

Introduction (Prolegomena), III.

If, as we have noted, language is the means by which we receive truth and it is the method God has chosen to reveal Himself to His people. We must address this question, “What, then, is truth?” Cf. John 18:37, 38.

Answering that question involves understanding the nature of truth. Both inside and outside of Christendom various answers are given. These answers are condemned by the apostle, 2 Tim. 3:7.

Just as language is to be grounded in the nature of things, so truth is grounded in the nature of things. This is why there is the “Natural” revelation of which we have spoken, which is grounded in Creation. And, more importantly, as fallen creatures, there is “Special” revelation which pertains to matters most strictly considered religious.

Contrary to contending views, according to Scripture truth is knowable, 1 Tim. 4:3; 1 John 2:21; Acts 10:34; 3 John 12. To this end Scripture was written, Prov. 22:20, 21; Luke 1:3, 4. And for this truth the godly man longs, rejoices and contends, Ps. 43:3; 25:5; 1 Cor. 13:6; 2 Cor. 13:8.

Additionally, truth is *singular*—it is one, John 14:6; 8:32; 1 Tim. 2:7. This truth is identified with the Scriptures—the Word of God, Dan. 10:21; John 17:17; 2 Cor. 6:7.

The Holy Spirit Himself is as closely linked to the truth as is the Son, John 14:17; 16:13.

In fact, this *knowable singular* truth is the seed used by the Spirit of God to regenerate fallen men, 1 Pet. 1:23; Jas. 1:18; John 8:32; Tit. 1:1. One great purpose of saving men is to bring them to the knowledge of the truth, 1 Tim. 2:4; 2 Tim. 2:25. It is necessary to living the Christian life, Eph. 6:14; 1 Pet. 1:22; Ps. 71:22. The truth is said to dwell in believers, 2 John 2.

This singularity of truth is intended to lead believers into: 1.) Unity of faith, Eph. 4:11-13. 2.) Unity of fellowship, Eph. 4:3-5; Ps. 133:1.

Unity of faith is achieved through unity of belief in the truth—it is *doctrinal*, 1 Tim. 4:16; Isa. 52:8. Doctrine is a principal end for which Scripture was given, 2 Tim. 3:16; Isa. 29:24. True doctrine is, throughout Scripture, portrayed as both knowable (because it is teachable) and singular, Prov. 4:2; Matt. 22:33; Luke 4:32; 1 Tim. 4:13. Interestingly, only when false doctrines are in view do we see the word doctrine appear in the plural form, Matt. 15:9; Col. 2:22; 1 Tim. 4:1.

Just as individual belief manifests itself in confessing, Rom. 10:9, 10; so, too, this doctrinal unity—unity in the truth—shows forth itself in a unity of confession, 1 Cor. 1:10. Verbal confessing of sound doctrine is necessary to preserve the Christian faith, Tit. 1:9; 2:1, 7. These sound words of doctrine possess a form, 2 Tim. 1:13; Rom. 6:17.

It is a mark of the apostasy of our age that men resist and refuse the truth, 2 Tim. 3:8; 4:3, 4; 2 Thess. 2:10-12. Refusal to believe the truth is a sign of unbelief—an indication that one is not counted among the people of God, John 10:26.

It is by taking heed to a form of sound words (*i.e.*, truth rightly derived from the Word of God, 2 Tim. 2:15; 2 Cor. 4:2) that move believers from faith to faith, Eph. 4:14, 15; 1 Tim. 4:16; Heb. 5:12-14; 6:1; Rom. 1:16, 17. It was a hallmark of the earliest church that they held the apostles’ doctrine, Acts 2:42.