

Bridging the Gap

Truth is not:

- 1) That which **works**. Where the end justifies the means
- 2) That which is **popular**. Our “vote” determines right and wrong
- 3) That which **agrees in part**. Circular reasoning, “fossils validate rocks”
- 4) That which is **constructed**. Contingencies must be answered
- 5) That which is **relative**. “My culture, situation and story”

Why does Truth matter to me?

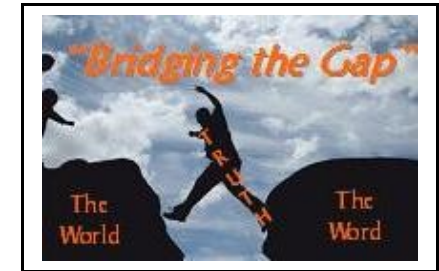
- 1) It matters theologically
 - a. How do I read my Bible? Is this the way things are?
 - b. Psalm 119:160, “All thy words are the way things are”
 - c. Matt. 5:18 “Amen” is the same idea, “so let it be”
 - d. John 14:6, “The Way, the Truth”
 - e. John 16:13, “Guide you into all truth”
- 2) It matters evangelistically
 - a. Acts 4:12, “No other name”
 - b. John 5:29, “Will hear His voice and come forth”
 - c. Hebrews 9:27, “The judgment”, the *krisis*
- 3) It matters personally
 - a. The Cross, John 19:30 . . . Sura 4:157
 - b. 1 Thessalonians 2:13, “Not as the word of men”
 - c. 2 Thessalonians 2:13, “Salvation . . . in the truth”
 - d. John 17:17, “Sanctify them by Your truth”

Friday: TRUTH EXPLAINED

What is Truth?

Why does Truth matter to missions?

Why does Truth matter to me?



“Jesus answered . . . For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth.” **John 18:37**

Basic definitions:

Mission: “The work of God in reconciling sinful humanity to himself through the saving work of Christ”

Missions: “The practical implementation of *Mission* through local churches, organizations and individuals of the Great Commission: to make disciples in every nation that will make disciples . . . that will make disciples . . . that will make disciples . . .”

The Source **God.** This is His world, with billions of people made in His image, with intrinsic value, and worth saving (John 3:16)

The Message **Christ.** Of first importance, says Paul, is the death, burial and resurrection of Christ; the Gospel (1 Cor. 15:1-4)

The Target **A lost world.** Separated from God, and lost, without a single resource to save themselves (Rom. 3:23-24)

The Embodiment **The Church.** Believers living out His life within us, bridging the gap to this very lost world we live in (Rom. 10:13-15)

The Power **The Holy Spirit.** Beginning in Acts 2 with display after display of the power of the Holy Spirit (1 cor. 2:4-5)

The Proposition:

“The present chasm [between Christian’s and the world] . . . has been bought about almost entirely by a change in the concept of truth . . . So this change in the concept of the way we come to knowledge and truth is the most crucial problem, as I understand it, facing Christianity today . . . If anything was true, the opposite was false. In morality, if one thing was right, its opposite was wrong. . . If you understand the extent to which this no longer holds sway, you will understand our present situation.”

Francis Schaeffer The God Who Is There

**Defining Truth: “Truth is that which corresponds to reality”,
“Truth is that which corresponds to the way things really are”.**

	Characteristics	Opposites	Verse, example or illustration
C	Communicated	Unknown and no authoritative source	Psalm 19:1-8, “Day unto day utters speech” and Hebrews 1:1-4, “Has in these last days spoken to us by His Son . . . the express image of His person.” What about Bertrand Russell (1872-1970), “Not enough evidence”.
O	Objective	Subjective , with a “light within”	John 20:31 says, “but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name. “My own Jesus” without definition is idolatry.
R	Reasonable	Irrational: Any claim is equally valid as true	History and other disciplines validate Truth. There are limitations, of course, to the extent of reason. C. S. Lewis became the “most dejected and reluctant convert” in England. Paul offered “reasonable” evidence many times.
R	Reflects reality	Illusionary: reality is my own creation	Let’s say you are in prison for a justified reason. No matter how much my positive thinking might alleviate my attitude toward the situation, denying reality with happy thoughts can never reverse the reality of the situation.
E	Everywhere	Limited to cultural and social norms only	Absolute, universal truth means that when something is true, it is true for every person, in every place and at all times in history. For example, the Holocaust is a true, historical fact regardless of what country you live in.
S	Supernatural	Scientific: Nothing “unnatural” exists	Science is <i>limited</i> by the scope and method of inquiry, therefore unable to answer the fundamental questions like, “Is there a God”, or “why is anything”. Science cannot rule out a spiritual world that is “above and beyond nature”.
P	Personified	Ethereal: vague notions of a “deity”	John 14:6, “Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.” Not only that, those who have seen Christ have seen the Father as well as John 14:9 states.
O	Orderly	Disorderly: Can you systematically know?	If the pieces of the puzzle cannot be arranged, then they do not fit. A correct, truthful, world view must have a system of knowing itself: we might not know all the slices of the pie, but there is a whole pie!
N	Non-contingent	Contingent: new information alters it	All human knowledge is contingent. New information alters outcomes. However, knowing something <i>truly</i> does not require knowing something <i>exhaustively</i> . We live day-to-day with limited knowledge: “how strong is your chair?”
D	Divine	Human: the origin of truth begins with Man	Truth is divine in its origin. That is, it is <i>Theocratic</i> as opposed to democratic. Truth his not voted upon, or constructed by humans with limited knowledge. Who is God’s counselor? Isaiah 40:13. Gandhi said truth was God
E	Experiential	Theoretical: pure intellectual “fun”	Truth can and must be lived out. Mental ascent is not enough, “You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe--and tremble! (James 2:19). “Believe” means to “lean upon”, not “know about”
N	Non-contradictory	Contradictory: It can’t be lived out	One valid and necessary test for any world view is whether it can be lived out (experienced). A contradictory world view cannot, as John Cage’s “mushrooms” prove. Gandhi said, “I am a Hindu, A Christians, A Muslim, A Jew”
C	Comprehensive	Limited: Any world view must be holistic	A second valid test for a world view is whether it covers all possible facets of life. Evolution, for example, cannot speak to design, love, purpose etc. Darwin’s main problem was <i>origins!</i> “Nothing to offer” was his reply! Ahhhhhh
E	Exclusive	Inclusive: Can’t we all just get on?	Truth is necessarily exclusive! For example, Jesus said He was the <i>only</i> way. (John 14:6, Acts 4:12). 2 x 2 = 4 necessarily excludes the numbers 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, etc. “True” is different to “preference”.

Some other key characteristics of Truth:

1. **Absolute** (not relative),
2. **Universal** (not local),
3. **Permanent** (not temporal),
4. **Factual** (not opinion based),
5. **Theocratic** (not democratic, where man decides).