

FACT OR FICTION

TRUTH - GOD - CHRISTIANITY

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Fact of Fiction?

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FACT OR FICTION

Outline

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

PART	Topic	Page
1.1	There are different types of truth. Fact or fiction?	
1.2	No one can know the truth. Fact or fiction?	
1.3	Truth claims can be tested. Fact or fiction?	
1.4	All religions are basically the same. Fact or fiction?	
1.5	Knowing the truth gives you a great life advantage. Fact or fiction?	

Section 2: God exists. Fact or fiction?

PART	Topic	Page
2.1	God's existence can be proven. Fact or fiction?	
2.2	Science and religion are in conflict. Fact or fiction?	
2.3	We need God to be good. Fact or fiction?	
2.4	Believing in God makes you happy. Fact or fiction?	
2.5	If there is a God, it changes everything. Fact or fiction?	

Section 3: Jesus the Christ was a unique religious leader. Fact or fiction?

PART	Topic	Page
3.1	Christ's life was predicted 100s of years before. Fact or fiction?	
3.2	Christ never claimed to be God. Fact or fiction?	
3.3	Christ taught that all people must choose a religion. Fact or fiction?	
3.4	The claim that Jesus rose from dead was invented hundreds of years later after His death. Fact or fiction?	
3.5	Emperor Constantine invented Christianity. Fact or fiction?	

Perhaps it has never been more difficult than it currently is to determine what is true and who is telling us the truth. More and more people have become cynical about: how mainstream media outlets report “news”; what political leaders pronounce; whether ‘celebrities’ are sincere or are just being paid actors, and how social media giants use algorithms to determine what we are allowed to see or read.

In addition to this (or maybe because of it) societies around the world seem to have become more polarised (taking sides against one another). These divisions have become increasingly hostile — literally resulting in riots on the streets and, tragically, even deaths.

Disagreements are nothing new. In fact, the strength of any society is measured by the extent to which it can disagree, dialogue, discuss, debate, and show deference (respect) to those whom its citizens do not agree with. This is the ideal of every *democracy* and is, in fact, the only way a true democracy can function.

There are presently several highly emotive issues such as:

- Climate change;
- Covid vaccines, masks, mandates;
- Transgenderism;
- Abortion on demand;
- Same-sex marriage;
- LGBT rights;

which, in many parts of our western society, have created deep divisions. Sometimes these divisions are made all the wider because those advocating for their position on these issues *do not make arguments for their position*, rather, *they attack and ridicule those who disagree with them*.

It is my contention that there is a world of difference between *disagreeing by fighting* and *disagreeing by arguing*. Fighting generally attacks a person. Arguing generally offers reasons for holding a viewpoint. And it is similarly my contention that the best reason for having a viewpoint is that it can be demonstrated to be *true*. This is what we will explore in these 15 topics that I hope will lead you to be able to offer *reasons*, based on sound evidence, for your viewpoint rather than merely adopting what the mainstream media, social media, politicians or celebrities tell you what to believe.

A.C.

SECTION 1:

CERTAIN THINGS ARE
OBJECTIVELY TRUE.
FACT OF FICTION?

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 *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 agreed on who they disagreed with. This made them *good* friends. **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?
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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?
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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.
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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

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