

GoLife100 | Lesson 25

The Nature of Truth

BY DENNIS PEACOCKE



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THIS LESSON FOCUSES ON the nature of truth from the Christian worldview. It will discuss other competing perspectives of the nature of truth, factors that affect our perception of truth, and how biblical revelation of who God is forms the foundation of our biblical beliefs about truth.

THIS LESSON IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE it is necessary that we can address the needs of our culture at the root level. Understanding what the Christian worldview teaches about the nature of truth will help us do that.

CASE STUDY:

During what seems to be a very positive, open opportunity to share the Gospel with your next-door neighbor, you decide to share your testimony. At the end of your sharing, your neighbor says politely, "Well, I'm very happy for you. It sounds like you have found your truth, but that is not my truth."

CASE STUDY REFLECTIONS:

What would you do or say next?

MAKE YOUR CASE:

What question might you ask yourself to challenge your neighbor's view of truth?

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I. Truth as described in Scripture:

- A. [John 14:6](#): Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.
- B. [John 14:16](#): I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever;
- C. [John 14:26](#): But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.

II. The nature of truth is a “root” presupposition. It fundamentally addresses how we determine what is reality:

- A. Epistemology is determined by our presuppositions—what we have put our faith in. Is it in:
 - 1. Our senses?
 - 2. Our mind?
 - 3. Revelation from God through the Holy Spirit ([1 John 2:26-27](#)).
- B. Seven influential epistemological positions:
 - 1. Science and technology (modernism): If it’s not scientifically provable, it is not true.
 - 2. Reason (rationalism): If it is not reasonable, it is not true.
 - 3. Senses (empiricism): If it is not sensible, it is not true.
 - 4. Experience (existentialism): If I can’t experience it, it is not true.
 - 5. Revelation (Christian): If God is not its source, it is not true.
 - 6. The Experts: If the experts don’t confirm it, it is not true.
 - 7. Tradition: If it is different than we have always believed, it is not true.

What would be true even if we were not there to affirm it?

III. In the Christian worldview, revelation is the standard for truth:

- A. General Revelation: God’s nature as revealed in the created order ([Romans 1](#); [Psalm 8](#); [Psalm 119](#)).
- B. Specific Revelation: Specific truth revealed by God.

IV. Other factors affecting how we learn and perceive truth:

- A. Our culture.
- B. Our disposition and calling.
- C. Our age.

V. The Greek and Christian presentations of truth:

- A. Western cultural teaching methods vs. Eastern cultural teaching methods.
- B. Distinctions between the Greek and Christian perspectives:

Your perspective changes your capacity to comprehend truth.

1. Truth is a fact (point) vs. Truth is a person (Christ).
2. What do you know about what is true? vs. Where are you in relationship to what is true?
3. Truth is a point (either/or) vs. Truth is a road (both/and).
4. Truth is static vs. Truth is alive.

Define a Term:

OBJECTIVE *belonging to the object; contained in the object; without bias or prejudice; anything being, or regarded as being, external to or independent of the mind; something objective; reality; real; actual; something aimed at or striven for* “Objective certainty, is when the proposition is true in itself;” – Watts (Webster’s 1828)

VI. The nature of truth from a Christian worldview:

- A. God is the source of all truth.
- B. God is one, therefore, there is one truth.
 1. Different dimensions of truth: subjective and objective.
 2. The difference between fact and opinion:
 - a. Wisdom discerns fact from opinion.
 - b. The principle of two witnesses to establish truth ([Deuteronomy 17:6](#); [1 John 5:8](#); [Deuteronomy 19:15](#); [Acts 15:28](#); [Deuteronomy 30:19](#); [2 Corinthians 13:1](#); [Matthew 8:16](#); [Matthew 16:19](#)).
 - c. A conclusion is the systematizing of fact and opinion.
- C. God’s subjectivity is our objectivity. His opinion is our truth.
 1. God stands outside of all that limits us, therefore, truth is objective and infinite beyond our capacity to fully comprehend it.
 2. There is one truth all creation must submit to.
 3. As created beings, no one person or one group of people can know the extensive truth ([Ephesians 3:14-18](#)).
 4. God never changes; therefore, truth is constant.
- D. God has created man with the capacity to know truth.
 1. We can’t know everything, but we can know something.
 2. Though God has provided many means of discovering truth, our ultimate standard for truth is revelation.
 - a. Revelation is dependent upon the nature and ability of the Revealer.
 - b. There are various ways God reveals truth to us. Examples: the Word, prayer, visions, others, etc.

**God’s
subjectivity
is our
objectivity.**

VII. Knowing truth in Christ is not popular, but it is powerful!

Memory Verse:

“Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.’”
—[John 14:6](#)

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Homework:

1. What non-biblical, epistemological positions are you most prone towards and why?
2. Why does God seem to hide truth from people?
3. What do you think has been the biggest factor in undercutting the belief in objective truth in popular culture?
4. What part of “your truth” do you believe applies to everybody and why?

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Listening Test:

1. Reason is subjective.
 - a. True
 - b. False
2. Our dispositions and callings affect the way we perceive truth.
 - a. True
 - b. False
3. _____ philosophy has had an impact on the way we perceive truth.
 - a. Eastern
 - b. Darwinian
 - c. Greek
4. The principle of two _____ has been given to us to help us discern what is true.
 - a. witnesses
 - b. judges
 - c. in prayer