

Truth is Absolute and Knowable

Sharing the gospel involves making truth statements about God, Jesus, and the Bible. However, if there is no *absolute* truth that can be known (for all people, at all times, and in all places), then Jesus is in error for claiming that God's "word is truth" (Jn 17:17), that it was possible to know Him as "the truth" incarnate (Jn 14:6; 17:3), and that there is freedom in knowing the Truth (Jn 8:32).

1) What is truth?

- a. *Coherence View* – all statements must cohere or be consistent with other statements in the system.
- b. *Pragmatic View* – statements are true if they work or have utility. Truth is that which is expedient and brings intended results. This view confuses what truth *is* with what truth *does*.
- c. *Intentionalist View* – truth is found in good intentions, not in propositions or affirmations.
- d. *Correspondence View* – truth is that which corresponds to reality as it exists.

8 Truths About Truth:

- 1) Undeniable – Phil 2:10-11 – Every knee shall bow & tongue confess
- 2) Non-contradictory – 1 Tim 6:20 – Jesus corresponds to the Father.
- 3) Discovered – Jn 1:48 – Jesus is discovered by Nathaniel.
- 4) Revelatory – Jn 1:18 – Jesus is the "Word", "declares" the Father.
- 5) Personal – Jn 14:6 – Everyone must discover truth personally.
- 6) Unchanging – Heb 13:8 – Jesus is same yesterday, today, forever.
- 7) Absolute – Jn 3:16 – Jesus is Messiah for all people, all places, time.
- 8) Exclusive – Acts 4:12 – Like truth that excludes its opposite, Christ is the exclusive way to salvation.

2) Can truth be known? – Some ideas stand in the path of discovering truth.

- a. *Skepticism* (Hume, d. 1776) – we should doubt everything, suspend judgement about reality. It is the philosophy of uncertainty.
- b. *Agnosticism* (Kant, d. 1804) – can't know ultimate reality/truth (appearance vs. reality)
- c. *Relativism* – (Heraclitus, 500 BC) – truth is not absolute, it is relative to the person, perspective, or culture.
- d. *Religious Pluralism* – The view that all religions are true. Those who deny this are considered intolerant, exclusivistic, and narrow minded.

3) The Laws of Logic

No two opposite statements can be true at the same time and in the same sense. These laws are also called “first principles” since they form the innate laws of thought and reasoning.

1. *The Law of Non-Contradiction*
(A cannot be both A and non-A at the same time and in the same sense)
2. *The Law of Identity*
(A is A)
3. *The Law of Excluded Middle*
(A is either A or non-A)
4. *The Law of Rational Inference*
(If A is in B, and B is in C, therefore A is in C)

The Nature of These Laws:

1. Undeniable
2. Laws that flow from God’s nature (Jn 1:1; Heb 6:18; Tit 1:2; Jms 1:13)
3. Self-evident to all (i.e. cannot get behind, under, or beyond them)
4. Like ethical laws which are *prescriptive* (what you *ought*/should do)
5. A *negative* test for truth – shows what *cannot* possibly be true, not what is true.

The Importance of Knowing these Laws:

1. Knowledge of these laws help in the detection of *logical contradictions* when dealing with unbelievers. Ex: “All truth is relative” is an absolute relative statement which is contradictory.
2. Knowledge of these laws aid in establishing *common ground* with all religions when witnessing (*i.e.* All religious statements are subjected to them).
3. No absolute truth statements could be made without these laws.
4. Knowing these laws will help one discover and establish certain undeniable premises that can be used for establishing the existence of God.

4) Objections to Truth

- A. Your truth is narrow, exclusive and intolerant.
- B. There is no truth! Truth cannot be known!
- C. All religions have equal truths.
- D. All truth is relative.
- E. What’s true for you isn’t true for me!

- F. The laws of logic are just human conceptions.
- G. There are no absolutes!
- H. People aren't logical, so why bother using logic?
- I. Logic doesn't apply to religious truth.
- J. This makes God subject to our logic?
- K. Truth cannot be known about God because finite human language can't talk about an infinite God.