

# **The Trees: My Truth or God's Truth**

**January 29, 2023**

## **The Trees**

The Tree of Life represents the connection between God and humanity. When you choose to yield to God's definition of what is good and what is bad, you are choosing to live in the Tree of Life. However, when we choose to depend on our own strengths and ideas, we are choosing to live out of the Tree of Knowledge Good and Evil (aka... the DIY Tree). Where we place our trust (either in God or in ourselves) becomes our subconscious motivation for the actions we take in life. What 'truth' do we live our lives around, my truth or God's truth?

## **My Truth**

We would all like to say that our interpretation of truth comes from God, but until we uncover the roots, how can we really determine which tree it is connected to? Some arguments based on 'my truth' are as harmless as claiming that wearing socks with sandals is your truth. However, when the same argument is used to defend something that is possibly harmful to another person, it carries a different weight. If 'my truth' is valued above God's truth or the truth of others, then we create a society of autonomous people that are only interested in serving their own needs and desires.

## **The sky is blue?**

The definition of truth says it is a 'verified or indisputable fact, proposition, principle, or the like.' There are some things that are considered true because they are agreed upon by many as being factual. Like, the sky is blue. However, someone that is colorblind might disagree with

that. Or maybe someone else was taught that the word ‘blue’ has a different meaning or represents a different color than what most people would agree on. Or, what about when the sun is setting and the sky is filled with orange, pink, and purple? Or on a stormy day, the sky may look more gray or black than blue. How can there be an agreed-upon truth when there are so many different variables?

The *fact* is that the color that is seen by the typical human eye when the sun reflects off of the water particles that make up the atmosphere is represented in the English language by the word ‘blue.’ Saying that the ‘sky is blue’ may be your truth but the truth of that statement may not be shared by a colorblind person from Norway. However, the difference of opinions on the interpretation of the color of the sky does not change how the sky works or what the sky is.

A *fact* is something that is indisputable. It is based on empirical research and established information. Facts are proven through observation, experience, and calculation. However, *truth* is entirely different. It may include or be based on fact but it can also include perspective and belief. The challenge with forming *your truth* is making sure that it is grounded in fact, otherwise, it is merely your opinion and can easily get uprooted.

## **Fact Based Faith**

The very foundation of the Christian faith is believing that the existence of God is a fact. Believing God exists goes hand in hand with believing that His story is true. His story is recorded in the collective writings that we call the Bible. As we gain knowledge and experience of who God is and grow in our relationship with Him, His truth becomes our truth.

## **Jesus is God**

From the very beginning of the Gospel of John, Jesus is presented as being the embodiment of 'truth.' (John 1:1-18) In short, this passage is relaying a message: God is life. He alone existed before creation. Everything and everyone is from Him and because of Him. Then His truth became flesh in the form of Jesus. Through His grace, we have the opportunity to become His children and be connected to His sustaining truth.

Jesus tells his disciples: "I am the way the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you really know me, you will know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him." (John 14:6-7)

To know Jesus is to know God because Jesus is God. God is truth, therefore Jesus is truth. But Jesus wouldn't be on this earth forever so, he continued to tell the disciples: "And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever - the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor know him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you." (John 14:16-17) To know the Spirit of truth is to know Jesus which is also to know God.

## **God's Truth**

Jesus told his followers "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." (John 8:31-32) God's truth offers freedom that is beneficial to everyone. God's truth is revealed in the scriptures through many of the conversations and teachings of Jesus (Luke 4:18-19; John 3:16-21).

God's truth is good news to the poor, freedom for the prisoners, healing for the hurting, love for the lost, light for the darkness, forgiveness for the condemned, and hope for the hopeless. This is the truth that grows from the Tree of Life. If someone is claiming to be representing God's truth but their words and actions oppress, hurt, hate, and condemn, they are living their own version of truth.

### **Choosing God's Truth**

When we value our own definition of what is good and what is evil over God's definition, we create a world of division and pain. There will always be things in life that you will see differently than other people. Some things and opinions don't matter too much. But, other things run much deeper, like your beliefs and convictions. It requires humility and love to be able to step back and try to understand someone else's perspective.

If we, as Christians truly believe that the existence of God is a fact and that He is truth then we have the responsibility of making sure that anything we claim to be our truth is rooted in God's truth. C.S. Lewis once said: "I believe in Christianity as I believe that the sun has risen: not only because I see it, but because by it I see everything else." Let God's truth illuminate and inspire your truth (Proverbs 3:5-7).

**Further Study:**

- Watch these videos to better understand how the gospel of John is a testimony to the true identity of Jesus.
  - Bible Project Video: John 1-12:  
[https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/john-1-12/?utm\\_source=web\\_social\\_share&medium=shared\\_video](https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/john-1-12/?utm_source=web_social_share&medium=shared_video)
  - Bible Project Video: John 13-21:  
[https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/john-13-21/?utm\\_source=web\\_social\\_share&medium=shared\\_video](https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/john-13-21/?utm_source=web_social_share&medium=shared_video)

**Discussion Questions:**

- How does our individual perspective affect our idea of what is true?
- What are the foundational facts that our truth should grow from?
- What practical steps can we take to make sure that our truth aligns with God's truth?