

Wednesday, July 6, 2022



## MidWeek - Problems with Christianity

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### Week 2 - The Problem of Truth

- What is truth?
  - A statement or belief that matches **reality**.
- Problem:
  - How do we **know** what is true?
  
- The answer according to the three worldviews:
  - Atheism: [Nothing at the center]
    - We **can't** know the truth.
      - Why? **Objective** truth does not exist. (In a worldview ultimately without a meaning)
    - Is this viable?
      - No. It is self-refuting.
      - “There is no objective truth” is an objective truth claim.
  - Selfism: [Self at the center]
    - Truth is up to the **individual**.
    - What I **feel** is true, is true for me.
    - Expressive individualism<sup>1</sup>
      - Truth is discovered by expressing your **feelings** and **desires**.
    - Truth is **subjective** and **relative**.
    - Is this viable?
      - No. It is self-contradictory.

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<sup>1</sup> For lots more on this read Carl R. Truman's excellent book “The Rise and Triumph of the Modern Self” or his smaller/newer version “Strange New World”

- Michael Kruger writes “If a person has cancer, will he respond by saying “that’s your truth, not my truth?”<sup>2</sup>
- Theism [God at the center]
  - **God** is truth.
    - John 14:6, 17:17
    - There is an objective standard - God himself and his Holy Word.
  - Worldview clash
    - “Today’s world is not the objectively authoritative place that it was 800 years ago, we think of it much more as a case of raw material that we can manipulate by our own power for our own purposes.”<sup>3</sup>
- Implications:
  - Personal: How do we know Christianity is true?
  - Apologetic: How do we make a compelling case that Christianity is true?
  - Practical: How do we navigate changing cultural moralities?
- Truth can be known! How do we know anything is true?
  - “Most Reliable” Ways
    - **Reason / Logic**
    - **Consistency**
    - **Evidence**
    - **Official Announcement**
  - More Dangerous Ways
    - **Instinct / Feeling**
    - **Majority opinion**
    - **Traditions / Customs**

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<sup>2</sup> Michael Kruger, Surviving Religion 101, 2021 Crossway Books, 58

<sup>3</sup> Trueman, Rise and Triumph of Modern Self, 41

- **Pragmatism** (the ends justify the means)
- How to Assess/Push Back on a Truth Claim [Laws of Logic]<sup>4</sup>
- Law of Non-**Contradiction**.
    - A cannot be both A and B at the **same time**.
    - Exceptions
      - **Paradox** has an appearance of a contradiction but is not.
      - **Mystery** is something beyond our rational comprehension.
  - Law of **Causality**.
    - Every **effect** has a **cause**.
  - **Sense** Perception
    - Our senses are generally **reliable** to know truth.
- How Do We Engage?
- **KNOW** why you believe Christianity to be true. [2 Timothy 1:12]
  - **ASK** questions. Seek to understand the other side. Gentleness and respect.
  - **DEFINE** terms at all times.
  - **PLANT** doubts in the worldview.
  - **REMEMBER** the goal of apologetics = making and maturing.

Next Week: Problem of Scripture

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<sup>4</sup> See RC Sproul's Defending the Faith or Classical Apologetics