

How Can You Know the Truth?

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We live in a world in which confusion abounds. In every major facet of the world's society: education, politics, religion, or whatever, contradictions, conflict and confusion prevails. Almost every subject of consequence is controversial these days.

There is a continuous struggle going on for our attention. Whether you realize it or not, your mind is under siege. All kinds of elements, groups, individuals, with a point of view to sell are struggling to capture your mind—attempting to win it over to their point of view. Your mind is constantly being bombarded by conflicting ideas, beliefs and opinions.

Even something as obvious as one's sex is controversial. Are you male or female? An increasingly popular idea these days is that it's not your DNA, nor the sex organs you are born with, that determine your sex. It's whether you "feel" that you are male or female. Confusion about one's sexual identity is being deliberately sown among even very young children by prevailing forces in our society. We can feel compassion for those who are confused about their sexuality, which often results from abuse or other kinds of mistreatment. But I have a hard time feeling anything but contempt for willful proponents of such confusion.

Paradoxically, in a world where the very idea of objective truth is increasingly under assault, powerful institutions are becoming more and more intolerant of any opinions on controversial matters which do not concur with their own.

Powerful social media companies routinely censor or deplatform those posting material which runs counter to opinions they favor, even though they are supposed to be content neutral platforms. Internet browser algorithms often tend to give preference in their search engine results to websites expressing viewpoints in favor with the left-wing Establishment.

Wikipedia, the online encyclopedia, which has a huge following and influence worldwide, initially had what they called a "neutral point of view" policy (NPOV). The idea was that an encyclopedia should write objectively about "what people believe" regarding a particular subject, especially a controversial subject, without advocating one point of view over another, or stating or implying that one particular view of the subject at hand is the correct point of view (cf. link to original policy in "Wikipedia is Badly Biased," larrysanger.org, retrieved 11-13-2020).

Larry Sanger, a co-founder of Wikipedia, who is no longer associated with the organization, argues that, "Wikipedia's 'NPOV' is dead. The original policy long since forgotten, Wikipedia no longer has an effective neutrality policy. There is a rewritten policy, but it endorses the utterly bankrupt canard that journalists should avoid what they call 'false balance.' The notion that we should avoid 'false balance' is directly contradictory to the original neutrality policy. As a result, even as journalists turn to opinion and activism, Wikipedia now touts controversial points of view on politics, religion, and science" (*ibid.*).

In the article Sanger provides a number of examples of how Wikipedia articles are written from a biased "liberal-left point of view" (his words). One example is a statement in Wikipedia's article on abortion. The article in question asserts as fact that, "When properly

done, abortion is one of the safest procedures in medicine.” Sanger comments of this assertion: It is, “...a claim that is questionable on its face, considering what an invasive, psychologically distressing, and sometimes lengthy procedure it can be even when done according to modern medical practices. More to the point, abortion opponents consider the fetus to be a human being with rights; their view, that it is not safe for the baby, is utterly ignored.”

One of the other examples he cites of Wikipedia bias is their article on Jesus. “It simply asserts, again in its own voice, that ‘the quest for the historical Jesus has yielded major uncertainty on the historical reliability of the Gospels and on how closely the Jesus portrayed in the Bible reflects the historical Jesus.’ In another place, the article simply asserts, ‘the gospels are not independent nor consistent records of Jesus’ life.’ A great many Christians would take issue with such statements, which means it is not neutral for that reason — in other words, the very fact that most Christians believe in the historical reliability of the Gospels, and that they are wholly consistent, means that the article is biased if it simply asserts, without attribution or qualification, that this is a matter of ‘major uncertainty.’ In other respects, the article can be fairly described as a ‘liberal’ academic discussion of Jesus, focusing especially on assorted difficulties and controversies, while failing to explain traditional or orthodox views of those issues. So it might be ‘academic,’ but what it is not is neutral, not in the original sense we defined for Wikipedia” (*ibid.*).

Sanger provides another example of Wikipedia’s lack of objectivity and accuracy in its article titled “Christ.” The article leaves the impression that the early followers of Jesus, who would include Peter, John, Paul, Jude, and others, rarely if ever referred to him using the title “Christ.” Sanger cites evidence for his conclusion that this impression is false: “Clearly, Wikipedia’s claims are tendentious if not false, and represent a point of view that many if not most Christians would rightly dispute” (*ibid.*).

He also discusses some examples of how Wikipedia treats subjects dealing with science. Views on scientific subjects such as global warming, vaccines, alternative medicine, (and others) not in line with the so-called “Establishment” view are treated dismissively, scornfully, in Wikipedia articles. He points out that “scientists sometimes do not agree on which theories are and are not scientific.” He concludes that Wikipedia articles “endorse definite positions that scientific minorities reject.” And that “genuine neutrality requires a different sort of treatment” (*ibid.*).

Steve Deace, an opinion writer for theblaze.com, comments in one of his articles: “A prominent Christian pastor tweeted the following this week: ‘Two seemingly contradictory currents mark our society 1. There is a denunciation of all claims of absolute truth 2. Yet there is also a fanaticism in which one position or group is absolutely right, nothing is ambiguous, and divergent views should be destroyed.’

“I feel ya, brother. But nothing contradictory is in fact going on at all. This is the logical destination of attempting to usurp the ultimate authority in all the universe. It is biblically defined double-mindedness perfected. ‘My truth’ can’t help but become ‘kneel before Zod.’

“As a consequence, the Beatitudes are indeed replaced with the Fanaticisms. They are ever-changing, non-eternal, entirely arbitrary power grabs that seek not to instill humility and healing but elevate lies to the level of ultimate justice” (“Mask-wearing fanaticism sure looks a lot like a religion,” theblaze.com, November 13, 2020).

Thankfully, at least in the United States, although the same cannot necessarily be said of some other countries, no one is attempting to force you into a particular mode of thought at the point of a bayonet – at least not yet. Although mobs in some of our cities have recently forced some individuals into making confessions of one kind or another through violence and intimidation. And intimidation is being used in our schools and colleges in a similar manner. And individuals are increasingly being targeted by our system of “justice” for expressing certain political points of view.

In our generation, as in other ages past, whole nations have been forced to accept a particular dogma through violence and terror. Japan in the World War II era, Nazi Germany, the Soviet Union, and other Communist countries, are only a few examples of ideologies being forced on people through terror and intimidation. In the Middle Ages it was often religious dogma that was being forced on people through mass murder and instruments such as the Inquisition.

In areas dominated by Catholic, Protestant, or Muslim authorities, conversion to the prevailing dogma was frequently forced on people. Those who did not yield were often subject to execution or imprisonment.

Not infrequently, those who would impose their will on others pose as “liberators.” “While they promise them liberty, they themselves are slaves of corruption; for by whom a person is overcome, by him also he is brought into bondage” (II Peter 2:19).

Is it any wonder that people are confused when from positions of high authority, whether it be in politics, education, religion, or what-have-you, black is continually called white, evil is called good, rhetoric, empty promises, slander, guile, “public relations,” are substituted for truth?

Is it any wonder that people are most especially confused about values? As writer, editor, and publisher Irving Kristol wrote decades ago, “America is experiencing what can only be called... a crisis in values.... People do not know what they ought to think about relations between the sexes, about relations between parents and children, about relations between the citizen and his government.... The old ways have decayed...” (“New Left, New Right,” *The Radical Left: The Abuse of Discontent*, Ed. William P. Gerberding, Duane E. Smith, Houghton Mifflin, 1970, pp. 57-58).

What was true when the book was published in 1970 is even more true now. People don’t **know** what to believe about basic values—about the relationships which form the very fiber and fabric of a stable society. The **truth** about almost everything seems to have escaped us as a people. We, the United States, the western world, the whole world, don’t **KNOW** the truth. And furthermore, we don’t know where to find it—or even how to go about looking for it.

One area in which confusion reigns is religion itself, including what is alleged to be “Christianity,” with hundreds of competing sects and denominations, often teaching doctrines diametrically opposed to one another, and not infrequently, opposite to what the Bible itself teaches.

How can you know the truth? In this article let’s explore some principles to help you answer that question, to help you understand how you can **know the truth**.

But first I want to show you what the Bible says about the condition the world is in today. I want to show you **why** a knowledge of the truth is important. Then we’ll discuss how you can find it.

The Bible says the whole world is today in a condition of being deceived. “So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who **deceives the whole world**; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him” (Revelation 12:9). The Bible describes this world as a world of darkness. Paul wrote, “Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, **against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places**” (Ephesians 6:11-12). In other words, the battle for truth does not just involve human beings. Our battle is against Satan and the demonic horde that influences this world. Peter wrote of those who are a part of the true Church of God in this age, “But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who **called you out of darkness** into His marvelous light” (I Peter 2:9). We are called out of this world of lies and deception, into the light of truth.

The following words of prophesy from Jeremiah apply especially to our age: “Oh, that I had in the wilderness A lodging place for travelers; That I might leave my people, And go from them! For they are all adulterers, An assembly of treacherous men. ‘And like their bow they have bent their tongues for lies. They are not valiant for the truth on the earth. For they proceed from evil to evil, And they do not know Me,’ says the Lord. ‘Everyone take heed to his neighbor, And do not trust any brother; For every brother will utterly supplant, And every neighbor will walk with slanderers. Everyone will deceive his neighbor, And will not speak the truth; They have taught their tongue to speak lies; They weary themselves to commit iniquity. Your dwelling place is in the midst of deceit; **Through deceit they refuse to know Me,**’ says the Lord” (Jeremiah 9:2-6).

“Hear the word of the Lord, You children of Israel, For the Lord brings a charge against the inhabitants of the land: **‘There is no truth** or mercy Or knowledge of God in the land. By swearing and lying, Killing and stealing and committing adultery, They break all restraint, With bloodshed upon bloodshed” (Hosea 4:1-2).

Through lying and other sins, for a lack of knowledge of the truth, our peoples are headed for destruction. Because a doctrine or practice is widely accepted, doesn’t mean it’s true, or acceptable to God. Many practices and teachings widely accepted—including many widely accepted by popular “Christianity”—are in fact contrary to the teachings of God’s word.

“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being priest for Me; Because you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children” (Hosea 4:6).

Why, we might ask? How is it that deceit, falsehood, confusion have come to dominate the world?

It began in the Garden of Eden, when Adam and Eve chose to reject God’s instructions, and believed Satan’s lies instead. Jesus said of the devil, he “does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it” (John 8:44).

What we have in short is a world turned over to Satan’s control precisely because Adam, and most of his descendants, have chosen to reject God’s authority over their lives. And in rejecting God’s authority, Adam and his descendants have also **rejected the truth** God has to offer. They have rejected God’s laws, and they have rejected the greatest and most absolute reality, or **TRUTH**, of all, which is God himself!

Therefore we have a world of darkness, of confusion, of chaos, a world ruled over by Satan—the father of lies (2 Corinthians 4:2-4).

The Bible makes it perfectly clear that the right kind of knowledge is priceless. The Bible prophesied that at the time of the end, the time we’re living in now, knowledge would increase. “But you, Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book until the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase” (Daniel 12:4). Knowledge has increased exponentially in the past few centuries and decades. But with increased knowledge have come increasing evils, evils that threaten human existence, and the very survival of life on this planet.

Is it the knowledge which is wrong? Or is it the way the knowledge has been abused and misapplied? Is it the knowledge which is evil, or is it the philosophical system which underlies the world’s governmental and educational systems?

What is the truth if it is not knowledge? If you say, “I have the truth,” are you not saying you have a knowledge of what is true? What does the Bible say about the value of knowledge? And how does that relate to seeking and finding the truth?

Paul wrote, “We know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies” (1 Corinthians 8:1). Does that mean knowledge is bad? No. Paul goes on to say, “And if anyone thinks that he knows anything, he knows nothing yet as he ought to know” (1 Corinthians 8:2). In other words, superficial knowledge tends to give one a false sense of superiority to others. Knowledge must be subordinated to love. But any of us, no matter how much knowledge he has, knows nothing compared to what he has yet to learn. The knowledge of any of us is rudimentary and introductory, so we have nothing to be vain about, and we have a lot to learn.

“A wise man will hear and **increase learning**, And a man of understanding will attain wise counsel” (Proverbs 1:5). “The fear of the Lord is the **beginning of knowledge**, But **fools despise wisdom and instruction**” (Proverbs 1:7). These are just a couple of many scriptures that tell us learning, knowledge, is of inestimable value. The accrual of the right kind of true knowledge is an essential key to your spiritual growth and development. Peter wrote, “... giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue **knowledge**” (II Peter 1:5). He also admonished, “You therefore, beloved,... beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked; but **grow in the grace and knowledge** of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen” (II Peter 3:17-18).

As Peter warned, it could prove essential to your salvation that you continue growing in knowledge and in an understanding of the truth. Otherwise, you may well be led into error.

But how do you know what is the truth? With all the conflicting ideas, teachings, beliefs, persuasions, and opinions, how are you going to know what is true?

How can you know what is true? Some have agonized over this question their entire lives, never finding a satisfactory answer.

Many have found the question so perplexing that they at least outwardly have given up even the idea of finding the truth. There are many who claim that truth is impossible to attain, that attempting to know the truth is futile. I have a biology book in which the author states that the object of science is not to find truth. One might ask, if the object is not to find truth, then what is the object?

Many people, especially those in higher education, are afraid of the word “truth.” Why? Because the word implies finality and authority. And authority, other than that of themselves, is what many of the supposed wise men of our society hate above all else.

That hatred for authority, that unwillingness to subject themselves to the truth is why the wise of the world have not been able to find it. They have rejected the very first requisite to having a knowledge of the truth. This state of cultivated foolishness is described in Scripture: “... **always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth**. Now as Jannes and Jambres resisted Moses, so do these also **resist the truth**: men of corrupt minds, disapproved concerning the faith” (II Timothy 3:7-8).

First Key

The first requisite and the first key to knowing truth is to subject yourself, submit yourself, to the truth—beginning with the greatest truth—the greatest reality of all, God himself. Jesus said, “I am the way, the **truth**, and the life” (John 14:6). God is the very embodiment and source of all truth. He is the greatest reality in the Universe because all things were created by him and he existed before all else. He is not only the source and wellspring of all life—he is the source and wellspring of all that is real—of all that is true. To be cut off from God is to be cut off from that which is sound, that which is true, that which is secure and grounded in reality. “Because they **hated knowledge** And did **not choose the fear of the Lord**, They

would have none of my counsel And despised my every rebuke. Therefore they shall eat the fruit of their own way, And be filled to the full with their own fancies. For the turning away of the simple will slay them, And the complacency of fools will destroy them; But whoever listens to me will dwell safely, And will be secure, without fear of evil" (Proverbs 1:29-33).

The truths concerning basic values which undergird all else are spiritual truths. And that which is spiritual must be spiritually discerned. It is only through the added dimension and power of God's Spirit that we can fully know and understand the framework of spiritual truth upon which all else must be ordered and arranged in order to be of permanent value (1 Corinthians 2:6-14).

And having been given a knowledge of truth, we must abide in it, that is, we must live by it, practice it, if we are to retain it. "...Jesus answered him, saying, 'It is written, "Man shall not **live** by bread alone, but **by every word of God**"'" (Luke 4:4). "Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, 'If you **abide in My word**, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall **know the truth**, and the truth shall make you free'" (John 8:30-32; cf. Romans 1:18-28). "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; A good understanding have all those who **do His commandments**" (Psalms 111:10).

Second Key

Jesus Christ promised his disciples in John 16:13 that his Spirit would guide them into all truth. But in order for it to do that we must be **seeking the truth**. That is the **second key** to knowing the truth. The principle from God's word is clear: "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened" (Matthew 7:7-8).

In order to find the truth you must seek it. If you don't seek it you'll never find it. It takes effort, study, diligence to find the truth. "... he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him" (Hebrews 11:6).

In the book of Proverbs and elsewhere the truth is compared to rubies, gems, precious metal and is said to be of even greater value (Job 28:12-28; Proverbs 3:13-15; 8:10-11; 20:15). Gems and precious metals must be sought out at great cost and effort. You don't normally just stumble over them in the dark. Solomon built a fleet of ships and sent them to search the world over for the treasures which enriched his kingdom (1 Kings 9:6-28; 10:21-23). He recognized that it takes effort to attain that which is of value.

"My son, if you receive my words, And treasure my commands within you, So that you incline your ear to wisdom, And **apply your heart to understanding**; Yes, if you cry out for discernment, And lift up your voice for understanding, If you **seek her as silver, And search for her as for hidden treasures**; Then you will understand the fear of the Lord, And find the knowledge of God" (Proverbs 2:1-5).

We need to ask ourselves, how diligent am I in praying for understanding. Am I careless about what I believe? Am I diligent in seeking the truth?

“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (II Timothy 2:15). Note that the Bible is referred to here as the “word of truth.” The Bible is your primary tool as a truth seeker and is the source of basic truth because it is the revealed word of God. It is the foundation of all knowledge and nothing that is true will contradict God’s word if rightly understood.

This brings us to the third key.

Third Key

Learn to use the tools of study and **prove all things**.

Needless to say, the Bible has been twisted, distorted and perverted in countless ways to make it seem to support lies and contradictions. The history of mankind is one of perverting truth and exchanging it for a lie. “For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who **suppress the truth** in unrighteousness, because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man—and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things. Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, **who exchanged the truth of God for the lie**, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen” (Romans 1:18-25).

We are told, “**Test [or prove] all things**; hold fast what is good” (I Thessalonians 5:21). In studying the Bible a most important key is that the **Bible interprets itself**. “Whom will he teach knowledge? And whom will he make to understand the message? Those just weaned from milk? Those just drawn from the breasts? For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept, Line upon line, line upon line, Here a little, there a little. For with stammering lips and another tongue He will speak to this people, To whom He said, ‘This is the rest with which You may cause the weary to rest,’ And, ‘This is the refreshing’; Yet they would not hear. But the word of the Lord was to them, ‘Precept upon precept, precept upon precept, Line upon line, line upon line, Here a little, there a little,’ That they might go and fall backward, and be broken And snared and caught” (Isaiah 28:9-13). Line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little, there a little, all from God’s word. If you ignore this vital principle, you will make little progress in understanding of the truth of Scripture.

Men are all too willing to read their own ideas and interpretations into Scripture. If an interpretation of a particular Scripture is plainly contradicted by other Scriptures, then that interpretation is false. “Theology is the whole meaning of Scripture—the sense taught in the whole of Scripture, as that sense is modified, limited, and explained by Scripture itself. It is a consistently interpreted representation of the statements of the Bible, on the various facts, doctrines, and precepts, which the book of God reveals” (*The Bible Handbook*, Joseph Angus, Samuel Green, p. 201)

There are many tools and aids that can help in studying the Bible. Learn what some of them are and learn to use them properly to help you grow in knowledge of the truth. (See from our website for reference: "[References for Bible Students](#)"; and "[How to Study and Understand the Bible](#)").

Another tool that can be used in ascertaining truth is the scientific method. Science, or what is called science, has been made a false god in our society and there are a lot of things that are labeled science that are not scientifically demonstrable at all. Indeed, much that is labeled science is demonstrably false.

But the scientific method boiled down to its fundamentals is nothing more than observing, comparing, and reasoning logically from those observations and comparisons. It involves the process of induction or reaching general conclusions from specific observations, augmented by other types of logic based on sound reasoning. Observation and induction play a key role in coming to an understanding of truth.

Sir Isaac Newton, who is recognized as one of the greatest scientists of all history and who largely developed the scientific method philosophically, was able to prove God's existence satisfactorily to himself by his method observation and logic. Of course conclusions reached sometimes can be erroneous, and are subject to being tested. Thus we are to "test all things, hold fast what is good" (1 Thessalonians 5:21).

Because there were in Newton's many who wanted to reject God's existence, some philosophers, notably David Hume, sought to argue against and debunk the method of induction. Nevertheless, the method of observation and induction has proven a very fruitful tool in the development of knowledge and understanding.

The use of inductive reasoning is a very important tool in gaining an understanding of the Bible because as you read about specific happenings and events in the Bible you can then by induction gain an insight into overall principles which apply universally. The New Covenant, for example, can be understood to be a superinduction over the Old Covenant. That is, the New Covenant consists of general spiritual principles which were given a specific and temporary expression in the Old Covenant. The two covenants are not at all opposed to one another, contrary to what many people have assumed, but rather according to God's word they go hand-in-hand, the one being induced from the other.

In conclusion, remember that there are keys that you can use to get a grasp on truth. It is essential that you learn to use these keys effectively. If you don't, you may be misled by men who seem righteous, but underneath are ravaging wolves (Matthew 7:15-19; Acts 20:29).

As in the past, there will be in the future apostasies, men leading people into error and rebellion against God through false teachings. Indeed, such is happening now. Remember the three keys:

- (1) Submit yourself to God and his truth.

- (2) Seek out the truth.
- (3) Prove all things.

If you apply yourself diligently and prayerfully to the search for knowledge of the truth using these keys, you'll find it.

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