

TOPIC 1

THERE ARE DIFFERENT TYPES OF TRUTH. FACT OR FICTION?



Conversation Points

- ★ I think how strongly someone believes what they are saying is true is a good indication whether it is true or not. **AGREE or DISAGREE?**
- ★ If I don't like someone I am less likely to believe what they say is true. **AGREE or DISAGREE?**
- ★ Most people when confronted with the evidence that proves beyond all reasonable doubt that they were wrong, will admit it and change their mind immediately. **AGREE or DISAGREE?**

Reflection

Terry is a student whose parents do not take too much interest in what is taught at their child's school by Terry's teachers. Terry's friends all agree - literally - about *everything*, including what their teachers tell them even though it often seems to stray far from the curriculum. These friends never disagree with each other. *But* each of them know *the type of person* who they disagreed with! *Those* people (as their teachers and 'influencers' told them) were *evil* because they were intolerant bigots! Added to this, these "haters" were also science-deniers and anti-intellectual because they blindly hold to long out-of-date religious myths about human identity. Terry, and each of Terry's friends, when they gathered together, would often mock and ridicule these "religious idiots". However, Terry's family didn't do many things together, but, when it was convenient, they went to church. Terry liked the music, hanging out with a small group of different set of friends, and enjoyed the preaching (accepting it as true) - although Terry never told anyone at school.

Different Ways To Understand Truth

Terry is an example of someone who believed there are different kinds of truth. When at school and hanging out with friends, Terry accepted there was *scientific* truth, *historic* truth, *geographic* truth, *biological* truth and *sociological* truth. And just like all of Terry's friends, they never questioned their teachers' who confidently told them *only to accept a claim that could be proven either mathematically or scientifically*.

When Terry went to church on Sundays it unconsciously involved using *another* truth category - *religious truth*, where Terry could accept such 'truths' as *the Bible, Christianity, and God*. It never seemed to occur to Terry or to Terry's friends that many times these 'different kinds of truths' contradicted each other (such the contradictory views of 'biological truth' with 'sociological 'truth' about sex/gender), or that their teachers' advice to *'never accept a claim unless it could be proven mathematically or scientifically'* was itself a claim that could *not* be proven mathematically or scientifically!

There are many more people who also think like Terry that there are different kinds of truth - without realising that this leads to logical contradictions and wild inconsistencies about their everyday interactions with reality of the world in which they lived!

It is important to understand that when we use the word 'truth' we are not merely referring to *perspectives* (such as two people looking at the same number on different sides of a desk and disagreeing whether its a '6' or a '9') or what we *agree* to call 'true' (such as how we agree to use *language* and accept its use as *true* - such as what we might mean by "Stay up late"). Neither are we confusing the validity of *opinion* or *preference* for the meaning of *truth*.

Therefore, it may be *true* that someone had an opinion about something. But it may also be *true* that their opinion was not true.
Can you think of an example?

Terry's friends never disagreed and yet agreed on who they disagreed with. This made them *good* friends. **Fact or fiction?**

1. Dr. Andrew Corbett

18 February 2023 at 3:41:21 pm
John 1:14 ¶ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.
John 1:17 For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

2. Dr. Andrew Corbett

18 February 2023 at 3:42:58 pm
John 8:45 But because I tell the truth, you do not believe me.

3. Dr. Andrew Corbett

18 February 2023 at 3:43:21 pm
John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

4. Dr. Andrew Corbett

18 February 2023 at 3:43:49 pm
Col. 1:5 because of the hope laid up for you in heaven. Of this you have heard before in the word of the truth, the gospel,

5. Dr. Andrew Corbett

18 February 2023 at 3:44:23 pm
John 14:6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

FACT OR FICTION

Section 1: Certain things are objectively true. Fact or fiction?

From the Bible

1. In the opening chapter of the Gospel of John, how does the apostle describe Jesus in John 1:14, 17?

2. When Jesus was being maligned by Jerusalem’s religious leaders, what do we know about how He conducted Himself according to John 8:45?

3. The Apostle John introduces Jesus as the Word of God (John 1:1) and later cites Jesus telling the Pharisees that all of the Scriptures (the Bible, which is now our ‘Old Testament’) was all about Him (John 5:39). All of the Bible is true (Col. 1:5) which Jesus affirmed - and as we have seen in the Scriptures above, Jesus Himself was the embodiment of truth. In a sense, the Bible was the written truth while Jesus was the living truth.

3. When Jesus made the declaration about Himself being truth in John 14:6, did He only mean religious truth? Discuss.

Christianity is not a series of truths in the plural, but rather truth spelled with a capital “T.”

Truth about total reality, not just about religious things. Biblical Christianity Truth is concerning total reality—and the intellectual holding of that total Truth and then living in the light of the Truth.

FRANCIS SCHAEFFER

Address at the University of Notre Dame, April 1981 (Pearcey 2008, 16)

Live your truth versus live the truth. It's a big difference.

The call to be true only to one's own feelings and desires is the exact opposite of the teachings of Jesus and the historic Christian faith...Understanding our purpose as humans will require us to commit ourselves to absolute truth.

ALISA CHILDERS
(Childers 2022, 16, 17)

Additional References

Childers, Alisa. 2022. *Live Your Truth and Other Lies. Exposing popular deceptions that make us anxious, exhausted, and self-obsessed.* Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers.

Pearcey, Nancy. 2008 (2004). *Total Truth: Liberating Christians from Its Cultural Captivity.* Wheaton, IL: Crossway.