

Authority for Truth

Matthew 21:23

14 January 2022

What gives us the right to decide what the truth is? It certainly cannot be based on our own opinion or our personal experience or preference. When we confront people with the truth of the Holy Bible, they are going to question our authority for the truth that we are presenting. We must be sure that we have God's authority for everything that we proclaim concerning the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

I. WHAT IS TRUTH? (John 18:37-38)

- A. *An exact and faithful expression of the facts.*
 - B. *The standard by which to judge all else; a final authority.*
 - C. *The real answers to the real questions; those things that remain (Hebrews 12:26-28).*
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II. WHY DO WE NEED THE TRUTH?

A. **Man is Unfulfilled Without the Truth** – He is to:

- 1. **Seek the truth (Jeremiah 5:1)**
 - 2. **Buy the truth (Proverbs 23:23).** You can buy a bible and get the truth (John 17:17), but if you don't know the importance of the truth, it will lie dormant.
 - 3. **Know the truth (John 8:31-32) NOTE: knowledge of the truth must therefore be possible.** The truth of the bible will set you free from the bondage of sin (Rom 6:17-18, 1 Cor 7:22).
 - 4. **Serve in truth (1Samuel 12:24).** We need the truth to live for God and serve Him. Knowledge of the truth of the bible is profitable for conforming our hearts and reforming our lives to the holiness of its principles. Everything other than God's truth is vain (1 Sam 12:21).
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B. **Truth is Often Disregarded by Man**

- 1. **Truth is fallen in the street (Isaiah 59:14-15).** The loss of the truth should upset you. Too many people don't care when the truth is lost.
 - 2. **Men are not valiant for the truth (Jeremiah 9:3,5).** It takes courage to stand by the truth. There is so much lying and deceitfulness on this earth that you need to be brave stand by the truth.
 - 3. **There is no truth in the land (Hosea 4:1,6)**
 - 4. **Men turn their ears away from the truth (2Timothy 4:4)**
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III. CAN WE KNOW THE TRUTH?

A. God is the Source of Truth

1. **God the Father is truth (Psalm 31:5)**
 2. **God the Son is truth (John 14:6)**
 3. **God the Holy Ghost is truth (John 14:17)**
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B. God has Promised to Reveal the Truth – His Truth is:

1. **To endure to all generations (Psalm 100:5).** There will never be a time when God's truth is not there.
2. **To be known with certainty (Proverbs 22:21).** We can have confidence in the truth of God's word as we boldly proclaim it.

IV. WHAT ARE THE ENEMIES OF TRUTH? (Genesis 3:1-5; Roman 1:25).

Anything you put ahead of God's word as an authority for truth are things that will harm people.

- A. **Philosophy:** the authority of man's greatest wisdom (Colossians 2:8; Acts 17:18). The Apostle Paul said the philosophers of Athens were "wholly given to idolatry, too superstitious, and do things ignorantly." (Acts 17:16, 22, 23). That is the result of man's wisdom based on philosophy.
- B. **Tradition:** the authority of man's long-time practice (Colossians 2:8; Matthew 15:1-9, esp.v.3,6,9)
- C. **Science:** the authority of observable facts and repeatable physical laws (**1Timothy 6:20**)
- D. **Scholarship:** the authority of academic learning and agreed upon knowledge (**2Timothy 3:7; Isaiah 29:9-12**). A college education is not necessary to be a bible preacher (as some presume).
- E. **Pragmatism:** assigning authority to something because it brings the desired results (**1Cor. 1:18-25**). Mega-churches put aside the bible and follow other popular (worldly) methods to attract large crowds. That is pragmatism. God's wisdom teaches that preaching is the power of God unto salvation.
- D. **Experience:** the authority of personal experience (**Romans 10:2-3**). "*I felt it. It happened to me. Therefore, it is the truth.*" Spend your time seeking to know God, not seeking more experiences.

V. WHAT IS THE AUTHORITY FOR TRUTH? (John 17:17, 1 Thess 2:13, 2 Peter 1:16, 19)

- A. **The word of God:** the only God-given authority (John 8:31-32; 17:17)
- B. **Called the word of truth** (John 17:17; 1Thessalonians 2:13; 2Timothy 2:15)
- C. **The authority a person accepts when two authorities disagree becomes his supreme authority**
 1. Theistic evolution (Bible vs. Science)
 2. "Praying through" for salvation (Bible vs. Tradition or Experience)
 3. Concerts and Drama (Bible vs. Pragmatism)
- D. **Only an absolute authority can give absolute truth; all other truth is relative and changeable (Ps.119:128).**