

## **What Is Truth?**

### **1. Truth vs. Relativism**

A. Truth on trial - Jn 18:37-38.

1. Identity: Who was Jesus really? Was He, in truth, a King? How so?
2. Activity: What had Jesus really done? Was He, in truth, a perverter of the nation? Did He forbid payment of taxes? (Lk 23:2)
3. Pilate reflects the skepticism, agnosticism of his culture: "What is truth?"
  - a. Pilate says there is no firm, stable, binding standard by which men can know.
  - b. This being true, Pilate is at the mercy of political pressure, superstition.
  - c. Truth, to Pilate, was what was expedient, what was in His best interest.

B. This same relativism is a great danger to our society.

1. Business/politics: Lying accepted practice; truth is what you can get away with. Illus: Seeing through lies in advertising.
2. History: Recent rise of revisionism. WWII now being retold; denial of role of religion in establishment of this country.
3. Morality: One person's "right" is not necessarily another person's "right." This has led to a terribly confused society in which it is obvious that some behaviors lead to disaster but they cannot be labeled "wrong."

C. Religion, too, has bought into the philosophy of relativism.

1. All religions have validity; all are acceptable alternatives although many teach conflicting doctrines.
2. But the Bible speaks of "false" teachers: I Tim 6:5; II Tim 3:7, 8; 4:4.
3. God intended for His church to be the "pillar and ground" of the truth (I Tim 3:15).

### **2. The Objective Standard of Truth**

A. Truth is rooted in the very essence and being of God. "I am the way, the **truth**, and the life" - Jn 14:6.

B. Jesus told the Jews, “If you abide in My word ... know the truth” (Jn 8:31-32).

C. To Pilate - “Everyone who is **of the truth** hears **My** voice” (Jn 18:37).

1. Truth is objective and rooted in the nature of God.
2. God has spoken in His revealed word.
3. The Scriptures contain objective truth; we cannot tailor them to fit our subjective experience. Illus: “How do you **know** you are a Christian?”
  - a. I feel it; it is an indefinable assurance.
  - b. I obeyed the truth - Rom 6:17-18.

### 3. Our Obligation to the Truth

A. We must **love** truth - II Th 2:10-12.

1. This grows from the knowledge that truth is ultimately benevolent. It may be hard, for truth may reveal my weakness or sin. People today reject the Bible because it convicts them and their lifestyle as wrong.
2. The converse: lies are from Satan and are ultimately destructive. See Jesus’ condemnation of the Jews: Jn 8:37, 40, 44, 47.

B. We must **know** the truth - II Tim 2:15 (“rightly dividing”); 3:7 (“always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth”).

C. We must **worship** in truth - Jn 4:23-24. Most people today think worship is entirely relative.

D. We must **speak** truth - Eph 4:15, 25. We must not be deceived into thinking that lying will better solve a problem than telling the truth.

**Conclusion:** God desires all men to be saved “and to come to the knowledge of the truth” (I Tim 2:4).