

Beyond Belief – 01 What is Truth?

Subjective truth – Truth that is subject to change (circumstantial and individual)

Objective Truth – Absolute truth. True no matter the circumstances

I. Living without Truth

1. Why should I have to talk about this stuff anyway? (1 Pet 3:15)
2. Is it possible there is no reality no ultimate truth?
 - 1) Postmodernism
 - 2) Relativism
 - 3) Agnosticism
3. What's at stake?

II. What can really be known?

1. *Fact and Opinion?* Real and Interpretation?
2. The major tests of truth:
 - 1) **Correspondence** – Does the claim match or “mesh-with” reality?
 - 2) **Coherence** – Do the facts come together as an integrated whole?
 - 3) **Consistency** – Does the story told make sense within itself (internal logic)
3. Minor Tests of Truth: Less reliable ways of “*Knowing*”
4. Cutting off the branch you're sitting on.

III. When God Enters the Truth Equation

1. If there is a God, then Truth *IS* objective
2. If God can be known, then Truth can be known (Prov 9:10)
3. If God has revealed Himself... (John 14:6, 8:31-32, 16:13, Psa 119:160)
4. The truth about God is already known (Rom 1:18-20)

What is Truth – Discussion Questions

1. Describe the difference between objective and subjective truth.
2. Why should we as Christians need to deal with false views? Can't we just focus on the scriptures and let other people deal with this stuff on their own?
3. Define postmodernism and describe how it corrupts the culture and the church.
4. Define relativism and describe how it corrupts the culture and the church.
5. Define agnosticism and describe how it corrupts the culture and the church.
6. Ben suggested several measures of truth, how necessary is it to understand and apply these measures? If we could get by without these measures, why might we still want to get proficient at applying them.
7. Try to recall some ways in which the three views we criticized fail the tests of truth. Do you have other challenges you would like to bring against them?
8. How does God's existence and subsequent revelation impact the nature of truth and our capacity to know it? (John 8:31-32)

For memorizing this month:

1 Peter 3:15 New American Standard Bible
¹⁵ but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always *being* ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence;