

Jesus Is The Way

Lesson 3: Jesus Is The Way To Truth



Discovering God's Word

Bible Study Series

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Learn the importance of absolute truth and how Jesus can lead you to the truth

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About the author: My name is Eric Krieg. I am a disciple of Jesus, a Bible student, a truth seeker, and an evangelist. My interest is in using the Bible as my only guide in my faith. My desire is to help others understand the message of the Bible and pursue true, New Testament Christianity.

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My plea: It is my hope and prayer that you are searching for the truth that is contained in God's word, the Bible. My desire is to help you understand and obey these truths God has revealed in the pages of His word. It is to that end that I write this material. Please observe all of the Scripture references and evaluate whether the conclusions I have drawn are in harmony with God's word. If they are, I ask that you make honest application of those truths to your life and obey God's instructions.

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Jesus Is The Way

Lesson 3: Jesus The Way To Truth

In our first two lessons, we have considered finding and following Jesus. Now, we need to begin seriously considering some things Jesus leads us to. In John 14:6, Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”

As we begin this section of lessons in our study, “Jesus Is The Way,” we need to recognize that Jesus is the way to truth. In fact, the text says that He is the truth. In a world that is full of confusion and false information, Jesus will perfectly lead you to what is true. And, this truth will have eternal implications for your soul.

There is confusion and false information everywhere you look in this world. People are constantly doing whatever they believe is right in their own eyes and by their own consciences. And, even among religiously-minded people, there is a great deal of confusion and conflicting information.

But, we should not be surprised by any of this. After all, Satan is the great deceiver who has spread lies and deceptions throughout the world. Listen to what Jesus said in John 8:44: “You are of your father the devil, and you want to carry out your father’s desires. He was a murderer from the beginning and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he tells a lie, he speaks from his own nature, because he is a liar and the father of lies.”

Just as the first sin in this world occurred because of Satan’s deception (when he tempted Eve), Satan’s continued deceptions in the world lead many people to sin and spiritual destruction. However, most people do not recognize that they have been deceived. Instead, most people really do think they are living in the way they should and believe things that are right and true. Yet, they have not come to Jesus and found the truth!

In this third lesson, we want to consider the fact that Jesus is the way to truth in a deceived and confused world. We will consider whether absolute truth really does exist. We will consider the importance of knowing the truth. We will consider that God speaks today through Jesus. And, we will consider how everything must be done in Jesus’ name. So, no matter where you are right now, you must recognize that Jesus is the way to truth!

There Is An Absolute Standard Of Truth

One of the biggest questions that must be answered in life is: What is truth? In fact, whenever Jesus was on trial before the Roman governor Pilate, Pilate asked, “What is truth?” (John 18:38). This question receives many different answers today. And, the answer that you accept will determine how you live! At the heart of this question is another question: Does absolute truth even exist – or, is all “truth” open to personal interpretation and judgment? You must get the right answer to this question!

Objective versus subjective standards of truth

It seems that it is becoming more and more acceptable for people to reject the concept of an absolute standard of truth. Many people believe that “truth” is subject to different opinions and interpretations. So, what is true for one person may not be true for another person – and vice versa.

This is the concept of a “subjective” standard of truth. People who live according to “subjective”

standards of truth see truth as an evolving concept. Everyone simply has to find their “personal truth” to live by. And, it is able to be changed according to many factors (i.e. popular opinion). So, as long as an individual feels that something is right (i.e. as long as he/she can do whatever it is in “good conscience”), then the standard of truth is met.

But, one of the problems with this idea is that what is true for one person is not the same truth for another person. For, there are many factors that go into how a person’s conscience is trained. This includes a person’s culture, traditions, parents, instruction that has been received, etc. Therefore, subjective standards of truth will always lead people to do whatever they believe to be right within themselves rather than looking to a singular standard of truth.

All the confusion and conflict in this world can be traced back to this single problem of how we establish anything to be right or wrong. You see, as long as people are looking to different standards to establish truth, there will never be agreement on what is right and wrong. Some people look to their own customs and traditions to determine what is right. Some people look to their own ideas or feelings. Some people rely on what they have been taught by their parents or educators. There are many different ways people gain ideas about what is right and wrong.

The alternative to everyone living according to subjective standards of truth is for people to recognize one “objective” standard of truth. An objective standard of truth is *not* dependent on a person’s feelings or personal interpretations. Instead, the truth is just the truth.

But, even in this, there are different objective standards people live by. For instance, some people live according to the Koran. Some people live by a church’s book of doctrine (i.e. the United Methodist Book of Discipline). Some people live by the Old Testament Scriptures in the Bible. So, even though these people may agree and live by the same objective standard, they live by the wrong standard that fails to lead them to the truths God wants them to accept and obey today.

You see, there is only one who has the power and the right to determine what standard is truth. That is God, the almighty Creator of all things. Therefore, when you recognize that God is real, you should also recognize that all truth is defined by Him!

God is always true

One of the characteristics of God is that He is always true. In fact, God is the definition of what is right. This is the concept of God’s holiness. For example, God is declared to be “holy” in Revelations 4:8, as four living creatures are pictured as praising God, saying, “Holy, holy, holy, Lord God, the Almighty, who was, who is, and who is to come.”

The holiness of God means that God is completely separated from everything evil. 1 John 1:5 explains the holiness of God by saying that “God is light, and there is absolutely no darkness in him.” Habakkuk 1:13 says (concerning God), “Your eyes are too pure to look on evil, and you cannot tolerate wrongdoing.”

Since God is real and He is holy, He is the only one who gets to define what is right and what is wrong. He is the only one who has the power to punish those who live contrary to His standard of truth and reward those who obey it. And, He is the only one who has the right to impose His standard of truth on others! After all, as the perfect Creator of the universe, He knows what is best for all His creation.

The fact is that everyone and everything else has been created. Therefore, they are not capable of perfect knowledge of all things. So, you must ask yourself: “Will I acknowledge God as the perfect standard of truth – or will I follow something or someone who has been created and has not achieved perfection?”

God’s word is true

Since God is perfect, it only stands to reason that everything He says is also perfectly true. Nothing God has ever said has been wrong. Instead, God tells us that it is completely against His nature to say anything false. Titus 1:2 says that God “cannot lie.” Hebrews 6:18 also says that “it is impossible for God to lie.” So, it is not just that God never has lied. Instead, it is an *impossibility* for God to lie!

This makes the words God has spoken absolute truth. When Jesus prayed to the Father in John 17:17, He said, “Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.” Then, it is important to recognize the Bible as containing the words of this God who cannot lie. 2 Timothy 3:16-17 says, “All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, for training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.”

Anything against God’s word is sin

Since the words of God in the Bible reveal God’s absolute standard of truth to us so that we can believe and obey it, we need to recognize what it means to violate that standard of truth. Quite simply, God calls anything that violates His truth “sin.” And, sin has serious spiritual consequences.

1 John 3:4 says, “Everyone who commits sin practices lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness.” To be lawless is to act as if there is no law that you must live by. Instead, you just act in whatever ways you want to live. Therefore, whenever you live as if God has not given an absolute and objective standard of truth or live by some other standard, you are in violation of God’s truth and guilty of sin!

Then, you must not dismiss this as being an insignificant thing. Romans 6:23 says, “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” That is, when you sin, you deserve to be separated from God. This is spiritual “death.” And, if your earthly life ends while you are guilty of sin, you will experience “the second death” in Hell fire (Revelation 21:8).

God’s word will judge everyone

You must recognize that it is no insignificant thing to oppose the absolute standard of truth God has revealed in the pages of the Bible! The truth is that God will judge everyone who has lived on the earth one Day. Although we will specifically consider Jesus’ words a bit later, consider what He has said about the connection between His words and the Judgment in John 12:48. He said, “The one who rejects me and doesn’t receive my sayings has this as

his judge: The word I have spoken will judge him on the last day.”

Similarly, listen to the picture of the Judgment Day in Revelation 20:12. “I also saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life, and the dead were judged according to their works by what was written in the books.” These “books” are the books that contain the words of God. Therefore, everything you do, say, and think during your lifetime will be evaluated by these words. And, based on how you have lived in comparison to God’s standard of truth, you will either spend eternity in Heaven or in Hell.

No other standard will judge you on this Day! Therefore, although you may choose to ignore God’s truth now and live according to some other standard that is more appealing to you, you will come face-to-face with God’s words of truth on Judgment Day. And, when you do, your eternal destination will hang in the balance!

The Importance Of Knowing The Truth

Now that you recognize the absolute nature of God’s truth, you should continue thinking about the importance of knowing this truth while you live on earth. As you do, keep in mind that you will be judged by God’s words on the Last Day. Therefore, the importance of knowing the truth can be seen in how the truth helps you and others get and stay away from sin (which carries eternal consequences).

The truth saves you from sin

The fact is that every person who has reached the point of maturity and personal accountability so as to make decisions between right and wrong has sinned – except for Jesus. Romans 3:23 says, “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” Therefore, every one of us deserves to experience the consequences of our sin – which involves being separated from all God’s spiritual blessings while we

live on earth and being eternally separated from God in Hell.

So, the question then becomes: How can we be saved from sin? Again, in John 17:17, Jesus said, “Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.” To “sanctify” is to set apart as devoted to God. Therefore, those who have rebelled against God’s standard of truth so as to sin against God can be brought back into a right relationship with God through God’s truth!

Similarly, in John 8:31-32, Jesus told some people who believed in Him, “If you continue in my word, you really are my disciples. You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” Therefore, there is something special about the truth God has revealed that it is capable of setting people free from their sins!

Romans 1:16 says that the “gospel” is “the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes.” So, God’s word of truth is the only available avenue for you to be saved from the consequences of your sins and experience eternal life in Heaven! The truth accomplishes this by telling you both what God has done to save you through Jesus Christ and by telling you what God requires you to do to be saved. No other source of information provides you with everything you need to live for God and be saved from your sins!

The truth keeps you from sin

Once you learn the truth so as to be saved from your past sins, the truth of God’s words also help you stay away from future sin. Remember, sin occurs whenever you violate the words of God in the Bible. And, even though you may believe and obey the truth so as to be saved from your past sins, Satan is not going to stop trying to deceive you. For, he wants you to believe a lie so that you will not be saved.

For example, consider how Satan worked to deceive Eve. After God had given Adam and Eve the law that they must not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (see Genesis 2:16-17), Satan entered the Bible’s story. The conversation between him and Eve is recorded in Genesis 3:1-5.

“Now the serpent was the most cunning of all the wild animals that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, ‘Did God really say, “You can’t eat from any tree in the garden?”’ The woman said to the serpent, ‘We may eat the fruit from the trees in the garden. But about the fruit of the tree in the middle of the garden, God said, “You must not eat it or touch it, or you will die.”’ ‘No! You will not die,’ the serpent said to the woman. ‘In fact, God knows that when you eat it your eyes will be opened and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.’”

There it is. The first of Satan’s many deceptions with people. Today, he continues to work as a deceiver. And, he will not stop trying to deceive you just because you become a disciple of Christ. Instead, he will just have to work harder to deceive you! But, if you arm yourself with the truth, you can defeat Satan. For, part of the spiritual armor God has given you to defeat Satan is “truth” (see Ephesians 6:10-18)! Also, listen to Psalm 119:11: “I have treasured your word in my heart so that I may not sin against you.”

The truth saves others

As you consider the fact that God’s word of truth can save you from your past sin and keep you from sin in the future, you must recognize that the truth can also save others. Therefore, God wants those who believe and obey His truth to teach His truth to others. Listen to 2 Timothy 2:24-26.

“The Lord’s servant must not quarrel, but must be gentle to everyone, able to teach, and patient, instructing his opponents with gentleness. Perhaps God will grant them repentance leading them to the knowledge of the truth. Then they may come to their senses and escape the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will.”

You see, the truth always works to set people free from sin and enables them to live for God. So, once you have followed Jesus to the truth from God, you must work to lead others to Jesus so they can learn and obey the truth and be saved on the Day when Jesus Christ will judge this world! And, they should also work to lead others to the truth so they can be saved (see 2 Timothy 2:2).

God Speaks Today Through Jesus

Up to this point in our lesson, we have just been establishing that God is the source of absolute truth and considering the importance of truth. But, we have not really considered how Jesus fits into this. So, having established these things as a foundation, we must now consider how God has spoken His words of truth through Jesus Christ.

God spoke in different ways in the past

God has communicated His words of truth to people in different ways throughout history. Hebrews 1:1 says, “Long ago God spoke to the fathers by the prophets at different times and in different ways.” Consider some examples.

God spoke to some people directly (i.e. Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Moses). God spoke to people through the law He gave Moses (as revealed in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy). God spoke to people through prophets (i.e. Elijah, Elisha, Isaiah, Daniel, Hosea, Micah, etc.). God communicated His will through visions and dreams (i.e. Joseph).

Now, as you consider all the words God has communicated in these various ways prior to Jesus Christ, they all have one thing in common. That is, they were only meant to be temporary to lead people to Jesus Christ. They were not intended to be the final system of law God would provide.

For example, in Matthew 5:17-18, Jesus said, “Don’t think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to abolish but to fulfill. For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or one stroke of a letter will pass away from the law until all things are accomplished.” Recognize that the Law and the Prophets would be fulfilled through Jesus Christ. Not even the smallest stroke or letter would pass away until Jesus fulfilled them.

Still, the implication clearly is that these words would pass away when all of this was completed. So, when Jesus Christ came to this earth,

lived as a man, fulfilled the prophecies, established the foundation of His new and better law, died on the cross, rose from the dead, and ascended into Heaven, He had accomplished this great task! Therefore, Colossians 2:14 says, “He erased the certificate of debt, with its obligations, that was against us and opposed to us, and has taken it away by nailing it to the cross.” Jesus Christ took this old and temporary law God had given out of the way and replaced it with a new and better law!

Jesus spoke while He was on earth

Hebrews 1:2-3 continues, “In these last days, he has spoken to us by his Son. God has appointed him heir of all things and made the universe through him. The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact expression of his nature, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.”

As part of Jesus’ teaching while on earth, He demonstrated that His new law would be different from the old law and from commonly held beliefs. For instance, in Matthew 5:21-22, Jesus said, “You have heard that it was said to our ancestors, ‘Do not murder,’ and whoever murders will be subject to judgment. But I tell you, everyone who is angry with his brother or sister will be subject to judgment. Whoever insults his brother or sister, will be subject to the court. Whoever says, ‘You fool!’ will be subject to hellfire.”

Jesus’ teachings while He was on earth laid the framework for His new law. He plainly demonstrated what people who would be part of His kingdom would be like. And, not only did He accomplish this through direct teaching, but He also spoke in parables to communicate the nature of His kingdom and kingdom citizens.

As you think about all these words Jesus has spoken, recognize that (since He possesses all the characteristics of being God), He also cannot lie. So, every word He has ever spoken is absolute truth. For instance, just before Pilate asked the question, “What is truth?” (John 18:38), Jesus had said to Pilate, “You say that I’m a king...I was born for this, and I have come into the world for this: to testify to the truth.

Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice” (John 18:37). And, remember that Jesus told those who would continue in His word that they would “know the truth” and be set free by it (John 8:31-32)!

Jesus continues to speak through New Testament writers

Although Jesus does not continue living on this earth so that we can hear words directly spoken from Him today, God *does* continue to speak through Him today. You see, when Jesus was on this earth, He only revealed some of His new and better law. People were not yet ready to receive it all. So, He promised that He would tell them more through the Holy Spirit.

Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit to His apostles, as you can read in John 14:15-18, 25-26, John 15:26-27, and John 16:12-15. In all these passages, Jesus assured His apostles that the Holy Spirit would be a Counsellor (or, Comforter) to them by doing two things. Listen to John 14:24-26.

“The one who doesn’t love me will not keep my words. The word that you hear is not mine but is from the Father who sent me. I have spoken these things to you while I remain with you. But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and remind you of everything I have told you.”

First, the Holy Spirit would cause them to remember everything Jesus had taught while He was on this earth. Second, the Holy Spirit would teach them things they were not yet ready to learn while Jesus was on the earth. Furthermore, I want you to notice how the Holy Spirit would teach the words of Jesus, which were the words of the Father! Listen to John 16:12-15.

“I still have many things to tell you, but you can’t bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth. For he will not speak on his own, but he will speak whatever he hears. He will also declare to you what is to come. He will glorify me, because he will take from what is mine and declare it to you. Everything the Father has is mine. This is why I told you that he takes from what is mine and will declare it to you.”

This is how all the words that have been written by the New Testament writers can be “inspired by God” (or, God-breathed words, 2 Timothy 3:16). The Holy Spirit came upon the apostles and prophets who would speak Jesus’ words to people and write them down. For example, concerning the mystery that has now been revealed by the message of the New Testament, Paul said, “The mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have briefly written above. By reading this you are able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ. This was not made known to people in other generations as it is now revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit” (Ephesians 3:3-5).

So, all of this means that when Jesus promised to judge us by the words He has spoken (as we saw from John 12:48), we will not *only* be judged by the words He spoke while He was on this earth. Instead, we will be judged by all the God-inspired words contained in the pages of the New Testament Scriptures! For, these are the words Jesus Christ spoke through the Holy Spirit after He ascended into Heaven!

This is even what the apostle Paul claimed about His own writing. In 1 Corinthians 14:37, he said, “what I write to you is the Lord’s command.” Then, in 1 Thessalonians 2:13, he wrote, “This is why we constantly thank God, because when you received the word of God that you heard from us, you welcomed it not as a human message, but as it truly is, the word of God, which also works effectively in you who believe.”

So, even these messages are God’s messages of truth through Jesus Christ! This is because the Holy Spirit knows what is in God’s mind (see 1 Corinthians 2:6-16). In fact, although we cannot know what is in God’s mind by ourselves (because He is far too knowledgeable and wise for us), through the work of the Holy Spirit, Paul said that “we have the mind of Christ” (1 Corinthians 2:16). Whenever we read the message of the New Testament, we can understand exactly what Jesus’ words are. And, every word of Jesus is absolutely true!

Everything Must Be Done In Jesus' Name

God has spoken absolute truth to us today through Jesus Christ. His words are written in the pages of the New Testament. Therefore, in order to please God and live according to His absolute truth, we must do everything in Jesus' name (i.e. by His authority). Colossians 3:17 commands, "And whatever you do, in word or in deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him."

Bible authority is essential to pleasing God

According to Colossians 3:17, everything you do and say must have Jesus' authority (or, approval). After all, God has spoken to us through Him and He will judge us all some Day! And, since Jesus has spoken through the writers of the New Testament, this means you must have Bible (specifically, New Testament) authority for everything you do and say to please God.

There is simply no other way to know that what you are doing or saying pleases God! Remember, you cannot know the absolute truth that exists in God's mind unless He reveals it to you. And, He has only revealed what is in His mind through Jesus Christ in the pages of the New Testament.

No other standard of authority is sufficient for determining what is right or what is wrong. Popular opinion, human traditions, individual conscience, personal opinions, teachings that have been created by people, and even the Old Testament are not the right standards of authority. Only the words of Jesus Christ in the New Testament are sufficient to give authority. So, if you live by any other source of authority, you cannot know that God is pleased with what you are doing!

How to establish Bible authority

Since it is so important to have Bible authority for everything we do in our lives, let's consider some basics about how to establish Bible authority. There are three ways through which we

can establish Bible authority and know God is pleased with something. And, please note that these are the same three ways we can know anything to be true. We either must be told by someone who knows, be shown a right example, or draw a necessary conclusion from other things we know to be true. So, Bible authority is only established if there is either a direct command/statement, an approved example, or a forced conclusion in the New Testament Scriptures.

(1) Through a direct command or statement from God in the New Testament Scriptures. For instance, baptism is commanded in Acts 2:38 as being necessary for the forgiveness of sins. So, we have Bible authority (established by a direct command) and know that it is right to be baptized for the forgiveness of our sins – and we must do so if we want to please God!

(2) Through an approved example in the New Testament Scriptures. While there are Bible examples of many things (i.e. murder, idolatry, greed, etc.), only examples that show God's approval are authoritative. For instance, Acts 8:38-39 shows an approved example of baptism. So, we have Bible authority (established by an approved example) and know that it is right to be baptized.

(3) Through a forced conclusion from the New Testament Scriptures. This is a conclusion that is *necessary* (not a guess or something that is speculated; but, one that is unmistakable). For instance, Acts 8:38-39 also forces us to the conclusion that baptism involved full immersion in water, not sprinkling or pouring. For, the passage shows that both the one being baptized and the one doing the baptizing went down into the water for the baptism – and both came up out of the water. The unmistakable conclusion is that this baptism was an immersion in water – as no other practice would have required both people to go down into the water and come up out of the water! So, we have Bible authority (established by a forced conclusion) and know that it is right to be baptized by immersion in water.

Conclusion

Jesus is the way to truth! Yes, absolute truth does exist. God is its source. Anything contrary to this truth is sin. We must learn this absolute truth in order to be saved from our past sins, avoid sin in the future, and help others be saved from sin. Today, God has communicated absolute truth through Jesus Christ, as we can now read in the pages of the New Testament. So, in order to please God and go to Heaven after life on earth is over, we must do everything according to Jesus' authority in the New Testament Scriptures!

Study Questions

How has Satan worked to spread confusion and false information in the world?

1. There Is An Absolute Standard Of Truth

What is the difference between an objective and subjective standard of truth?

Why is God always true?

Why are God's words always true?

What is sin?

How will God's word impact your eternal destination?

2. The Importance Of Knowing The Truth

How is the truth important to your past sin?

How is the truth important to avoiding sin?

How is the truth important to saving others?

3. God Speaks Today Through Jesus

How has God communicated the truth to people in the past?

What role did Jesus have in speaking truth while He was on the earth?

How does Jesus continue to speak today?

4. Everything Must Be Done In Jesus' Name

What is Bible authority and why is it so important?

How can you establish Bible authority?