after year to deliver eloquent speeches in (25:00) opposition to slavery.

He labored for 46 years in the face of threats and slander, (25:08) but a few days before his death, he saw the great British Empire vote to abolish slavery. One man, (25:17) one giant, one mighty God. I believe the scroll of Hebrews 11, the hall of faith, (25:26) continues to be unrolled and new names continually added to it.

(25:31) Names of those whose hope and trust rest in God, his truth and his promises. Yes, we live in a (25:38) land filled with giants, judicial tyranny, homosexual activism, terrorism that could (25:45) strike at any minute, a liberal media that seems to spin and distort everything into ugliness, (25:51) rampant immorality, and so on. If you see these from man's perspective, they are certainly enough (25:58) to make you want to run away, disengage, or sit on the sideline.

Unfortunately, many of us have (26:06) done just that, and many have listened to a subtle voice that whispers, give up, you're lost. Forces (26:14) against you are too great. That is not the voice of God, the deceiving message from the world, (26:21) the flesh and the devil.

We, however, are not those who side with the ten. By embracing the reality (26:29) of who God is and his truth claims for all of life, we can stand up against every giant that (26:36) threatens us, our all-powerful God who promised us through the prophet Isaiah that no weapon (26:43) forged against you will prevail, and you will refute every tongue that accuses you, Isaiah 54, 17. (26:53) Our prayer is that the Truth Project will provide you with the knowledge and insight you need (26:58) in order to be a vessel for change in our fallen world.

(27:03) Oh, that God would grant us a vision of him that is the desperate need of this hour. Take hope, (27:12) my friends, and let us not come weary in doing good, for at the proper time, (27:18) we

will reap a harvest if we do not give up, Galatians 6, 9. Those were the writings of my (27:26) colleague Dr. Del Tackett. I hope that his comments have given you just a small taste (27:31) of the compelling and potentially life-changing material found in The Truth Project.

To read (27:38) about it simply doesn't do the curriculum justice, though. You need to experience it yourself. (27:44) If you're interested in learning more about this exciting endeavor, including how to host a small (27:50) group in your area, please log into our website at thetruthproject.org. Don't miss looking at the (27:57) fascinating interactive guides.

Hope that you will pray with us that the Lord will bless this (28:03) initiative throughout the world. We honestly believe that The Truth Project holds as much (28:09) potential to advance the kingdom as any project we've undertaken in the history of the ministry. (28:15) God's richest blessings for you and your loved ones as you endeavor to defend his truth within (28:22) your own circles of influence in the coming days.

Sincerely, James Dodd. (28:29) So that's the introduction to The Truth Project.

Okay, so let's see if we can do this. [Presenting a video from Dr. Del Tackett]

(28:38) Well, we're about to begin our tour, and it's going to be an exciting worldview tour. (28:44) It's not one where we're interested in you just simply filling up your notebooks with a lot of (28:51) facts and information. Those are important.

What we're interested in is what the Scripture calls (28:57) transformation, the deep transformation. The only way that I know that that can occur (29:04) is when you and I come face-to-face with the living God. That is what will deeply transform us.

(29:12) It happened to Isaiah. You may recall in Isaiah chapter 6, Isaiah wrote these words. (29:20) The year the king Isaiah died, I saw the Lord seated on a throne, (29:24) high and exalted.

The train of his robe filled the temple. Above him were the seraphs, each with six (29:31) wings. With two they covered their faces, and with two they covered their feet, and with two they were (29:36) blind.

They were calling to one another, saying, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty. The whole (29:44) earth is full of his glory. At the sound of their voices, the door closed and the threshold shook, (29:51) and the temple filled with smoke.

Woe is me, I'm undone. I'm a man of unclean lips, and I live (29:58) among a people of unclean lips. There are a number of things that happen when we gaze upon the face (30:04) of God.

The first is that it exposes us. Isaiah cried, Woe is me, I'm undone. I'm a man of unclean (30:13) lips.

Immediately he was exposed in who he was before the face of God. The second thing that (30:20) happens is it exposes our culture. All of the masks and all of the glitter and the cheap paint (30:28) come off, and the reality of what stands behind that becomes very clear.

Isaiah knew that he lived (30:35) among a people of unclean lips. But a third thing happens to us when we gaze upon the face of God, (30:41) and it also happened to Isaiah. Isaiah continued, and he said this, Then one of the seraphs flew to (30:48) me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar.

Quickly he touched my (30:54) mouth and said, See, this has touched your lips, and your guilt is taken away, and your sins are (31:00) atoned. Then I heard the Lord saying, Whom shall we send, and who will go for us? Here am I, I cried. Send me.

(31:10) The third thing that happens when we gaze upon the face of God, it not only exposes us in who we are (31:15) and exposes our culture, but it turns us into a world changer. It says, Here am I, send me. That is what (31:23) we want to see happen.

That is what we're after. Not just a bunch of clinical knowledge, which we (31:29) need to have, but it's an encounter with the living God, gazing upon his face, exposing us, exposing (31:36) our culture, and turning us into people who would say, Here am I, send me. That is what we're going (31:42) to do.

I'm glad that you joined us. I look forward to our times together. Let's begin.

So you got a (31:53) taste of what we're going to be doing here. The idea isn't just to do another Bible study. Like (32:02) Del said, we need to do, we have to have the information.

God has the truth. And the result, (32:08) as he puts it, is looking at the face of God. When we come into contact with that truth, and we (32:15) actually believe it, it will cause us to do things.

And so we need to become doers of the (32:23) word. And that's what we'll be focusing on. So let's close with a prayer.