

Some Preliminary Observations Regarding Truth

Introduction

- A. Truth is a most important reality and possession. Without it we would not have had men on the moon, there would be no penicillin, meaningful communication would be impossible, right and wrong would be meaningless, and hope would be an empty desire.
- B. We need only reflect on the oath we give in court, the search for truth in medicine, and the respect we give to honest men and women to understand the value of truth. When such areas become personal as when sued, or we are sick, or we are betrayed by a close friend we realize how our life is based on truth.
- C. It is important to recognize that all truth -- scientific, logical, mathematical, moral, or religious, etc., -- finds its source in the person of God and His creative work.

I. A Working Definition of Truth.

Truth may be defined as "A correspondence with reality."

Comment: This definition emphasizes that reality (what is) is real, i.e. is really there (rejecting the thought that all thought and life is fantasy, a human invention, or is constantly changing) and that a statement can be made about reality that is correct (truthful). A good illustration of this latter point would be, in response to the question, "Where is my history book?" a truthful answer would be "On the dining room table" if in fact that is where the book was.

II. The Basis of Truth (that which makes truth possible).

A. The Existence of God

God describes Himself as "The God of Truth."

Into your hands I commit my spirit; redeem me, O LORD, the God of Truth. Ps 31:5

But the LORD is the true God; he is the living God, the eternal King ... Jer 10:10

Jesus answered, I am the way and the truth and the life ... John 14:6

In whom (Jesus Christ) are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Col 2:3

Comment: Truth is one of the three moral attributes of God (Holiness, Love, Truth). Without truth there would be no absolute right and wrong. Life would then be based on some form of Utilitarianism/Pragmatism.

B. The Creative Activity of God

God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. Gen 1:3

Comment: The word "good" in this profound verse is used to characterize all of creation. It can be translated "right." Because God in His very nature is truth -- truth becomes one distinguishing quality of all that God made. This means not only that finite creation is real, but that was created "rational" in the sense that the underlying principles could be discovered and utilized for God's glory and our good, as when God told Adam to "Work the Garden of Eden and take care of it" (Gen 2:15). It seems, therefore, that the possibility of science and other disciplines were "built into" the creative work of God.

III. Truth Points to the Control/Power Existing "Behind" Events and Matter.

A. It is rather easy to see that truth is largely "invisible" and yet controlling.

Consider "laws" of nature: gravitation, thermodynamics; principles that govern our thinking: cause and effect; moral standards: righteousness and justice; and Biblical statements: "Salvation is by grace not works."

B. Truth is presented in the Bible as the correct way of interpreting reality.

Consider the way the Book of Job interprets Job's trial.

Consider the way we are to deal with our trials: II Cor 4:17,18; I Peter 1:7,8.

Consider how the Bible points "behind" people and events for interpretation: Eph 2:2,3; 6:12

Consider how the "Kingdom of God" is described as a largely invisible, yet powerful, activity of God: Mark 1:15; Luke 11:20.

IV. Important Emphases for the Understanding of Truth.

A. Truth is not only the very Person of Jesus Christ, but truth cannot be correctly understood or utilized apart from a living and obedient relationship with Him. Note John 8:31,32

Comment: Too often we try to separate truth from the Lord Jesus and relate to truth as though it were an abstract or "free floating" idea. The idea may be correct but must be believed and practiced in love for the Savior, with worship and faith, and for the glory of God. Herein lies much of our weakness and failure as evangelical believers. Simply reading and obeying the Bible in a legalistic or formalistic manner will not release the power of God. In fact it will lead one into severe deception and bondage.

B. God has provided wonderfully for us in His truth.

I am the way the truth and the life. John 14:6

For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace. Rom 6:14

Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. John 17:17

The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life. John 6:63

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