

# The Genuine Article

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Date: 03 September 2025

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[ 0 : 00 ]     The words of the Lord are pure words like silver refined in a furnace on the ground purified seven times.

! You, O Lord, will keep them. You will guard us from this generation forever. I read somewhere that there is a jeweller's shop in Edinburgh called Fabulous Fakes.

When you walk into it, you're surrounded by an array of different items of jewellery that look stunning, shining and glistening in the light, but every one of them is just a cheap imitation.

Now, you know you're going in there and that's what you're getting because that's the way it's advertised. What you get is cheap because it's just a fake imitation.

And it got me thinking as to how often we can be caught out by something that we think is actually real, but is actually fake and worthless.

[ 1 : 06 ]     There's a difference between fake and cheap. Sometimes you can try and buy things cheap because we can't afford a higher quality item. For example, there's been a few times when I've bought some tools just for a job.

I just needed a certain maybe spanner and I only needed for that one thing so you don't spend too much on it. You buy cheap. But then you go and try and put a bit of exertion into it and it snaps almost immediately.

You're caught out because it's cheap. But there's other things that you can come across and you think you're getting the real thing, only to be deceived and find that it's fake.

Fake looks like the real thing, but you pay dearly. Sometimes it doesn't cost too much. Other times it can be an expensive mistake.

I once bought razor blades online thinking I was getting the real thing. Tried them, they wouldn't shave. No chance. In the bin they went. They looked just like the real thing, but they were fake.

[ 2 : 09 ]     Others can be caught out by buying things they believe are real. Diamonds and jewels or even cars that are expensive. But either the diamonds or the jewels have been faked or maybe the car has been in a crash and has been done up and is actually worthless.

You're caught out and you're conned. Well, what's that trying to say to us tonight? Where we find, as we read here in Psalm 12, that David is reminding us that in life there are many different things that we are looking at that seem so attractive and glisten in our eyes.

And they speak to us of giving us fulfillment and joy and satisfaction and all of these things. But David is warning us that there are so many things, although they glisten, they're fake.

But that there is something that we have that is real and true. And that is what he's talking about here in verse 6. He's looking around in this Psalm as you see.

The godly are gone, he says in verse 1. The faithful have vanished. It's almost like the people of God are disappearing. And then you see there are those who have flattering lips, the tongues that make great boasts.

- [ 3 : 28 ] There are those who are telling lies. But then he comes to verse 6 and he's saying, but there is the word of God. And that this word is truth.
- And that this word is real. And that's not just something for David's day. It's for every day of life. So that as we think of looking back to the weekend that we enjoyed under the word of God, was there anything about it that was fake or cheap or an imitation?
- People would say it's lies. It's not truth. It's just made up stories. But everything that we heard and everything that we partook in was truth, was real.
- The word of God is living and active. The sacraments remind us of what Jesus has done for us. Whether we think of the baptism that he came that we might have forgiveness of sin.
- Or whether we think of the Lord's Supper as we see how that sin was paid for. There was nothing cheap, nothing fake in what Jesus did for us. He paid the greatest price.
- [ 4 : 44 ] He paid the price in full. There was truth and reality there for us. And it was all founded on the word of God. The word of the Lord.
- The words of the Lord are pure words. Like silver we find in a furnace on the ground purified seven times. So here we are reminded that we have truth.
- Just as Timothy was in Paul's entrusting. In Timothy as we read in 2 Timothy 1. Or as you read in Romans 1. There you read of how the people exchanged the truth for a lie.
- There's a difference between what is fake and what is real. And it's God's word that is real. And so that as we go on, as we come here tonight. And as we go on from here and from a communion season.
- We do so looking to this word to be blessed to us. And to all who we see around us. And there's two things I just want us to think about briefly this evening.
- [ 5 : 47 ] And the first thing is this. Whose truth is it? And then secondly, what are we to do with this truth? So first, whose truth is this?
- When you have the Bible in front of you. Whose truth is it? Is it David's truth as we're reading here in Psalm 12?
- Is it Paul's truth to Timothy? Or as you look throughout the scriptures, whose truth is it? I'm sure you would answer that the word is God's.
- It belongs to him. But not everyone would answer like that. Paul reminds us in 2 Timothy chapter 3.
- These great words. He says, All scripture is God breathed. Breathed out by God. God spoke through his people. But it's God's word.
- [ 6 : 51 ] But some people see this as just something. A fairy tale. Some kind of made up story just there to brainwash people. But what they have is fake.
- These ideas are false. But we have the word of God. And that's the very point that David is making here. And everything that's changing as he's seeing around him.
- As godly ones are gone. As faithful ones have vanished. It would seem like things are in decline around David. And the liars with flattering lips are increasing.
- But what is David's hope? It is the word of God. Words of the Lord that are pure. That is where his hope is found.
- And scripture always reminds us of this truth. That God's word will endure. And that God's word will build.
- [ 7 : 48 ] Even when it seems like things are in decline. When the cause of Christ is going backwards as we would see it. Instead of going forwards. God's word is constant there to remind us.

He is at work. And that his word is powerful. You have so many scriptures that remind us of that truth. Other psalms speak about it.

For example, Psalm 89 verse 34. You read there, My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that has gone out of my lips. God's promises.

There is truth. There is something that is real. There's nothing fake about it. Every promise fulfilled in Christ. The already and the ones that are still to come.

Isaiah speaks about it in chapter 40 verse 8. He says, The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever. Forever. And he's talking there in the midst of great challenges.

[ 8 : 51 ] But the word of God stands forever. Psalm 119 verse 89. Forever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven. Again, it's just this constants.

Matthew 24 verse 35. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. Verse Peter 1 verse 25.

But the word of the Lord remains forever. You see it again and again. And Peter goes on in that verse to say, And this word is the good news that was preached to you.

So there's that powerful reminder, just as David is doing here, reminding the people that God's word is pure, like silver refined in a furnace.

Peter is reminding too that this is the good news. This is the truth. This is nothing fake about this. God's word declares it. But so does history.

[ 9 : 50 ] History shows us that the word of God will endure forever. That there is nothing that will defeat God's word. You go back to the year 303 after Christ.

And there was a Roman emperor by the name Diocletian. And he was one who ordered that all scripture would be confiscated and destroyed.

He wanted rid of God's word. And it was happening. Thousands of copies of God's word were burned.

However, God's word still remained. There were those believers who protected God's word. There were those who hid God's word.

When you go outside of Rome, there's a place called the catacombs. There caves underground and in them is where the Christians would often hide and where they hid the word of God.

[ 10 : 51 ] So that God's word endured and came through that experience. We often ask, and we've seen it in our own culture here, Bibles being buried.

Sometimes inside the walls of houses, old houses. If you're knocking them down, you'd often find a Bible inside them. Bibles have been hidden and buried in different places.

And you wonder, is it just with that in mind? If the day ever came, a day maybe we don't see just now where God's word would be banned in our island, that somebody would come across it.

That God's word would still endure. There is always that. God's word will remain. William Tyndale in the 1500s, he had the same experience during the reign of King Henry VIII.

Again, King Henry didn't want God's word in the language that people could understand. But William Tyndale was determined that everyone, as he once described it, from the princes to the ploughboys, would have the word of God in their own language.

[ 12 : 01 ] But the rulers wanted the Bible kept away from the people to control them. They wanted them kept in darkness. But William Tyndale produced the English Bible.

They tried to destroy it. But even that original copy that said that at least three remain to this day. They couldn't get rid of the word of God because the word of God will stand forever.

It is God's word. And he will keep it and use it in many ways to spread throughout the ends of the earth.

Because it is this word that the world needs. And it is this word that he still uses powerfully. Everyone here tonight, you have heard the word of God.

And you have known its power. And you have known it in many different experiences. From that first moment when your eyes were opened by God's grace.

[ 13 : 08 ] When you heard maybe a preacher preach it. Or when a friend shared it with you, you realized God is active. God is powerful. But you didn't forget it.

I hope. It is still that word that is still powerful today. That word that still reminds you that you are his and he is yours.

That Christ died for sinners. That we are one of those sinners that he died for. God's word is powerful. It is his word.

But it is also yours. Because he has given it to you. Psalm 12 here. David is claiming this word for himself.

The words of the Lord are pure words. This is what David knew. This is what David grasped hold of. In Psalm 119.

[ 14 : 06 ] Verse 105. That famous verse. It speaks about your words. A lamp to my feet. And a light to my path.

It is your word. It is the word that leads us and guides us. Hebrews again. It speaks of it in this way. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope.

Without wavering. For he you promised is faithful. So you see there. God's word. It is promised. It is faithful. But it is a confession of our hope.

Your hope. It is the word of God. And Timothy as he writes. Paul as he writes to Timothy. In chapter 1 verse 12. He says.

I am not ashamed. For I know whom I have believed. And I am convinced. That he is able to guard until that day. What has been entrusted to me. Do you own.

[ 15 : 06 ] That truth yourself. I am not ashamed. For I know. Whom I have believed. It is that that we were doing at the weekend. And seeing people doing it for the first time.

Confessing. Confessing. The Lord as our savior. Because the word of God. Has been powerful and active. In our lives. We are not.

Ashamed. Do you own. The word of God. Not just in the sense of having. A bible. In front of you. A physical bible. Or a bible on your phone. That you are able to read.

You own it. In many different ways like that. But do you own the word of God. In the sense. I am not ashamed. Of it. Because it is the power of God.

To salvation. This is God's word. And this is. Your word. From God. So that you may use it.

[ 16 : 04 ] On a daily basis. To build yourself up in the faith. To seek guidance from him. To see what he is. Going to do. To see what he has done. To see all his promises.

That are faithful. In Christ. Whose truth is it? It is God's. And he has spoken it. To us. Then the second thing we see here is.

What do we do. With this truth. What do we do. With this truth. Well we see. As David is speaking in this psalm.

He is. He is. He is. He is showing. Just what's going on. Around him here. How there are those. Who are. Vanished. And. Those.

Godly ones. Who are gone. And the lies. That are being spoken. So what's he saying. To himself. And to others. As he says. The words of the Lord. Are pure. Like silver.

[ 17 : 03 ] Refined. In a furnace. Well there's a reminder there. That. God's truth. Endures. Through all kinds of trials. Refined. In a furnace. Purified.

Seven times. But the words of the Lord. Are pure words. They come through all the different experiences. But they remind us of what we are to do with them.

That we can stand firm for them. And stand firm. In them. And that is what we are to do. With God's word.

It is God's word. And so then it's our responsibility. To do the right thing with it. To listen to it. To preach it.

To study it. To make it known. All of these things. That we are to have. The more we are in the truth. The more we realize. Just how precious.

[ 18 : 01 ] It is. Because there's no other truth in the world. Like it. Nothing. Compares to it. And again. You look through history. And you see.

How in the midst of oppression. And. Persecution. How people have stood firmly. On the word of God. Maybe the most famous is Martin Luther.

We looked at Martin Luther. And the reformation. In our. In our. Bible study. In the hall. The last few months. Before the summer holidays. The great truths. That he gave.

To the church. But the foundation. Of them. Was making us stand. On the word. Of God. The time of the reformation.

Martin Luther. Stood up. And stood out. Against. Those who were trying to keep. The word of God. From others. And he said this. And he's speaking here.

[ 18 : 58 ] To the powers of the time. And it's hard just to imagine. Just what. He was doing. Putting his. Life in danger. But he stood and said. Since your most serene. Majesty.

And your high. Mightinesses. Require of me. A simple. Clear. And direct answer. To the. One. And it is this. I cannot submit. My faith.

Either to the. Pope. Or to the council. Because it is. Clear. As noonday. That they have fallen. Into error. And even. Into glaring. Inconsistency.

With themselves. If. Then. I am not. Convinced. By proof. From holy. Scripture. And if my. Judgment. Is not.

In this way. Brought. Retract. Anything. For it. Cannot be. Either. Safe. Or honest. For a. Christian.

[ 19 : 53 ] To speak. Against. His. Conscience. Here. I. Stand. Cannot. Do. Otherwise. So.

Help. Me. God. They were. Trying. To. To. To. To. For. And.

By. The word. Of. We're. Martin. Luther. We're. Not living. Maybe. That day. As it is.

Just now. But. We. We. We. We. We. By. The. God. David.

In. This. Sam. And. Paul. In. They. They. Are. Indicating. That.

[ 20 : 48 ] This. Is. What. Is. Around. Them. Other. Teachings. That. Are. And.

Will. I. A. Preacher. Quite. Reasonly. Was. A. Truth. Wrong. And.

Doesn't. Become. Good. Just. Because. It. Is. Accepted. By. The. Majority.

And. That's. The. The. The. The. The. The. The. The. The.

The. The. The. The. The. The. The. The. The. The. The.

[ 21 : 43 ] The. The. The. The. and say Jesus was just a man he was not the Son of God would you just accept it and go out or would you I hope stand for the truth and say column you were wrong we need to talk about this we need to you need to see that what you've said is not true you're deceiving the people and even to take it further to to the elders to the presbytery to challenge and say you cannot be saying that you would stand on the Word of God but then that the challenge comes what about when we see it around us in society when we see the wrong that there is around us will we challenge those who believe a lie or those who proclaim a lie would we stand up or do we stand up for the Word of God Paul is saying that I am NOT ashamed of the gospel I'm not ashamed of what Christ has done for me are we we we identify ourselves with Jesus we identify ourselves with the cross the cross that purchased our salvation let us stand for and in the Word of God that speaks of these things as Romans 1 verse 16 says I am NOT ashamed of the gospel for it is the power of God to salvation for salvation to everyone who believes let us not be ashamed but let us stand for and in the truth that we have the Word of God that is before us when you think of what people have suffered like William Tyndale himself who was later executed not long after producing the Word of God in English and so many others who have suffered in order to bring it to all different parts of the world to ourselves here those who have stood firm in the truth will we stand with them we stand for the Word of God just as Paul warns Timothy just as David is warning the people here so we are warned whose word is it it is the Word of God what are we to do with it we are to stand on it and for it we should never be ashamed to identify ourselves with the Lord Jesus and also to identify ourselves with one another that we are the group of God's people that God has placed us in and that we have others around us who are the Lord's people as well as writing an article for the the newsletter that will go out this week about about being church family and I read this quote after I'd I'd put it in but I thought it was quite and tied in quite well as well when we think of being together as I was speaking about the familial nature that the togetherness is a family of God somebody else wants put it like this they may be strange they may be odd but if they are saved they are family it means we're all different somebody will look at me and say I'm strange or odd I might look at someone else and I think they're a little strange or odd we've all got our differences but they are family and together we stand on the Word of God do you believe that God has kept his word and passed it on to us here is the Word of God

for us the Word of the Lord is pure word it has been refined in a furnace on the ground purified seven times David is saying here the words of the Lord will endure well let us come to God's Word on a daily basis he must we come away from a communion weekend me the Word of God be what we stand in and stand for being encouraged in our faith strengthened in our faith and assured that God's Word will endure that God's Word is truth there is nothing fake about this it is more precious than gold and silver and anything else that we can have in this world the world appeals to so many but there's so much that is fake but the Word of God endures forever and that is what is truth and that is what is real and let us listen because God has given it and let us stand in and for the Word of God let us pray Lord our gracious God we do thank you for your word for all that it teaches us we thank you for its enduring power even as we read off in the Old and New Testament as we see so many reminders to us that the Word of God will endure forever we thank you even for our history and the history of the world in which we see that your word has come under attack so many times and yet oh Lord there is still that powerful reminder that your word still stands to this day and always will the grass withers the flower falls but the Word of God stands forever and may we oh Lord be blessed by it to stand in it and on it and for it that all that we have would be founded on your truth help us Lord remain faithful to it and be blessed under it as we hear your voice speaking to us we ask all in Jesus name Amen