

## **Can We Know Anything Anymore?**

### **1. Truth Under Fire**

A. Examples of political spin, statistical manipulation and outright lying abound.

1. Historical revisionism – Truth is not found in the *facts* but in cultural perception. Thus even the recent history of our nation is being rewritten in textbooks, museums, films, etc.
2. Judges, reporters, executives, even football coaches have fabricated stories, credentials. Our last president demonstrated without a shred of shame that truth lies solely in perceptions, and if you tell a lie long enough people will believe it.
3. Judicial truth: Trial of O.J. Simpson demonstrated on national TV that truth is less important than social justice. Religious truth: Denominational fragmentation and “it doesn’t matter what you believe” mentality has added to agnostic air. Truth has been sacrificed to god of political correctness.

B. The underlying philosophic foundation of subjectivism:

1. Naturalism: All that exists is a result of random chance. All the matter and energy of the universe just happened; man is just an accidental collection of atoms. Thus, there is no true objective reality – i.e. no God; reality is merely how one perceives his present world.
2. As each one’s perceptions are different, truth is different to each one. *Your* truth is how you happen to perceive the world from genetics, nurturing, politics, etc. Each individual is free to determine what is *right for him*.

C. We are a nation with growing ambivalence toward truth. We are swiftly reaching a state of skepticism demonstrated by Pilate: “What is truth?”

### **2. The Christian’s Outlook**

A. The basis of all that we know is the realization that God has revealed Himself. The Christian is confident of and pursues that knowledge, for it defines all else.

1. Creation – Rom 1:18-20; Ac 14:17 (not without witness). The proper interpretation of the evidence – design, complexity, purpose – leads one to the Creator.
2. Words – We have more than God’s product, however. We have *actual words* from Him.

3. The mind of Christ in words – 1 Cor 2:11-16. Inspired men wrote that others may know – Eph 3:3-5; 1 Jn 1:1-4.

B. But what is the outcome of this knowledge? Yes, it is obedience to God's will; it is a properly structured and productive local church. But it is more than this: it is *boldness, assurance and confidence in what is true about myself and my existence. This is what our society is missing and what has been sacrificed to the gods of naturalism and humanism.*

1. Eph 3:16-17 – *“we have boldness and access with confidence.”*

2. Eph 4:13-14 – *“no longer children tossed to and fro ...”.*

3. Col 1:23 – *“grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away ...”.*

4. Col 2:2 – *“full assurance of understanding.”*

5. 1 Jn 2:3, 5; 3:14, 19; 5:13 – *“we know ...”* (or derivatives).

6. 1 Jn 2:28 – *“confidence at His coming”; “boldness in day of judgment”* (1 Jn 4:17).

7. 2 Tim 1:12 – *“for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded ...”.*

C. On the other hand, Jesus repeatedly addressed the fearful, uncertain disciples: *“O you of little faith”*. Doubt, fear, uncertainty plague our society. We don't know who we are, what we stand for, why we're here, where we're going.

### **3. The Power of Faith**

A. The most important elements of reality are things not perceived by the senses – 2 Cor 4:16-18; 5:6-8.

B. Faith is not blind, naïve or simplistic acceptance but powerful conviction based on evidence. Christians base their beliefs on reasoned conclusions.

C. We are going to be challenged in the future by the movement of our culture and philosophic underpinnings. As a society we are drifting further and further away from safe anchorage in truth and reason. We are heading into the deep waters of skepticism, agnosticism and relative values. It is all the more imperative that we regain our stature as “people of the book.” Our hope, trust, confidence and assurance is in the mind of God as revealed in the Scriptures.