

# Truth

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If you will read the following, it discusses what I believe the Bible teaches about truth. It is my hope that you will take your Bible and study along with me. The religious world today is very similar to what it was in Jesus' day. Americans pride themselves in believing that **truth is relative**. We don't believe that truth is some absolute that can be defined. People are asking questions, **What is right?** How can you know **What is right?** How can you know **what is wrong? We don't know!** In our society, no one has any idea what truth is. Even more, many people don't seem to care.... **Is it all that important?** Well, that is the way it was in the N.T. (New Testament) times.. During the N.T. Letters, **Corinth** was a city of great idolatrous "religion". **Athens** was a city where people listened to every doctrine and Paul saw every imaginable idea there. In fact, they even had a doctrine to worship something they didn't know in case they left out some idea. The **Jews** also had their religion (and many of them were divided over it). Any N.T. preacher had the same problems we face today.... **What is truth?** People would no doubt reply, "There is no standard; how can you say what **you** say is truth?"

Long before Jesus came to earth, the Bible teaches that Jeroboam "drove Israel to sin" because Divine authority meant nothing to him. That is also true for many (including preachers) today. In this outline, I hope to give you reasons why people fail to appreciate and find truth. Some of it is in the character of truth itself. Jesus said, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. JOH 8:32 (KJV)" Truth is the only way we can find salvation from sins and harvest the souls of others. (Note, we have this in a shorter tract form).

Why do so many "fail" to find truth? Some do not see the need to look for God's authority in what they practice religiously. They are not looking for authority; in fact, they Don't EVEN KNOW WHERE TO FIND IT. In order to find truth, man has to know where he is at. For example, I use to fly as a pilot and I was flying VFR from Purdue, IN to Evansville, IN and became lost. Unexpected weather had obscured my view of the ground. When you flying VFR (visual flight rules), you fly by the map noticing the features of the land (cities, roads, lakes, etc.) to know that you are on track. It was the first time in my life that I had ever been lost in the air. (Back then, my plane didn't have the modern technology we use today that can safeguard and pin point to you exactly where you are at through radio signals). What does one do? You just don't stop and get directions. I was out of the fog and I could see the ground. I also had my map. But I was still lost; why? It was because the features of the land (lakes, et. al.) were not where they should be, according to the map. And friend, you will never know where to go or how to find where to go until you first figure out where you are. One may pick out a road or a town and fly down to try to read road signs (as we use to joke about in our flying classes), but you better find out where you are. Until you know where you are, you can't use the map to find out where you are going. The same is true in religion. Until we find out where we are at, we are not going to see where we are going. Everywhere we look, there are people in a lost state—

**I find among religious people today, that many of us want to know where to go, but we don't really understand where we are in our relationship to God or His truth. In this outline, we will look at**

- 1). Where we are.
  - a). The state of the world in reference to truth.
  - b). Why People Have refused Truth
- 2). Our obligation to truth.
- 3). The nature of truth.

I. The State Of The World In Reference To Truth...Let's note 3 distinct areas...(1). The Atheists, 2). The Religious, 3). Those Of The Church)

- A. The "NON religious" (secular) world today often refers to religion as a simple philosophy in which you "check your mind (brain)" at the door. There are many open forums with opinionated folks who are convinced man is nothing but an evolved creature through eons of time. Therefore, when you ask what is right, "who" would dare say they know. It is really up to each man to find his way. It is common to hear, "*I'm not judging anyone*" or "*If you think it is OK, fine*" or "*But I am personally against it*" or, "*I just do it to me, I hurt no one else*". All the world is teaching and practicing different things.
- B. Some folks have become deeply "religious" but we find every idea imaginable. People have turned to Buddhism or Taro Cards. Some people believe in **faith only**; that is, they actually, believe a "**blind faith**". Some believe in **faith and repent. only**. Some believe in nothing but a "**sincere**" type religion.

C. Yes, and even those of us who consider ourselves Christians in the “Lord’s” church are divided over a great many things. It is common for one to say, “we all realize that we don’t know EVERYTHING”; but the point is to imply, that we can’t know the truth about certain Bible subjects (e.g., on marriage and divorce issues).

Today (as in past ages), People are doing what they “feel” like doing. **Moral relativism**, (some things are right in one circumstance, and wrong in another) is descriptive of our age.

## II. Why do People Today Find Truth So Difficult?

**For Some, WE DON’T WANT TO KNOW!** Arrogantly, we each believe our opinion is as good as truth. We don’t accept that someone else might teach us “absolute truths”. For example, one host of a talk show (a religious man was being interviewed) said something like, “what you are telling me, is that we are to be ‘newborn’ Christians, and that is thumbing your nose at those of us that are not. **You are saying the rest of us are no good and the way we are living is no good....**” His charge was really a charge of either bigotry or egotism against those who would claim to know the way to live.

We hear, “Don’t tell us how to live”! We like “confusion” because it eases our conscience about the choices we make. In fact, if some fellow were to come out and say, “**I know** in all this confusion, **I know what truth is**”, he would be considered prejudice, egotistical. If someone dare stand up today and say whole heartedly, “In the midst of ALL the denominations (some 1600 plus), In the midst of ALL the religious folk, **I know what truth is**”—he will be charged as an idiot. We want our own choices.

We want to act “based upon our feelings”... Often, discussions about what is right or wrong come down to, “*I don’t feel is too bad...*” or “*I feel....drinking...*” or “*I feel dancing...*” or “*I feel if we love each other,*”. I recall in one congregation where I worked, those in their 30’s to 40’s characteristically replied, “but I feel”. It didn’t matter what the Bible stated. This is nothing less than making idols out of one’s own feelings or emotions. Idols are what we bow down to serve other than God and His word. The fact is, that anytime we abandon a standard of authority, the result is that we will just do what we feel like doing (see Judges 17:1-6 KJV) “6) In those days {there was} no king in Israel, {but} every man did {that which was} right in his own eyes”.

Such attitude made them (and we as well) ripe for the judgement of God and His wrath. God raised nation after nation to punish Israel because every man did that which was right in his own eyes. In reality, this is the central theme of error.

# The Nature Of Truth

**ALL** truth is settled in heaven (a fact, the world rejects).

A. Holy men of God, always taught there is an absolute standard...

B. Man doesn’t invent truth, or make it up...

1. Truth has always existed, since the beginning of the world...

Psa 119 deals specifically with this point-- Psa 119:89 LAMED. For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven. (Royal Bible has footnote— to settled “**permanent**”

We don’t make or invent truth, we discover it.

Now let me tell you something about the Bible. You can go from the depth of sea—or into a space craft and go to the end of universe and you won’t find one truth that will contradict that the Bible has said.

You can stand on what the Book says, because it is truth and it is settled in Heaven.

The Bible stands because it is truth. What this means is that EVERY ISSUE OF MORALITY– IT IS SETTLED IN HEAVEN BY God– It DOESN’T Change. For example, it will include morality issues such as HOMOSEXUALITY. In modern times, people have written books explaining why such an “alternative” life style is fine. Everyone has an opinion. But I can give you the truth absolutely. I know the answer. But it is not because, “I” am so smart, nor because “I” invented it, but because God “said” it, and truth is “settled” in Heaven. God’s truth is that Homosexuality is an abomination (it is sin), and those who practice such things won’t go to Heaven (see Romans 1; Gal. 5). There is what God said. Therefore, I dare not **stand up and say, “I don’t see anything wrong with it...”** It’s a day in which the people of God better stand be counted, there is this that is right, and this that is wrong. This is acceptable or unacceptable because of what the Bible says. Homosexuality is just an illustration; the principle applies to any moral issue one cares to name; Truth is settled in Heaven—whatever subject (fornication, premarital sex, divorce, marriage, modern drinking, murder, or even the way- authority- the church does its work). There is no room for us to “invent” or say, “*I feel this way, that way, or I have a good idea of what the Bible says*”

To illustrate, let’s consider a young couple who are fighting and quarreling all the time. They seek advice and

release from the marriage. We are hearing too often things like, “*I am not for divorce* “ someone says, *but in a situation like this it might be better.* Folks, as a preacher, and you as a lover of truth, we had better toss our feelings about such matters in “file 13”. Then, I better open my heart to the will of God and read what the Bible says (as in marriage in such passages as Mat 19:9). My feelings have nothing to do with the matter. My desire to see this young couple become happy has nothing to do with the matter. No, rather, what does the Bible say? I need to elevate the integrity of God, the righteousness of the Heavenly Father to its rightful place and respect His word. How do you feel about these movies with sexual content and nudity? It doesn’t matter “how I feel” but what does the book say (see *Phil 4:4-8* ; among many passages that could be given). We better learn to “keep our hearts” by the Book of God. You don’t want to talk about what is right? What is wrong? What is sinful, and what is not? What is moral, and what is not? Maybe, you don’t want the “absolute” truth? Do you want to know what God says about subjects like Divorce and Remarriage, Sex before marriage..., social Drinking, Dancing, Going to the prom..., Modest Apparel, Homosexuality, Euthanasia, Doing Drugs, Abortion, Husband/Wife Roles In Home, Lying, et. al.? Then we must take it out of the realm of feelings, and go back to the Book. God has settled the truth in Heaven.

## You Are Obligated To Know Truth

Let’s make something clear— **Every accountable person** is obligated to know (find, understand) truth. Rejection of moral absolutes will never work and those who do such are on the road to destruction. They have rejected God just as Paul described in Romans 1. God teaches that we can both know and “understand” His truths. Isaiah said, “let us reason together” (Isa. 1:18). Too many in religious circles today have the idea that what God wants us to do is to just blindly accept him. Really, there is no thought process behind their religion; nothing but more emotion, **blind faith, holding hands while quivering and quaking and being blindly excited.** That is not what God taught. God says, “let us reason” —use your mind. In John 8, Jesus reasons with the Jews. They are listening to His arguments and then He says, “If ye were Abraham’s children, ye would do the works of Abraham.... If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me.” Further, He challenges them to look at His life and find sin. He says in essence, “give it a try”. He appeals to their minds to see the truth and to accept it. The whole eighth chapter sets forth that there is “A” standard set forth by God. He also explains why they refused Him; that is, they didn’t want truth.

(John 8:43-45 KJV)

(43) Why do ye not understand my speech? {even} because ye cannot hear my word. (44) Ye are of {your} father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it. (45) And because I tell {you} the truth, ye believe me not.

They understood and what they concluded was that “Never so spake a man”. They had the ability to see but chose to reject truth. God has given us the same challenge. He has presented us with absolutes; truth. We have the same choice. God doesn’t want blind acceptance. He gave us “signs” to cause belief “(30) And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: (31) But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.(Joh 20)”.

Each person is accountable for truth, “all of us” from the poor to the rich, are individually accountable to see and accept truth. I can’t blame you, for not seeing it I can’t hold you responsible because I didn’t have it. Each is accountable...**THAT BEING SO**—we hope you will take God’s word and search for truth. Investigate its pages for we **KNOW WE ARE ACCOUNTABLE....** Let us open our minds and hearts to truth.

## Free Will Brings Choice Of Good Or Evil

God created man in His Image; therefore, in Genesis 2 He made man with a mind of *free will*. Man can know **good** from evil. Man can know **right** from wrong. We **have ability** to examine the facts and choose the truth. We can “cipher”; to put it all down, **NUMBERED A TO Z**, then to look and see if it is truth or error. Man has always chosen the error. For example, Adam knew what God said...but he chose wrong, and rebellion to God. It didn’t get better. In Noah’s day, God looked at the whole world, and every individual and saw nothing but intentions to do evil. They could have been better but chose rebellion. With the tower of Babel, they could have chosen to do right, but they built it in rebellion. God has always given man choice; but man was held accountable for his choice.

And when Jesus came, God did not take away free will. Jesus **DIDN’T COME TO FORCE HIMSELF ON ANYONE.** He could have bowed my neck down, put a sword to my throat, or He could have forced my mind...No it is

(Mat. 11:28), “whosoever will”. Jesus will not make you do anything, but He invites. “And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely. REV 22:17 (KJV)” As Elijah of old, we each must make up our minds, “how long will we stand between two ways?” As Joshua admonished, (Josh 24:24 ) “*choose you this day whom ye will serve*”. **You** have a mind. **You** are accountable. **You** have a choice. And **YOU** will be held accountable for the choice you make; whether for the standard of truth set forth by Jesus (Joh. 8:32) or your own standards.

## Characteristics of Truth That Make It Hard For Some...

Truth IS NARROW. This is Perhaps one of the **greatest qualities** of truth that the world refuses to accept. For example, the Apostles came into the world and brought a doctrine that **astounded, amazed, and changed** the entire face of the earth. As we said in the beginning, it was a doctrine of narrowness. That first sermon after Jesus ascension was a sermon of “narrowness”. Peter said, “Therefore let all the house of Israel *know assuredly*, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. ACT 2:36 (KJV)” These religious people were no different than those of our day. They had been raised to what their Mamma’s, daddy’s, believed. Later the Apostles would no doubt, encounter the same questions of religious people today; What’s right?. What’s wrong? Who can tell, how can you, who knows? No one does? But Peter in his *narrow mindedness* says “You can know assuredly”. Can you imagine anyone being any more narrow minded? In essence he says, “**I don’t care** which religion all the city of Athens accepted...**I don’t care** how sincere, and loving your parents believe...**I don’t care** what Jew or what sect believes this or that for this one man I preached about; the one I said is resurrected; the one I said is Lord and Master is the only truth. That’s the way it is. That’s where the truth is. And you can know it assuredly.” Of all the religions of the world in that day. Peter stands there in his narrow mindedness and he says, “This is true.....” The point of the Apostles is that when they **preached gospel, you’ve got it. None of them were any different about truth.** Later, Paul will say, “my preaching was not of men, but you heard from me what God wanted you to hear” (1 Cor.). How egotistical, and narrow-minded **he must have** sounded to some—

The truth is narrow and I will tell you that when you take a stand on truth and mark it (that is, you point out that this is the beginning and here is the end of it and you say that this is where I will stand); you will appear narrow —and you will be called narrow. You WILL BE NARROW for **A-L-L truth is narrow**. In mathematics, what is 2+2? Will we argue about it or we stand on the Narrow answer of “four”. So it is with religious truth; the word of God.

Truth Involves A High Cost To Those Who Accept It. Truth Obligates us to obey it...(Psalm 119:60) I made haste, and delayed not to keep the commandments.” I am not only held accountable to understand it and to recognize how narrow it is, But I am to haste to be obedient to it. More, the degree of obedience to it that God expects of me is astounding. It is unfortunate today that we have so many denominational folks telling us that there is basically nothing we do to be saved while Jesus is teaching “be thou faithful even if it means death” (see Rev. 2:10). Few religious people know the difference between God’s part, “g-r-a-c-e” and our part “o-b-ey”. “Buy the truth, and sell {it} not; {also} wisdom, and instruction, and understanding. PRO 23:23 (KJV)” Truth is going to cost me; just as it did my Lord. “Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; HEB 5:8 (KJV)” Paul said, (II Timothy 1:12) “For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day. 2TI 1:12 (KJV)” Truth is the standard that I can put my trust in it; it will be the standard I can die for.

Truth demands we put it first before the most ‘loved’ things given to us on earth. “If any {man} come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. LUK 14:26 (KJV)” Now, it makes no difference who likes it...or who is offended by it; even those of my own family-- Truth must be first. Jesus said many hard things, but nothing harder than. “But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven. MAT 10:33 (KJV)”. The fact is that it makes no difference what my loved ones think, my employer or what I think. The only thing that makes a difference, —is it the truth? Most of us accept “some principles” of truth until it gets “personal”. We want truth until it crosses with my loved ones or my “pet sins”. We all know we are sinners and we don’t really mind saying that; but we hate having specific sin pointed out. *They taught*, out of all the religions in the world and out of all the sincere folks in the world, that if one didn’t believe this doctrine, **he was damned**. That is what they taught. That wasn’t easy and they did it because of their love and joy for truth. They did it out of concern for the souls of men. Too many will allow hurt feelings, popular opinion, loved ones or inconvenience to get in the way of setting forth the truth of God.

Truth just cannot Abide with Error

All around us, we have people crying out, "let's just get along". Let's just fellowship one another and overlook our differences. The Apostles fought false doctrine with all their heart and breath for they would have no fellowship with error. They were persecuted because they dared to declare truth and demand folks leave error.

#### Truth Obligates One to Stand As A Righteous Man

How often have we heard something like, "I have to live this life for God, but I am not strong enough by myself". I understand that, for I am in the same boat but God gives a secret to having the power to live righteously in His closing exhortation to the Ephesians. It is a chapter (6) that tells us how to get Job done, in order to go to Heaven **if we want to go!** "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. EPH 6:10 (KJV)" The secret to being a Christian is to make ourselves strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. That is it! "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. EPH 6:11 (KJV)" You see, the nature of truth demands that we "stand and be counted". We cannot "drift" if we are going to go to Heaven. Being a Christian just doesn't accidentally happen; for one will have to stand against the world. **We can do it!** "Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;(15) And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; (16) Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. (17) And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:".

We have learned that truth is easy to define (John 17:17). We have learned that truth is "absolute" and narrow and that we can know it (John 8:32). We have learned that if you will read the word of God and practice what you read, that you will stand in truth. Will you do that? Will you be holy in your conduct; "Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy. 1PE 1:16 (KJV)" Will you look to God's character, His righteousness, and emulate that as your standard or code of Ethics? Choices in life do not come down to what "I feel" or what "makes me happy" when it comes to truth. Rather, it is about applying the teaching of God to our lives. That is what should direct us. "(Titus 2:11-12 KJV) (11) For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, (12) Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;" Men better stop deciding what is right and wrong *in our own eyes* and get back to consulting the book of God to find what is right and wrong.

You remember what Jesus said (see John 17:17, John 8:32) and that is that **truth** saves! Men can make you **feel good**. Men can tell you that **everyone** is going to Heaven. Men can fill the building with people by enticing them with **cokes, popcorn and candy**. Men can have fun in games and socialize so that we all enjoy one another deeply and conclude that "**God must accept us because we are good; if we don't get to Heaven, no one will.**" But the truth is, not everyone that calls upon God will be saved but only those who do His will (Mat. 7:21). There is the hard and narrow truth of it. There is truth that saves and there is love that saves (when men are willing to preach it). Nothing we say can do any good unless it is truth. And we have no real love unless we are willing to stand in the face of all the popular errors and say that they are no good so that men can be saved.

May this Website help you in your search for truth! If it does anything at all to help just "one", it will have been worth my time and effort (see Mat. 16:26).