

PETE BUMGARNER MINISTRIES

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WHAT IS TRUTH

STUDY GUIDE



WHAT IS TRUTH

SCRIPTURE READING

John 18:33-38

Then Pilate went into the judgment hall again and summoned Jesus. He said to Him, "Are You the King of the Jews?" Jesus responded, saying, "Do you ask this question of yourself, or did others tell you about Me?" Pilate replied, "Am I a Jew? Your own race and the chief priests have delivered You to Me. What have You done?" Jesus responded, "My kingdom is not from this world. If My kingdom was from this world, My servants would fight, so that I would not be delivered to the Jews, but My kingdom is not from here." Therefore, Pilate said to Him, "Then, you are a king. Jesus replied, "You say that I am a king. For this purpose, I was born, and for this reason I came into the world, so that I could be a witness of truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice. Pilate said to Him, "What is truth?" After making this statement, he went out again to the Jews and said to them, "I do not find any fault in Him."

II John 4

I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.

THEME

Every person in every society needs a standard by which to live. Truth is the standard. Without a standard, each one does what is right in his/her own eyes; therefore, truth is imperative for every society. Absolute truth cannot be determined by man. It must be determined by the Creator of man. God is the Creator of man; therefore, truth must come from God. Only God can set the standard by which we are to live. Truth is God's standard. It never changes, regardless of generation, culture, or geographical location.

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. Each of us must ask ourself the same question Pilate asked Jesus, but unlike Pilate, we must pursue the answer.
- B. Truth is what is true under any matter of consideration.
- C. Truth is fact—facts that come from God, not man.
- D. Truth is a standard. The standard for truth also comes from God, not man.
- E. Truth is reality or actuality.

- F. Truth does not change; it is an absolute.
- G. Truth is freedom from deceit or distortion of facts.
- H. Truth has no flaws; it is consistently correct.
- I. Truth is pure; it is absolute—perfect in quality and nature.
- J. Truth is self-supporting; it does not need witnesses.
- K. Truth is challenging and confronting.
- L. There are two sources available for finding truth—God’s Word and His Spirit.
- M. The word truth is mentioned two hundred thirty-five times in the King James Version of the Bible. There are twelve Hebrew/Aramaic words translated as truth in the Old Testament (KJV). There are six Greek words translated as truth in the New Testament (KJV).
- N. The Greek word *aletheia* (al-ay’-thi-a) is the most frequent word used for truth in the New testament. It was translated truth one hundred seven times. Jesus often used this word.
 - 1. When speaking to Pilate, Jesus used this word two times. (John 18:37)
 - 2. In John 4:23-24, John 8:32, and John 8:44, Jesus used this same word.
 - 3. Jesus also used this word when He said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life.” (John 14:6)
 - 4. When referring to the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of Truth, Jesus also used this word. (John 14:16-17; John 15:26; John 16:13)
 - 5. When referring to the Word of God, both John and Jesus used this word. (John 1:14; John 17:17)
 - 6. Paul also used this word in Romans 1:25, Romans 2:2; and Galatians 5:7.
 - 7. The Greek word *aletheia* (al-ay’-thi-a) means “truth”—that which is true in accordance with fact and reality.
- O. Absolute truth comes from God, not man; however, men have devised their own truths and live by their standard, not God’s.

II. PERCEPTIVE TRUTH

- A. Perceptive truth is a way of regarding, understanding, or interpreting something as truth.
- B. Most people live by perceptive truth, which is susceptible to change.
- C. Perceptive truth is supported by limited information.
- D. Experiences and accumulation of information will change perceptive truths.
- E. Perceptive truth is not absolute truth.
- F. Witnesses of an accident or crime have individual perceptions; therefore, it is imperative to compile and evaluate all perceptions in order to find the complete truth.
- G. There is a difference between perception and reality.
 - 1. Perception is what one perceives, but it does not change reality.
 - 2. Reality can and should change perception.
 - 3. Perception either accepts or denies reality.
- H. Vertigo is an excellent example of perceptive truth.
- I. Perceptive truth can cost one his life, or even worse, his eternal life. (Romans 1:18-32)

III. RELATIVE TRUTH

- A. Relativism teaches the doctrine that knowledge, truth, and morality exist in relation to culture, society, or historical context; consequently, absolute truth is viewed as nonexistent.
- B. Relative truth is truth in relation to or in proportion to something else, such as culture, tradition, etc.
- C. Relative truth is truth drawn from one's knowledge or understanding.
- D. Relative truth is not absolute truth; it is relative to limited knowledge.
- E. Relative truth means that truth believed is subject to the holder of this particular truth.
- F. Relative truth works hand-in-hand with perceptive truth.

1. Perceptive truth is relative to limited facts.
 2. Perceptive truth is truth in relation to exposure.
- G. Relative truth presents truth as inconsistent.
1. If two people perceive truth to be different, then truth is determined by perception, not fact.
 2. Truth never opposes itself.
 3. Relative truth produces mass confusion.
- H. If relative truth is true, then no one can be wrong.
- I. Relative truth requires investigation; otherwise, facts will be omitted and absolutes will remain unknown.

IV. SUBJECTIVE TRUTH

- A. Subjective truth puts forth an idea for consideration, thereby causing one to think a particular way.
- B. Subjective truth is based on or influenced by personal beliefs, feelings, tastes, or opinions.
- C. Subjective truth has no standard for right and wrong; it makes its own determinations.
- D. Subjective truth is perception, maybe even manipulation, not fact.
- E. One who teaches a subjective truth can easily be proven wrong with facts. (Example: stating that gravity does not exist can be proven wrong with facts.)
- F. Subjective truth can always be discredited when facts are brought to the scene.

V. SELECTIVE TRUTH

- A. Selective truth chooses beliefs that are most suitable to the individual.
- B. Selective truth means that you select what you want to believe.
- C. Perceptive, relative, and subjective truths are all selective truths.
- D. Everyone selects the truths by which he/she lives.

VI. OBJECTIVE TRUTH

- A. Objective truth is not influenced by personal beliefs, feelings, or opinions.
- B. Objective truth considers and represents the facts as they relate to science.
- C. Objective truth is fact linked to an object.
- D. Objective truth is unbiased, or impartial. It states that truth is truth, regardless what one believes.
- E. We can believe objective truth, or we can object to the scientific truth.
- F. The fallacy with objective truth is it is based on scientific beliefs, which are not infallible. (Example: determining age through carbon dating or counting the number of rings in a tree have been proven inaccurate.)
- G. There is a certain amount of validity to objective truth. (Example: Air and water are essential to sustain human life.)
- H. Because objective truth is not absolute, it must be scrutinized by the Word of God, which is absolute truth.
- I. People can get so caught up in the natural that they miss the spiritual. (I Corinthians 2;14)

VII. ABSOLUTE TRUTH

- A. Absolute truth is something that is true for everyone, everywhere, at all times. It represents God's facts.
- B. Absolute truth stands on its own, regardless of what one thinks or believes. It needs no witness.
- C. Absolute truth is irrefutable. (Example: In the beginning, God created heaven and earth. This fact cannot be disproved.)
- D. Absolute truth is a revealed truth; therefore, it is absolute.
- E. Absolute truth is determined by the creator, or inventor. (Example: The person who invented the ruler determined both the increments on the ruler and its length. The inventor set the standard.)

- F. God, the Creator of humanity, is the only One Who can determine the absolute truths for humanity. God is the Creator. Fabricating one's own truths defies absolute truths.
- G. I am the way, the truth, and the life is absolute truth.
- H. Both God's Word and His Spirit are absolute truths.

VIII. DOGMATISM

- A. Dogmatism is establishing beliefs that one considers to be indisputable without considering evidence or facts.
- B. People who hold on to perceptive, relative, subjective, and objective truth become dogmatic, therefore unteachable.
- C. Dogmatism is refusing to believe truth that exceeds perception.
- D. Dogmatism prevents one from learning absolute truth. (Ezekiel 12:2)
- E. Absolute truth cannot be consider as dogmatic because it is absolute. The evidence and facts confirm it.

IX. GOD'S WORD IS ABSOLUTE TRUTH

- A. In John 17:17, Jesus said, "Sanctify them by Your Word; Your Word is truth."
- B. In John 8:31-32, Jesus said to those who believed in Him, "If you stay in My word, you are truly My disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will liberate you."
- C. God's Word is truth; it is forever established in heaven, and it will remain steadfast forever. (Psalm 119:89)
- D. According to Psalm 138:2, God has magnified His Word above His name. He puts great emphasis on absolute truth.
- E. James 1:17-18 declares, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with Whom there is no variation or shadow of turning. Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures." Salvation comes as a result of absolute truth, not perception.
- F. In II Timothy 2:15, Paul gave this exhortation: "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

1. The word of truth is the word spoken by God.
2. The Word of Truth is revealed through the Holy Bible.
 - a. The Holy Bible was written by forty men over a period of approximately fifteen hundred years without contradiction.
 - b. According to II Timothy 3:16, the Scriptures were inspired by God.
 - c. According to II Peter 1:20-21, no prophecy of Scripture came through private interpretation. Holy men of God spoke what God gave them.
 - d. No one individual had all the truth. Each writer had a God-given portion of truth.
3. The Word of truth must be properly interpreted; otherwise, it will cease to be truth.
4. Only the Holy Spirit can properly interpret, or discern truth.
5. Studying about God is not the same as studying God.
6. Absolute truth comes from studying God, not studying about Him.
- G. The Word of God is a revealed truth; therefore, it is the absolute truth. It is the standard by which one should live.
- H. It is the standard by which we will all be judged. (Romans 2:20)
- I. The Bible which, was written by forty God-inspired men over a period of approximately fifteen hundred years, was truly stated; however, not every word written in the Bible is a statement of truth. Some of the statements that were written were statements of men. The documentation of these statements reveals man's ignorance of God. We are shown the difference between perception and absolute. (Job 38:2)
- J. We, the members of the Body of Christ, were brought forth, or birthed, by the word of truth. The word of truth is God's word. According to I Peter 1:23, we are born again by the Word of God.
 1. Our lives should be a testimony to the validity of God's Word.
 2. The effectiveness of our testimony is dependent upon our willingness to follow the absolute truth.
- K. God's Word is truth. It can be argued, but it cannot be changed.

X. THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH

- A. In John 14:16-17, 15:26, and 16:13, The Holy Spirit is referred to as the Spirit of truth.
- B. The Holy Spirit is the life of truth. He empowers one to live the quality and nature of life that God intended.
- C. According to John 16:13, the Holy Spirit guides us into all truth.
- D. I John 5:6 says, “This is He Who came by water and blood—Jesus Christ; not only by water, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit Who bears witness, because the Spirit is truth.”
 - 1. The Holy Spirit is the essence of truth; He brings truth to life.
 - 2. The Holy Spirit will identify truth.
 - 3. The Holy Spirit bears witness to the word of God, both written and spoken.
- E. The Spirit of Truth bears witness to absolute truth, not perceived truths.
- F. The Spirit of truth bears witness to only that which is true—that which God has already spoken or is speaking.
- G. One who does not follow the lead of the Spirit of Truth will be led into error through perception, relevance, or subjection.

XI. GOD’S STANDARD: THE WAY—THE TRUTH—THE LIFE

- A. According to John 14:6, Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life.
- B. Jesus is God’s standard revealed. He exemplifies absolute truth. He is the standard by which everyone will be judged—the living Word.
- C. In John 17:19, Jesus said, “I sanctify Myself, so that they also may be sanctified by the truth.”
 - 1. Truth set Jesus apart; it also sets His disciples apart.
 - 2. Those who follow truth are distinctly different from those who follow error and deception.
 - 3. One who pursues truth will follow Jesus, the standard of God.

4. One who refuses to follow Jesus will succumb to error and deception and will rebel against absolute truth.
- D. In John 18:37, Jesus said, "... for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice."
1. The phrase "I should bear witness" is translated from one Hebrew word—*martureo* (*mar-too-re'-o*), which means "to be a witness, or to testify."
 2. Jesus' life was a testimony of the truth of God's word.
 3. He exemplified the integrity of God.
 4. He fulfilled what God had promised and conducted His life exactly as God had required humanity to live.
 5. Jesus was the full essence of God revealed in a physical body.
- E. Jesus came to earth and expressed truth with His words, lifestyle, and deeds.
- F. He met and became God's standard and gives us the standard/example by which we should live.

XII. ORIGIN OF TRUTH

- A. Absolute truth originates with the one who determines the standard.
- B. God determined the standard for the world before He created humanity; therefore, truth originates with God.
- C. Absolute truth comes from the Creator, not the created. God sets the standard, not man.
- D. Both God and men set standards, but everyone will be judged by God's standard, not men's.
1. Men's standards are perceptive, relative, objective, and subjective truth.
 2. God's standard is absolute truth.
 3. Opinion does not change absolute truth; however, absolute truth can and should change one's opinion.

- 4. One is not judged by what he believes; he is judged by what God believes.
- E. The origin of truth is God; opposition to God is opposition to truth; opposition to truth is opposition to God.
- F. Absolute truth does not come from reason; it comes from revelation.
- G. God reveals truth to those who diligently seek Him. (Hebrews 11:6)
- H. Absolute truth is not to be argued; it is to be practiced.

XIII. DISCOVERING TRUTH

- A. Truth is an expression, symbol, or statement that matches or corresponds to its object or referent (the thing that a word or phrase denotes or stands for).
- B. Discovering truth requires diligent effort. Truth is not superficial. God rewards those who diligently seek Him. (Hebrews 11:6)
- C. Some are always learning, but never coming to the knowledge of truth. (II Timothy 3:7) Why? They are not seeking the Spirit of Truth.
 - 1. One does not learn spiritual truth through religious teaching.
 - 2. Spiritual truth comes through revelation.
- D. Paul told Timothy to be diligent, presenting himself to God for approval. He told him to be a worker without shame because he had correctly divided the word of truth.
 - 1. These instructions reveal that truth is not superficial; it must be sought.
 - 2. Seeking for truth is often laborious, requiring much time and effort.
 - 3. What God said must be extracted from what men say or have said about God.
 - 4. Truth is extracted from facts. Beliefs/doctrines must be extracted from all the facts, not just a select few.
- E. In order to discover truth, one must abandon all presuppositions and let the study reveal the truth.

- F. God wants everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of truth. (I Timothy 2:4)
- G. Truth is not complex, but it is profound.
- H. According to Jesus, knowing truth is contingent upon staying in His Word. When found, truth is liberating. (John 8:31)
- I. One who pursues truth will find Jesus. One who embraces Jesus will discover the Father and the Holy Spirit.

XIV. WALKING IN TRUTH

- A. Walking in truth is following Jesus in lifestyle and character.
- B. Walking in truth is being a doer of the Word.
- C. Walking in truth is obeying the Spirit, thereby allowing Him to lead you.
- D. John's statement in III John 4 is revelatory.
 - 1. I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are disciples of Jesus.
 - 2. I have no greater joy than to hear that my children obey the Word of God.
 - 3. I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are led by the Spirit.
 - 4. I have no greater joy than to hear that my children please their Heavenly Father.
 - 5. This word, which was spoken by John, was inspired by the Holy Spirit.
- E. According to I John 4:6, those who know God listen to those who are of God.
 - 1. Those who do not listen to those who are of God do not know God.
 - 2. In this way we can recognize the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error.
- F. Truth is liberating. Those who do not walk in truth are in bondage.
 - 1. Many people are bound to their selfish opinions and beliefs.

2. These people profess to know truth, but their actions reveal their ignorance of truth.
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- G. Those who know God will listen to those who are sent by God; conversely, those who do not know God will not listen to those sent by God. (John 8:47; John 10:27)
 - H. One who will not take counsel according to the Word and Spirit of God does not know God.
 - I. Godly preaching and teaching are not for entertainment or suggestion; they are for instruction in righteousness to enable one to walk in truth.
 - J. The truth should be spoken in love, but without compromise. (Ephesians 4:15)

XV. CHRISTIANITY AND TRUTH

- A. Christianity is the only religion that has a reservoir of evidence from both the religious and secular worlds.
- B. History confirms that Jesus is Who He says He is—One Who proceeded from God.
- C. Christianity and the truth of its message has been under attack from its inception.
 1. The Jewish religious system opposed Jesus from the very beginning because He did not follow their perceived truth.
 2. It was the religious system that had Jesus crucified and many other disciples of Jesus killed.
 3. Throughout the ages, Christianity has been under attack because it exposes the error of perceptive, relative, subjective, and objective truths.
 4. The translation of the Holy Scriptures cost many people their lives, yet the truth could not be eradicated.
 5. God's Word is true and should be proclaimed, explained, and practiced.
- D. The problem in Christianity is not the Christ of the faith; it is the various interpretations of the faith.

- E. Various denominations and organizations have divided the Body of Christ with perceptive, relative, subjective, and objective truths.
- F. The absolute truths of Christianity are irrefutable and cannot be changed or destroyed. God's word is forever settled in heaven. (Psalm 119:89)

XVI. PHILOSOPHY AND TRUTH

- A. The Greek word for philosophy is *philosophia*, which means the love of wisdom—man's, not God's.
 - 1. By etymology, philosophy is the love or study of wisdom, not knowledge.
 - 2. Wisdom is the ability to discern what is true, right, or enduring. It is good judgment, or common sense.
 - 3. True knowledge is an accumulation of facts that validate a truth.
 - a. Acquired knowledge is a discovering of something that already exists. (Ecclesiastes 1:9)
 - b. A good example of this truth is the fact that electricity has always existed, but for a long period of time, it was unknown.
 - c. The discovery of electricity validated what was there all along.
 - d. Knowledge discovered the facts; wisdom put the facts into something usable.
 - e. Wisdom is dependent upon knowledge, and knowledge needs wisdom to implement the facts.
 - f. Wisdom gives one the ability to utilize the facts.
 - 3. Ironically, philosophy does not always use good judgment, and often ignores facts that are contrary to theory.
- B. In reality, philosophy can be defined as thinking about thinking.
 - 1. Thinking can work for you or against you.
 - 2. Thinking about thinking is detrimental because it has no substance.

3. Taking thoughts or random information and fabricating them into supposed facts is not truth; it is deception.
 4. God has made provision for humanity to dominate the earth through superior intelligence, but humanity has perverted God's provision. Intellectualism has pushed intelligence aside.
 5. God has given to humanity abilities and talents, but humanity has not used these abilities and talents for God.
 6. In many cases, man has used his abilities and talents to present himself as God. Professing himself to be wise, he has become a fool. (Romans 1:22)
- C. Philosophy is the study of the fundamental nature of knowledge, reality, and existence.
1. It is an abstract theory without substance. Philosophy derives its information and conclusion from reason.
 2. Philosophy studies metaphysics, epistemology, and ontology.
 - a. Metaphysics is the branch of philosophy that deals with the first principles of things, including abstract concepts such as being, knowing, substance, cause, identity, time, and space. It is theory or talk with no basis in reality.
 - (1) Metaphysics is a compound word. Meta means after or beyond; physics is the branch of science concerned with nature and properties of matter and energy.
 - (2) Metaphysics ask questions like: What is the basic and inherent nature of reality?, How does the world exist?, What is the origin of creation? Does the world exist outside the mind?, Is there a God?, etc.
 - (3) Questions such as these disregard the Scriptures as God's absolute truth to humanity and rely on human reasoning to identify what issued forth from God, Who is Spirit, not human.
 - (4) Spiritual things can only be realized through the spirit. (I Corinthians 2:14)
 - b. Epistemology is the science or theory of knowledge, especially with regards to its methods, validity, and scope.

- (1) Epistemology is a compound word which means study of logic or knowledge.
 - (2) It is the investigation of what distinguishes justified beliefs from opinions.
 - (3) Epistemology deals with the way we know things.
 - (4) How do you know what you know?
- c. Ontology is a branch of metaphysics that deals with the nature of being.
 - (1) Ontology is a compound word. *Ont* means being, and *logy* means the study of. (The missing “o” is simply a vowel to connect the “being” to “the study.”)
 - (2) It is a set of concepts and categories in a subject area or domain that shows their properties and the relations between them.
 - (3) Ontology deals with what things are.
 - (4) What do you know?
- D. Unlike theology, which studies God, philosophy studies reason.
- E. There may be some validity to a philosophical approach regarding movies, books, and other natural information, but there is no place for a human to determine the reality or existence of his Creator.
 - 1. God’s Word is either true, or it is not true.
 - 2. The basis for understanding God’s Word is not reason; it is fact.
 - 3. The truth of God’s Word is found in practice, not theory.
 - 4. Finite man cannot rationalize an infinite God.
 - 5. The just live by faith, not theory. (Romans 1:17; Galatians 3:11; Hebrews 10:38)
- F. Because philosophy studies reason, not God, it can never know absolute truth; consequently, philosophy leads people into error.
- G. Those who pursue philosophy for their answers love natural wisdom more than they love God. Their love of wisdom takes the place of love for God, so they pursue wisdom, not God.

- H. One who is void of God will attempt to fill the void with thoughts and ideas that ultimately will leave one empty.
- I. One who does not follow God will devise his/her own belief system.
- J. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil can be compared to the law. The tree of life can be compared to Jesus.
 - 1. Knowledge alone will lead one into debate and away from God.
 - 2. Truth will lead one to God through eternal life found only in Jesus.
 - 3. Truth enlightens; worldly knowledge often obscures light. (John 3:19-21; Romans 1:18-22)
- K. God made man in his image, but man has chosen to make his own images through his vain imaginations.
 - 1. Knowledge of good and evil makes us like God. It does not make us God.
 - 2. God made man in His image, not to take His place.
- L. Never substitute theory for facts. Seek the facts and learn the truth.
- M. A wise person will develop a belief system that agrees with what God believes—His Word and His Spirit.

XVII. THEOLOGY AND TRUTH

- A. Theology is generally defined as the study of God, His nature, character, and relationship with humanity.
 - 1. *Theos* is the Greek word for God; *logy* is the suffix that refers to the noun (*Theos*), which means the study of *Theos*, or God.
 - 2. Theology in its truest sense is the study **of** God, not about God.
 - 3. In the past and present day societies, it seems that most students study about God instead of studying God.
 - 4. In order to study God, one must diligently study the Holy Scriptures that reveal God.
 - 5. Generally speaking, most professors and students study what others have written or said about God instead of studying God.

6. In order to learn the truth about God, we must go to the book (The Holy Bible) instead of books (writings of scholars).
- B. Various beliefs and doctrines have been birthed from colleges, universities, and seminaries of theology.
 1. In many cases, theology is paradoxical.
 2. One who pursues studies in theology and does not concentrate on the Holy Bible is contradicting his study.
 3. True theology is the study of God Himself, which can only be accomplished by studying the Bible and listening to the Holy Spirit.
 - C. Theology in its truest sense can only be understood through absolute truth, which comes only from the Bible.
 - D. Truth comes from theology when theology is truly studying God, not formulating opinions about God.
 - E. What God says about Himself is absolute truth. What others say about God may or may not be true. (Example: Job's comforters)
 - F. Theology is not philosophical; it is practical.

XVIII. FAITH AND TRUTH

- A. What is faith? It is a belief in something that you cannot physically prove. By definition, it is actually persuasion, which exceeds just believing.
- B. Faith can be toward God or some philosophical point of view.
- C. Everybody exercises faith in something, whether it is in a supreme being, or in one's own self.
- D. One's faith can be determined by the practices of one's beliefs.
- E. Faith is subjective; truth is not. Faith is based upon a belief. Truth is based upon an absolute.
- F. One's faith may change; truth does not.
- G. Each of us must evaluate our faith. We must determine if our faith is in absolute truth or in a perceptive truth.

1. Perceptive truths that do not agree with the Word of God will either hinder one's spiritual growth, or lead one away from God.
 2. Absolute truth will lead one to God and enhance spiritual growth.
- H. Faith in a perceptive truth can be detrimental. Faith in an absolute truth is rewarding.
- I. We must examine what we believe and why we believe it.
- J. It is imperative that our belief system be accurate.

XIX. THE CHURCH AND TRUTH

- A. In I Timothy 3:14-15, Paul wrote this message to Timothy, "These things I have written to you, hoping to come to you shortly. But if my coming is delayed, you have these instructions so that you will know how one should conduct himself in the house of God, which is the Church of the living God, the support and foundation of the truth.
1. The true Church is the Body of Christ. It is an assembly of believers in Jesus Christ.
 2. The Church is the support and foundation of truth. Not only is it to believe in truth, but it must also advocate truth.
 3. In order to be an effective support and foundation of truth, the Church must embrace the Word and Spirit of truth, ignoring and rejecting any and everything that is not in agreement with the Word and Spirit of God.
 4. We realize that all churches (local assemblies) are not a part of the true Church, which is the Body of Christ. Some are just religious organizations that know about Christ, but have never personally entered into relationship with Him; therefore, they are incapable of supporting truth.
- B. The objective of the Church is to proclaim and demonstrate truth through the proclamation of and adherence to the gospel message of Jesus and the kingdom of God.
- C. The modern-day church has abandoned truth and defines its own fabricated truth.
1. There are basically four different categories in the modern-day church. They all define truth from their own perspective, not God's.

2. The modern-day church can be divided into these four basic categories: traditional; contemporary, seeker-friendly, and coexistent/emerging.
 - a. The traditional church is legalistic (to some degree—moderate or extreme) and controlling.
 - b. The contemporary church is non-legalistic, casual, and entertaining.
 - c. The seeker-friendly church is liberal and lets the constituents dictate its services and activities.
 - d. The coexistent/emerging church is extremely liberal and tolerant of any and every belief. It is an assembly of pacifists who violate their own belief by opposing absolute truth.
3. Religion comes in many forms. Jesus made a distinction between truth and religion. Truth and religion cannot coexist. They do not share the same beliefs. (Mark 7:8-9)
 - a. Truth liberates; religion binds.
 - b. Truth delivers the Body of Christ from religion.
 - c. Those in pursuit of truth have to abandon religious thinking and practices.
 - d. The natural (religion) has to give place to the spiritual (truth).
4. From its inception, religion abandoned absolute truth and began to define its own truth and imposed rules and regulations to enforce its beliefs.
5. Like religion of old, the modern-day church is not seeking truth; it is defining its own convenient truth—convenient to its own agenda.
6. Today, absolute truth is still being sacrificed on the altar of religion—whatever the form.
7. The mindset of the modern-day church is give people what they want, not what they need.
8. Arts have taken the place of truth (the Word of God).
 - a. Music, drama, dance, etc. have become the main theme of many modern-day churches.

- b. Entertainment has taken the place of ministry.
- 9. Sports and physical activities have also become a major part of the modern-day church.
 - a. Multiplied millions of dollars are being spent on facilities to accommodate various activities that are non-spiritual.
 - b. In pursuit of fleshly desires, truth has been abandoned.
 - c. The modern-day church is stroking the flesh, not feeding the spirit.
- 10. Natural thinking has crept back into the church and made it a religious organizations once again—religion with a modern twist, not legalism, but liberalism and indulgence.
- 11. The Holy Spirit has left the modern-day church. Now, it is only a form of godliness, not a demonstration of godliness. Emotionalism and charisma have been substituted for the Holy Spirit and power of God. (II Timothy 3:1-5)
- 12. Religion and philosophy have subdued the truth in the modern-day church.
- D. The Church should advocate the truth, not manufacture its own truth.
 - 1. We are to be the carriers of truth, not the producers of truth.
 - 2. The mandate of the Church is to proclaim the gospel, which is the absolute truth.
 - 3. The church is to exemplify truth, not fabricate it.
- E. Truth is not what some organization believes; it is what God has established and believes. (II Timothy 3:1-5; Titus 1:10-11)
- F. The Spirit of truth reveals truth. When He is driven out of the church, truth remains hidden and unknown.
- G. The church should be the one place people could come and find truth. Sadly, this is not always the case.
- H. The Church has been called out of the world; it is not to bring the world into the church.
- I. The true Church will remain faithful to the Word and Spirit of God.

- J. The true Church is the Body of Christ, not a religious system.
- K. There is a way that seems right to man, but the end of that way is death. So it is with a church that has abandoned truth. (Proverbs 16:25)
- L. In Matthew 7:13-14, we are told of two ways, one wide and spacious, the other narrow and constraining.
 - 1. The wide and spacious way relates to religion.
 - 2. The narrow and constraining way relates to Jesus—the truth.
 - 3. Religion leads one to destruction; Jesus leads one to everlasting life.
 - 4. Religion is spacious; Jesus is not.
 - 5. Although religion places some restrictions on the flesh, it indulges it in many other areas.
 - 6. Those who submit to Jesus must consider the flesh to be dead, therefore not indulging any part of it.
 - 7. The broad spacious way is following the flesh, which will lead one into deception and destruction.
 - 8. The narrow constraining way is following the Spirit Who leads one into all truth.
 - 9. We can coexist, be politically correct, and acceptable to the world, or we can die to the world, walk in truth, and be acceptable to Jesus.
 - 10. All religious systems whether traditional, contemporary, or self-seeking will ultimately lead to one's own demise. Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. Any other way is a deception.
- M. God is depending on the Church to proclaim the truth. If the Church does not proclaim the truth, who will?
- N. The Church must separate itself from the religious systems of the world, both traditional and modern, and walk in truth.
- O. The one called to proclaim truth must not abandon it.
- P. God expects and requires the Church to walk in truth.

- Q. May believers rise up all over the world and proclaim and explain the unadulterated truth.

XIX. TRUTH ENCAPSULATED

- A. Truth is the gauge or standard by which everything is measured.
- B. Truth is the personification of God Himself.
- C. Truth is embodied in God.
- D. Knowledge, wisdom, understanding, discretion, etc., are all embodied in truth.
- E. Humanity originated from truth.
- F. If one knows truth, he will know what is right.
- G. One who walks in truth, walks with God.
- H. One who is led by the Spirit, walks in truth.
- I. One who walks in truth, walks according to the will of God.
- J. Deception does not exist in truth.
- K. Any variation from God produces error.
- L. Anyone who does not totally adhere to God's word and Spirit is in error.
- M. What is truth? Jesus—the word of God—the Holy Spirit. Anything that is not in total agreement with these three is a deception or lie.
- N. From the beginning, God spoke truth; He stated what was right for humanity.
- O. To know truth, one must know its origin. Once we know the origin of truth, we must pursue the absolute truth that is found only in God.

XX. THE SURE FOUNDATION OF TRUTH

- A. Truth must be preserved; therefore, the Body of Christ must be diligent and accurate in our pursuit and explanation of truth.
- B. Jesus is the only sure foundation. Building on anything else is a non-supportive delusion.

- C. Valid truth is supported by a foundation that will withstand any storm. (Matthew 7:24-27)
- D. What makes truth valid? It must be accurate, without error, and everlasting.
- E. Valid truth will have two or three witnesses. Opinions do not qualify as witnesses.
- F. God's Word and His Holy Spirit are valid truths.

XXI. SUMMARY

- A. Truth is what is true under any matter of consideration.
- B. Perceptive truth is a way of regarding, understanding, or interpreting something as truth.
- C. Relative truth is truth in relation to or in proportion to something else, such as culture, tradition, etc.
- D. Subjective truth puts forth an idea for consideration, thereby causing one to think a particular way.
- E. Selective truth chooses beliefs that are most suitable to the individual.
- F. Objective truth is not influenced by personal beliefs, feelings, or opinions. It considers and represents scientific facts, which may or may not be true.
- G. Absolute truth is something that is true for everyone, everywhere, at all times. It represents God's facts.
- H. Dogmatism is establishing beliefs that one considers to be indisputable without considering evidence or facts.
- I. God's Word is absolute truth. It can be argued, but it cannot be changed.
- J. The Spirit of Truth bears witness to absolute truth, not perceived truths.
- K. Jesus is God's standard revealed. He exemplifies truth.
- L. God determined the standard for the world before He created humanity; therefore, truth originates with God.
- M. In order to discover truth, one must abandon all presuppositions and let the study reveal the truth.

- N. Walking in truth is following Jesus in lifestyle and character.
- O. The absolute truths of Christianity are irrefutable and cannot be changed or destroyed. God's word is forever settled in heaven.
- P. Because philosophy studies reason, not God, it can never know absolute truth; consequently, philosophy leads people into error.
- Q. Faith is subjective; truth is not. Faith is based upon a belief. Truth is based upon an absolute.
- R. Truth is the gauge by which everything is measured. Truth is the personification of God Himself.
- S. The Church, which is the Body of Christ, must advocate truth.

XXI. CONCLUSION

- A. By looking at the various ways people arrive at what they call truth, we can see how important it is to study God's Word so that we can know the absolute truth.
- B. Even the study of God's Word will not reveal absolute truth, unless the student lays aside preconceived ideas and allows the Holy Spirit to reveal the truths of God's Word.
- C. Absolute truth is liberating. All other perceived truths are binding.
- D. In order to walk in freedom, one must live in and by the Word of God.
- E. When one learns the meaning of truth, he/she is free to worship and serve the only true and living God, Who is revealed by His son Jesus and the Holy Spirit.
- F. Jeremiah 17:9 declares that the heart is deceitful and frail. Who can know it?
- G. In Genesis 8:21, the Lord told Noah that the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth.
- H. Because the unregenerate heart is deceitful and the imaginations are evil, it can be persuaded to believe something that is not true.
- I. It is imperative that we live our lives as witnesses for Jesus. People need to know the truth, and they need to know the only place that truth can be found is in Jesus.

- J. As representatives of Jesus, we are to expose people to the absolute truth that is introduced through the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus.
- K. The unregenerate man lives in darkness. Some will pursue light, but often they go to the wrong source to find it; consequently, they are deceived by false illumination.
- L. Even the born-again believer must renew his mind; otherwise, he, too, will walk in darkness. (Ephesians 5:6-8)
- M. Renewing the mind must be done by putting God's thoughts in our minds, so that we can understand the difference between absolute truth and pseudo truth.
- N. When we ask, "What is truth?", we are not asking what truth is from man's perspective; we are asking what truth is from Creator God's perspective.
- O. So, what is truth? Ask God. In every situation and circumstance of life, we should go to God Himself for counsel.
 - 1. How can we go to God? He is Spirit.
 - 2. God has given His Word and His Spirit to us, but we must pursue and embrace both; otherwise, we have no access to Him.
- P. God alone knows the truth about everything, but God delights in revealing His truth to us.
- Q. What is truth? God and all that He embodies.
- R. All truth issues forth from what God has spoken—in the beginning God said.
 - 1. Satan deceived the woman into following subjective and objective truth.
 - 2. The woman influenced her husband into rejecting absolute truth.
 - 3. Satan's suggestion, the woman's perception, and Adam's rejection did not change absolute truth. They proved the truth of God to be absolute and suffered the consequences of disobeying it.
- S. Only the One who knows the end from the beginning can declare the absolute truth.
- T. Men know in part; God knows in entirety.

- U. Let God be true and every man a liar. (Romans 3:4)

- V. The temptation in the Garden of Eden that resulted in the downfall of humanity is still being utilized today—Did God say? Let me tell you what He really means.
 - 1. Just like the woman in the Garden of Eden, people today are entertaining suggestions from Satan.
 - 2. Stop looking and listening to the flesh. Be led by the Spirit.
 - 3. If God said it; that settles it; do not deviate from it!

- W. What validates truth?
 - 1. Is something true because I believe it is true?
 - 2. Is something true because many people are promoting it to be truth?
 - 3. Neither perceptive, relative, subjective, or objective truths can be accepted unless it agrees with the absolute truth of God's Word and His Spirit.
 - 4. Only truth can validate truth. God is truth; therefore, only God can validate truth.
 - 5. God is revealed through His Word and Spirit; consequently, only the Word and the Holy Spirit can validate truth.

- X. What we believe should be based on our experiences with God, not philosophy or theology. God experiences are undeniable.

- Y. What is Truth?, God and all that issues forth from Him.