



"Truth is not what you want it to be; it is what it is. And you must bend to its power or live a lie."

—Miyamoto Musashi

12-Sep-25

Knowledge and the Truth (Part One)

What is truth? What is knowledge?

I grew up in a household of scientists who could jabber on and on at the dinner table, and while they spoke with a lot of knowledge, the subject of truth never came up (unless it was to find out who ate the ice cream without permission). I studied physics and mathematics under numerous professors in high school and college, but truth never came up.

So, what is truth?

- According to the *semantic definition*, truth is "a property of a sentence." But it is not actually. One can say, "This sentence is a lie," leaving others with a paradox: Is it or is it not?
- *Journalists* say: Truth is "the accurate and objective reporting of facts." However, quoting from the Pew Charitable Trusts:

Midway through the 20th century, the news media was among the most trusted institutions in the United States.

Today, it sits near the bottom of the list, outflanked only by Congress.

Many journalists seem to have abandoned their own definition.

- *Philosophers* opine that truth is one of the largest subjects in philosophy. Stanford University published an article titled "Truth," which states, "Any simple definition of truth masks a great deal of controversy." As we can imagine, accepting a simple definition would pose a threat to some careers!
- *Propagandists* feel that the modification of the truth for ulterior purposes is a fine art. The supposed master of propaganda, Joseph Goebbels, who was the Propaganda Minister for the Nazi regime under Adolf Hitler, said, "It is the absolute right of the State to supervise the formation of public opinion." The Intelligence State, falsely named, ostensibly in charge of finding out the truth, is being exposed as a rogue actor.
- Believe it or not, there is a *rapper* who goes by the stage name "da T.R. U.T.H."
- *Empirical scientists* view truth as "knowledge that is primarily derived from sensory experience"—what one sees, hears, smells, tastes, and feels. They state, "Scientific knowledge is the most reliable but also subject to change as new evidence emerges." In other words, it is *not* the most reliable.

Science is supposed to be a house of logic, presumably in pursuit of the truth. Yet, it is built on the fallacy of guessing or hypothesizing. This method of hypothesizing first and trying to prove later has been applied:

- by Sigmund Freud to the human psychological condition.
- by Charles Darwin to the animal kingdom.
- by Karl Marx to societal evolution.

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- by Adolph Hitler to genetics.
- by judges to crime.
- by scientists to the known universe. As far as the metaphysical reality—that which the Bible calls "spirit"—science has absolutely no access. It can make no measurements and run no tests on something it cannot physically sense.

The scientific method, simply stated, is as follows:

1. State a hypothesis.
2. Propose some consequences.
3. Test to see if your proposed consequences actually happen.

This method has been modified to expedite research. These days, a theory is hypothesized, and a moratorium period is established. If the hypothesis cannot be proven false by the end of the moratorium period, it is assumed to be true.

One can probably see the weakness: Just set a short enough moratorium. Now, for instance, all a drug company must do to produce a product is to test enough to make it over a threshold of marketability. Then, they must ensure that any effects are delayed so that the product has been sold to the world—and profits reaped—before the effects are seen.

When Paul writes to Timothy describing the last days, he says in [II Timothy 3:7](#) that men are "always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." Earlier, he had written to Timothy:

O Timothy! Guard what was committed to your trust, avoiding the profane and idle babblings and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge—by professing it some have strayed concerning the [faith](#). ([I Timothy 6:20-21](#))

I have found that even seeking the definition of truth (in this world "under the sun") is a fool's errand. No one can agree on what it is, and so much is beyond our physical and mental abilities to understand. In *The Republic* written by Plato in 375 BC, Protagoras says, "What is true for you is true for you, and what is true for me is true for me."

It is no wonder, then, that we have this dialogue in the [trial of Jesus](#) Christ, who said to Pontius Pilate:

"You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and 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."

Pilate said to Him, "What is truth?" And when he had said this, he went out . . . ([John 18:37-38](#))

Pontius Pilate could have had the answer. He had the Expert in front of him. Whether he was being merely sarcastic or philosophically superior, he did not wait for an answer. He may not have wanted it because he likely preferred not having to make a choice about it.

However, the answer to that question is more valuable than gold, rubies, diamonds, or even one's life. As the psalmist writes in [Psalm 119:72](#), "The law of Your mouth is better to me than thousands of coins of gold and silver."

In [John 17:17](#), Jesus Himself provides the definition of truth as He speaks to the Father in prayer on behalf of His disciples: "Sanctify them through Your truth. Your word is truth." And in [John 14:5-6](#), when Thomas asks Jesus, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?" Jesus responds, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."

The truth is not a fluid, amorphous concept that is up to each individual to determine, but an absolute and unchanging reality. It is the nature of [God](#), and the ultimate revelation of God's truth is [Jesus Christ](#). His [Holy Spirit](#) is called "the Spirit of Truth" ([John 16:13](#)).

In reality, truth has an amazingly straightforward definition: the Word of God.

Next time, we will investigate the difference between truth and knowledge and see that truth must not just be known, but embraced and lived.

- James C. Stoertz

Church News & Special Announcements

Jeff (Poppy) and **Tracy** (Mimi) **Wilhelm** are ecstatic to announce the birth of their granddaughter, **Lillie Marie Couchman**. She was born at 1:19 this morning, perfectly healthy and with no induction necessary. There were not any complications after the initial blood pressure scare. Lillie weighed in at 7 lbs., 4oz., and was 21 inches long—"and absolutely gorgeous." Mom (**Michelle**), dad (**Ian**), and baby are resting comfortably and should go home tomorrow. The Wilhelms write, "God heard our prayers . . . Thank you, brethren, for your prayers. We love you all so much and look forward to driving you all nuts with pictures of her at Feast!"

12-Sep-25

New Transcripts

[1832A: Of Death](#)

Given by James Beaubelle on 16-Aug-25

[BS-AC26: Acts \(Part Twenty-Six\)](#)

Given by John W. Ritenbaugh on 21-Mar-89

[BS-AC27: Acts \(Part Twenty-Seven\)](#)

Given by John W. Ritenbaugh on 28-Mar-89

From the Archives: Featured Sermon

Keeping the Truth Pure

by Charles Whitaker (1944-2021)

Although God's church has correct or right doctrine, we need to know more than right doctrine. We must be able to use right reason (supported by Scripture and God's Holy Spirit) to support and defend right doctrine. If keeping or understanding doctrine comes from wrong, distorted, or questionable sources or wrong motives, the doctrine may be contaminated or defiled. If we allow doctrine to be contaminated with man's flawed, syncretistic reason, it will contaminate, defile, or profane the truth. One of Job's 'counselors,' Eliphaz, derived his hopeless, pessimistic and non-edifying advice (not from Biblical sources) from demonically inspired Gnosticism, putting himself at variance with God's Word. Bildad also encourages Job to look to non-biblical secular, Gnostic teachings of a mysterious, shadowy "fathers of fathers" - based upon the teachings of Satan rather than God's Word. We need to be careful of modern Gnostic syncretism found on television evangelists and commentaries.

From the Archives: Featured Article

Guard the Truth!

by John W. Ritenbaugh

How does God define the church? What comprises it according to the Bible? The *ekklesia*, the Greek word translated "church" in the Bible, is not a humanly defined corporation, but the mystical body of Christ, having the Spirit of God. The true church of God is an invisible, spiritual organism, of those people that have and are led by the Spirit of God. And such a person will not turn away from the teaching delivered by the apostles.

Featured Audio Schedule

Friday Night Bible Study

The next Bible Study (Friday 12-Sep-25) will be **Acts (Part Twenty-Six)**, given by **John W. Ritenbaugh**. The Bible Study will be featured on the [CGG homepage](#) from **6:00 pm Friday** (EST) and all day Saturday.

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