

What is Truth and How Can We Discern It?

I. What is Truth?

A. Definition of Truth

Truth is the accuracy relationship that a representation has to reality.

(A *representation* can be a proposition, sentence, thought, image, etc. ... anything that purports to describe how reality actually is.)

Example: "My blue car is in the parking lot." is true because it accurately describes reality.

B. Scripture

John 18:37-38

37 "You are a king, then!" said Pilate. Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. In fact, **the reason I was born and came into the world is to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me.**" 38 "**What is truth?**" retorted Pilate. With this he went out again to the Jews gathered there and said, "I find no basis for a charge against him.

John 14:6-7

6 Jesus answered, "**I am** the way and **the truth** and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. 7 **If you really know me, you will know my Father as well.** From now on, you do know him and have seen him."

Acts 17:24-28

24 "The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by human hands. 25 And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything. Rather, **[God] himself gives everyone life and breath and everything else.** 26 From one man he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands. 27 God did this so that they would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from any one of us. 28 '**For in him we live and move and have our being.**' As some of your own poets have said, 'We are his offspring.'"

Colossians 1:15-17

15 **The Son is the image of the invisible God**, the firstborn over all creation. 16 For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. 17 He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

Hebrews 1:3a

The Son is the radiance of God's glory and **the exact representation of [the Father's] being**, sustaining all things by his powerful word.

C. Summary

Jesus is the Truth: **he is the perfectly accurate representation of ultimate Reality [God].**

II. How Do We Discern Truth?

In Other Words, How Do Believe What is True and Not What is False?

A. Definition of Belief

A belief is a thought that one trusts/cherishes/accepts as true.

B. By the Spirit

John 15:26-27

26 “When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father—the **Spirit of truth** who goes out from the Father—he **will testify about me**. 27 And you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning.

John 16:12-15

12 “I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. 13 But when he, **the Spirit of truth**, comes, he **will guide you into all the truth**. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. 14 He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you. 15 All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what he will make known to you.”

B. By Personal and Communal Discipline

John 8:31-32

31 To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, “**If you hold to my teaching**, you are really my disciples. 32 Then **you will know the truth**, and the truth will set you free.”

Ephesians 6:11-14

11 Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes. 12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. 13 Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. 14 **Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist ...**

2 Corinthians 10:3-5

3 For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. 4 The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. 5 We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and **we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ**.

1. **Studying** and Obeying Jesus’s Teaching [**Scripture**]
2. Using the **Hot Seat Model** / Table of Decision
3. Creating a **Holding Cell** in Our Minds
4. Putting Our Thoughts Into Jesus’s **Rock Tumbler**