

into slavery- **5** to them we did not yield in submission even for a moment, so that the truth of the gospel might be preserved for you.

<sup>ESV</sup> **James 5:19** My brothers, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and someone brings him back, **20** let him know that whoever brings back a sinner from his wandering will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.

There is no virtue in pursuing ignorance, indifference, indecision, or indecency.

We should strive to be people of true conviction:

...pursuing knowledge of the truth

...pursuing assurance in the truth

...pursuing loyalty to the truth

...pursuing living by the truth

Am I understanding and handling matters (of agreement or disagreement) according to truth, or more out of my feelings, values, tastes, biases, prejudices, loves, preservation, etc.?

Sunday, September 07, 2025  
Danny Capon, *Pastor*

**A Theology of Disagreement**  
No. 6 | Truth and Disagreement  
**Selected Scriptures**

## Review

### A Theology of Disagreement

We can disagree about what **is** (reality).  
We can disagree about what it **means** (interpretation).  
We can disagree about what is **right** (righteous).  
We can disagree about what is **best** (wisdom).  
We can disagree about what we should **care** about (values).  
We can disagree about what we should **want** (desires).  
We can disagree about what we are **okay** with (submission).

- A disagreement is a situation in which two parties do not have the same opinion.
- A disagreement occurs, most observably, because no two parties are exactly the same and both parties are naturally morally corrupt.
- A disagreement may not initially be morally consequential or result in immoral conduct between two parties.
- A disagreement may also start out immorally by one or both parties, and proceed quickly to conflict or a range of other relationally-charged actions.

## Truth and Disagreement

How does truth contribute to our understanding and handling of disagreement?

To what degree does truth operate in all our (matters of) agreement and disagreement? To what degree *should* truth operate in both?

### What is truth?

<sup>ESV</sup> **John 18:37** Then Pilate said to him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world- to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice." <sup>38</sup> Pilate said to him, "**What is truth?**" After he had said this, he went back outside to the Jews and told them, "I find no guilt in him."

How is truth understood by the world?

How should we understand truth?

"In the OT, *emeth* signifies covenant faithfulness and reliability, a moral attribute ascribed both to God (e.g. Ps. 86:15; Jer. 42:5) and to humans (Exod. 18:21). Truth is primarily ascribed to sayings or teachings; both promises and statements are words upon which hearers may rely. Truth is not mere accuracy, eliciting intellectual assent only; it is reliability, worthy of personal commitment and trust." (K. Vanhoozer, p. 925)

“Rather than merely connoting correspondence with reality, as in Greek philosophy, or factual accuracy, as in Roman thought, truth, for John, while also being propositional, is at the heart a personal, relational concept that has its roots and origin in none other than God himself. As the psalmist (Ps 31:5) and the prophet (Isa 65:16) call God “the God of truth,” so John’s Gospel proclaims that God is truth, and that therefore his Word is truth. Jesus, then, is the truth, because he is sent from God and has come to reveal the Father and to carry out his salvation-historical purposes. For this reason the only way for us to know the truth is to know God through Jesus Christ (8:31; 14:6; 17:3).” (A. Kostenberger, p. 35)

ESV **Romans 1:18** For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the **truth**.<sup>19</sup> For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them.

ESV **Romans 2:6** He will render to each one according to his works:<sup>7</sup> to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life;<sup>8</sup> but for those who are self-seeking and do not obey the **truth**, but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury.

ESV **Romans 2:17** But if you call yourself a Jew and rely on the law and boast in God<sup>18</sup> and know his will and approve what is excellent, because you are instructed from the law;<sup>19</sup> and if you are sure that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness,<sup>20</sup> an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of children, having in the law the embodiment of knowledge and **truth**—<sup>21</sup> you then who teach others, do you not teach yourself? While you preach against stealing, do you steal?

ESV **Romans 3:3** What if some were unfaithful? Does their faithlessness nullify the faithfulness of God? “By no means! Let God be **true** though every one were a liar, as it is written, “That you may be justified in your words, and prevail when you are judged.”

The Truth is...

...what is **reality**, or accords with reality

...what is **right**, or accords with (the basis or norm of) what is right

For example, **a cookie**?! (or, a chicken?!)

## How is truth related to disagreement?

Our natural condition and the truth...

ESV **Romans 1:24** Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves,<sup>25</sup> because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.

God’s divine nature and the truth...

ESV **John 17:3** And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.

ESV **John 17:17** Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.

ESV **John 14:6** Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”

ESV **John 16:13** When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.

Morality and the truth...

- Obedience and Affections

ESV **John 3:36** Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.

ESV **2 Thessalonians 2:9** The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders, **10** and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved.

- Word and Deed

ESV **Ephesians 4:25** Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another.

ESV **Ephesians 5:8** for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light **9** (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), **10** and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord.

See also, Paul’s letter to Titus, where “sound” (healthy) doctrine is that which accords with the truth and that which produces sound living.

Consequence and the truth...

ESV **John 8:31** So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, “If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, **32** and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”

ESV **1 John 5:20** And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true; and we are in him who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.

ESV **John 3:33** Whoever receives his testimony sets his seal to this, that God is true.

ESV **1 John 2:22** Who is the liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, he who denies the Father and the Son.<sup>23</sup> No one who denies the Son has the Father. Whoever confesses the Son has the Father also.

ESV **Galatians 2:4** Yet because of false brothers secretly brought in— who slipped in to spy out our freedom that we have in Christ Jesus, so that they might bring us