

LIVING IN A CULTURE OF TRUTH DECAY, PT. 2
Sermon Series: Truth — How Do You Know It When You Hear It?
Next Steps Devotional Guide
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1. Truth can be as evasive as a fugitive on the run. When was a time you had difficulty finding the truth to something? Did you ever get to the truth? If so, what did it take? If not, what stopped you from getting to the truth?
2. It is important that we know how to know what is true, what is the truth. One of the best ways to do that is by looking at nature and the universe. Read Romans 1:20 from your sermon notes in point #1 under the heading, “*How Do We Know What Is True?*” What does this verse tell you about discovering the truth from nature and the universe? How do you know this?
 - a. It is obvious from looking at creation that God is not into clones — exact replicas. God could have just created one kind of dog, one kind of cat, or one kind of tree or one kind of fish and etc. For example, God created over 350,000 different types of beetles in the world, with 30,000 of them being in America alone. What truth does this tell you about God?
 - b. It is amazing how vast our universe is. Scientists had determined using Star Trek’s concept of warp speed, warp 1 is the speed of light — 186,282,000 miles per second (mps). Therefore, from earth to Pluto at warp 1 would take 5 hours and 28 minutes; at warp 10, which is 10x the speed of light, you would arrive a Pluto in 10 seconds. Scientists have calculated that traveling from one end of our Milky Way Galaxy to the to other end at warp 10 would take 96 years, if you never stopped. And if you wanted to travel to Andromeda, which is the next closest galaxy to us outside of our own Milky Way Galaxy, it would take over 300 years non-stop 10 times the speed of light. What does this tell you about how powerful God is?
 - c. In every family, you have those who are on time or even early verses those who are always running late. You have those who are neat and those who are messy. You have those who are organized and those who are not. When you look at creation, how does it tell you our God is an organized God?
 - d. Read Romans 1:19 in your sermon notes in point #1 under the heading, “*How Do We Know What Is True?*” What does this verse tell you about God?
 - e. Albert Einstein was probably the most brilliant scientist in our lifetime. He once said this: “*I want to know how God created the world; I want to know His thoughts, the rest are details.*”¹ What do you think he meant?
3. Everyone has a conscience. It can either help you or hardened you. God gave us one to hard wire us with an awareness of right and wrong.
 - a. Read Romans 2:14-15 from your sermon notes under point #2 under the heading, “*How Do We Know What Is True?*” When have you let your conscience help you and when have you let it hardened you and what were the results?
 - b. Do you think it is possible to have a dead conscience? Why? If so, do you think there is a connection between a dead conscience and believing in the existence of God?
 - c. It is my belief (PK) that one of the reason atheism is attractive to some is that they want to be their own god, not submit to one. What do you think?
4. It has been said, “*The mind is a terrible thing to waste.*” God gave us a mind so that we can test the truth, evaluate the truth, observe the truth and consider the truth. How is truth rational? How is truth logical?
 - a. Many people drift through life. They never think about, “*Where am I headed? Where am I going? What am I doing?*” Have you ever done this? How did it impact your view of the truth?
 - b. Read Proverbs 4:26 and Proverbs 14:8 in your sermon notes under point #3 under the heading, “*How Do We Know What Is True?*” What do these passages tell you about knowing where you are going and doing?
 - c. Read Jesus’ words in John 3:33. Have you ever checked out the evidence about who Jesus claimed to be or do you just accept it without any examination? Why?
 - d. We live in a world of philosophers and teachers who have great influence, many which committed suicide and went insane. When it comes to Christian preachers and teachers, we have to be careful. There have been huge scandals involving Christian preachers (i.e, PTL and Jim Baker, Jimmy Swaggert, and Ravi Zacharias). Do you ever investigate whether or not what they say lines up with how they live?
 - e. Paul Vitz wrote a book called, *Faith and the Fatherless*. He studied the 100 most famous atheists in history to see if there was anything in common. You know what the 100 famous atheists in history had in common? They all hated their fathers. They were either abandoned by their father, ridiculed by their father, rejected by their father, or their father died at an early age and thus they hated their father for it. What does it tell you about the challenge such people in seeing and accepting God as their Father?
 - f. Read Jesus’ words in Matthew 7:15-16 and Matthew 7:20. Jesus warns us that charisma is overrated. Charisma has nothing to do with leadership. The three most charismatic leaders of the twentieth century were also the worst — Mao, Stalin, and Hitler. Extremely charismatic men, but very evil men. They are the result of millions and millions of deaths. Charisma is highly overrated. Look for character not charisma. How do you get to that kind of truth about character that and what does it take to do it?

¹ Michael Caputo, *God Seen Through The Eyes of the Greatest Minds*, Kindle, Location 579 of 1856.

- g. We live in a digital world and thus we listen to the radio, podcasts, the TV, the Internet and etc. Read Jesus words in John 14:16-17 and John 15:26. How does doing what Jesus says help you get to the truth about a teacher or preacher?
5. When we think of commandments, our mind naturally thinks of “The Ten Commandments.” While these are God’s “Top Ten,” there are others in Scripture as well. Read 2 Timothy 3:16 as well as the explanation for the Greek New Testament words translated as “inspired by God” in your sermon notes in point #4 under the heading, “*How Do We Know What Is True?*” What does this mean to you and how does it help you know the truth?
- There are two kinds of truth: subjective (internal) and objective (external). What difference has the Bible as truth made in your own life? Jesus was the embodiment of truth because He is THE TRUTH. Which truthful statements and teachings by Jesus have had the greatest impact on your life and why?
 - We say, “*Those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it.*” The Bible is also an historical book. It lists names, people, events, places, wars, catastrophes and etc., all of which can be historically verified by outside sources. Why do you think some people discount this as proving the Bible is true?
 - The Bible was written over 1,500 years with around 40 different authors or contributors resulting in around 5,366 ancient copies of the Bible. From the earliest copy to the last copy there is a span up to 70 years. When scholars compare these copies of the same books in the Bible through the years they have discovered there are no discrepancies or changes or omissions or additions to them. Why do you think this is not good enough for skeptics to believe the Bible is true and teaches truth?
 - Archeology has done wonders in substantiating the validity of biblical stories. For hundreds and hundreds of years scholars and historians said the Bible’s reference to a Hittite Empire was false. Then around 1914/1915, a German archaeologist by the name of Hugo Winckler was on an archaeological dig and discovered over 10,000 clay tablets from the Hittite Empire. These tablets listed in great detail information about this. Now, no one doubts the Hittite Empire existed. Scholars have said for years that biblical account of King Solomon having 40,000 horse stalls for housing horses, 4,000 stalls for housing horses and chariots, and 12,000 horsemen was false. Then archaeologists digging in Meggido found thousands of horse stables dating to the time of King Solomon. Instead of considering the possibility that the Bible is truth, many still insist that all of this is just coincidence. Why do you think they are so stubborn to accept the truth?
 - The Bible lists hundreds of eye witnesses to historical events such as Moses at the Red Sea, Joshua at the walls of Jericho, the disciples of Jesus seeing the resurrected Jesus, David, the prophets and others. In a court of law, such persons’ testimony would be welcomed and believed. Why do you think that not even eye witnesses’ accounts are not enough to convince people that the Bible is true and teaches truth?
 - While there are numerous stories in the Bible, they all have one common theme: they tell us about a God who loves us, has a purpose for us, wants to redeem us, wants to be intimately involved in our lives and has a place in heaven for us. Have you ever thought of the Bible in this way? If not, what impact does this have on your own life?
6. Read Jesus’ words in John 14:6 in your sermon notes in point #5 under the heading, “*How Do We Know What Is True?*” Jesus did not say, “*I might be the truth.*” Jesus did not say, “*I would like to be the truth.*” Jesus did not say, “*I am a little bit of the truth.*” Jesus said, “*I am the only truth, the only way and the only life. No one, absolutely not one gets to God except by going through Me.*” Mohammed said, “*I am a prophet for the truth.*” Buddha said, “*I am still searching for the truth.*” There is a BIG difference in believing Jesus is the truth and living your life as the truth. Which would you say you do more? Which do people see you doing more? Why?
- C.S. Lewis was an atheist who was challenged by his good friend, J.R. Tolkien, the author of The Lord of the Rings series to prove Christianity is a lie. In the end, C.S. Lewis looked at all the evidence, surrendered his life to Christ and went on to write numerous books defending the Christian faith, some of which were made into box-office movie hits. He said this, “*I’m ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don’t accept His claim to be God. That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic--on a level with the man who says he is a poached egg--or else he would be the Devil of Hell! You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, God: or else a madman or something worse. . . You can shut him up for a fool, you can spit at Him and kill Him as a demon; or you can fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God. But let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to.*”² Lewis’ point is this: when it comes to Jesus, you have to decide if you believe Jesus is a lunatic, or a liar or the Lord He claimed to be. Yet, at times even Christians live as if Jesus is a lunatic or a liar and the Lord He claimed to be. Look over your own life. When has your life given the impression that you believed Jesus was a lunatic? A liar? And the Lord He claims to be? What were the results of that in your life and in the lives of people around you?
 - Everyone has to decide what they are going to do with the truth once they discover it. You were given 4 actions in your sermon notes as suggestions as to what to do with the truth. Read all four and the Bible verses with each one. Then write out how you can do all four of these as proof you are going to live the truth.
 - Read the last verse in your sermon notes: Titus 2:7b. How can you “reflect your love of the truth” in your own life to others.

² C.S. Lewis, Mere Christianity, pp. 40-41.