

**THE
TRUTH
ABOUT
TRUTH**

THE TRUTH ABOUT TRUTH

July 7, 2013

Sermon in a sentence: Understand that God's Word is established as the only reliable truth in our world.

Scriptures: John 18:37-38a; John 17:17; 2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:20-21; Is. 41:21-24; Is. 42:5-9; Is. 46:8-10

John 18:37-38a Therefore Pilate said to Him, "So You are a king?" Jesus answered, **"You say *correctly* that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice."** 38 Pilate said to Him, "What is truth?"

Pilate's question is one that still rings out today, 2000 years later. There is a high degree of personal autonomy in our contemporary North American society, and people want to have things their own way, do their own thing and define truth on their own terms.

However, there are certain truths about truth that we need to keep in mind.

Truth is exclusive. In other words, if something is true, anything other than that is untrue! For example, if I have a son, I am a father. I am not childless. Being a father is the truth of my situation. Being childless is NOT the truth about my situation. Truth excludes un-truth.

Truth never changes. If it is true today, it will be true tomorrow. Time does not change truth. Politics cannot change truth. Our feelings cannot change truth. Our

wishes and desires cannot change truth. **TRUTH NEVER CHANGES.**

Truth is absolute. It is not affected by situational ethics or societal practices. Truth does not bend or crack. Truth is unaffected by 'political correctness'.

Truth is verifiable. It can be verified by what you (and/or others) have seen, heard, felt, touched, smelled, tasted, read, experienced, tested or tried.

Logicians, philosophers and mathematicians like Aristotle, Socrates, Immanuel Kant, Rene Descartes, Blaise Pascal and Georg Hegel have given much thought to this matter, but the truth is that not many of us get our ideas regarding truth and error by reading books on philosophy, logic or mathematics!

We DO however have some pretty clear concepts of truth that we live by as a general rule in our society.

In simple terms, we speak about:

- **Statements of fact:** "A stick is not a stone". "You can be alive or dead, but not both at the same time". Or the simple statement: "I am a human being". These statements and others like them are universally accepted with no debate.
- **Experiential truths:** "I have experienced pain, so I know it is real". Pain is a reality to me. It is TRUE that I have experienced it. "Wind exists. I have felt it on my face. I have been pushed along the road by the wind. I cannot see it, but I have experience with it". These truths may deal with both physical on non-physical realities.

- **Eyewitness truth:** “I saw Johnny run across the street”. No one had to tell me. No one had to convince me of it. I actually saw it with my own eyes. I may commit perjury and tell a lie in court, but that does not change the fact that I saw what happened.
- **Historical truth:** There are things that I was not around to see or experience, but I believe in the truth of them because of the witness of those who were there. I wasn’t there to see Alexander the Great or Napoleon Bonaparte in battle, but I believe the word of those who *were* there and saw them. I wasn’t there to see the running of the first marathon as the messenger brought news of battle to his Emperor and then fell dead, but I believe it happened because of the report of those who were there.
- **Scientific truth:** Through observation, calculation, experimentation, etc., truths about the natural world are discovered, quantified and verified using the “scientific method”.
- **Revealed truth:** As we cannot read the mind of another person, they have to reveal their thoughts to us. This is revealed truth about what they think and feel, their plans and dreams, their hopes and desires.

For the purpose of this lesson, however, when we speak of revealed truth, we are primarily referring to the Word of God, which reveals His thoughts, actions, will and plan: for the world in general and our lives in particular.

Jn 17:17 Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.

2 Tim. 3:16 NASB All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness.

2 Peter 1:20-21 NASB But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is *a matter* of one's own interpretation, 21 for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.

The Lord began to speak through Isaiah in chapter 40ff to establish His position as the only true God of the universe, to state He was coming to earth to shepherd His flock and to establish the words of the prophets as His own Word.

Peter stated that the prophets spoke under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and Isaiah's prophecy backs him up.

Isaiah 41:21-24 NASB "Present your case," the LORD says. "Bring forward your strong *arguments*," The King of Jacob says. 22 Let them bring forth and **declare to us what is going to take place; As for the former *events*, declare what they *were*, that we may consider them and know their outcome. Or **announce to us what is coming**; **23 Declare the things that are going to come afterward, That we may know that you are gods**; Indeed, do good or evil, that we may anxiously look about us and fear together. 24 Behold, you are of no account, and your work amounts to nothing; He who chooses you is an abomination.**

Isaiah 42:5-9 NASB Thus says God the LORD, Who created the heavens and stretched them out, Who spread out the earth and its offspring, Who gives breath to the people on it and spirit to those who walk in it, 6 "I am the LORD, I have called You in righteousness, I will also hold You by the hand and watch over You, and I will appoint You as a covenant to the people, as a light to the nations,

7 To open blind eyes, to bring out prisoners from the dungeon and those who dwell in darkness from the prison. 8 “ I am the LORD, that is My name; I will not give My glory to another, Nor My praise to graven images. 9 “Behold, the former things have come to pass, now I declare new things; before they spring forth I proclaim *them to you.*”

Isaiah 46:8-10 NASB Remember this, and be assured; Recall it to mind, you transgressors. 9 “Remember the former things long past, for I am God, and there is no other; *I am* God, and there is no one like Me, 10 Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things which have not been done, saying, ‘My purpose will be established, and I will accomplish all My good pleasure’.

Thus, through fulfilled prophecy, God has established His Word as truth, in all the categories listed above except for Scientific Truth. (This is not at all to say the Bible is not true from a scientific standpoint. It is simply to state that at this point, science has not been able to verify all of God’s claims.)

Our responsibility therefore is to learn as best we can, and apply ourselves to obeying His Word, to the very best of our ability. His Word is our foundation for living.