



Lesson Guide

Lesson 1 - Veritology: What is Truth?

Introduction

In this initial episode, students receive a general introduction to the overall scope and purpose of *The Truth Project*. This series is designed to take participants on a guided *worldview tour*, following the points of the *worldview compass*, a tool designed to direct our thinking with regard to four fundamental issues: Truth, God, Man, and the Social Order. Along the way, we will attempt to build a logical, systematic framework of ideas by which to organize and evaluate the various truth claims to be encountered during the course of our tour. Our ultimate goal is not simply to gain knowledge, but to look upon the face of God – and to be *transformed* in the process.

Themes

Our destination in Lesson 1 lies due North. The focal point for this first hour of discussion is the concept of *Truth* itself. What is truth? Why is it important? What role does it play in the biblical view of the world, God's purpose for the cosmos, His will for mankind, His plan of salvation, and the way we live our personal lives? In his comments on this subject, Dr. Del Tackett will demonstrate how *truth* was fundamental to the mission of Jesus Christ in the world; how it forms the heart of the *Cosmic Battle* that has been raging since the beginning; how this battle has divided the world into two opposing camps or sides; how lies, the antithesis of Truth, take human hearts and minds captive by the power of deception; and how every man and woman now stands in the position of having to choose between God's truth claims and the opposing perspective of the world, the flesh, and the devil. To answer the question "what is truth?" Dr. Tackett consults the 1828 edition of Webster's Dictionary which defines truth as "Conformity to fact or reality..." We will also see how popular notions of truth (represented by man on the street interviews) contrast sharply with the biblical concept (as articulated by Ravi Zacharias, Os Guinness, and R. C. Sproul).

Points to Watch For

Dr. Tackett concludes that, in almost every case, the perspective of contemporary culture stands in direct opposition to the Truth-centered worldview presented in the Bible. In the process of making this case, he advances the bold claim that our culture is not only filled with lies but is actually heading in the direction of social insanity. As a result, he proposes that Pilate's query – "What is truth?" – is *the* most important question facing our society today. He ends Lesson 1 by challenging his audience with this all-important question: "*Do you really believe that what you believe is really real?*"

Discussion Questions

- 1) **Jesus stated plainly that He had come into the world "to testify to the truth" (John 18:37). Exactly what did He mean by this, and how is this claim connected with those other aspects of Jesus' mission – for example, forgiveness, salvation, redemption, and healing – that we more naturally associate with the ultimate purpose of His advent?** (Jesus identified Himself as "The Way, the Truth, and the Life" [John 14:6]. In other words, He *is*, as the Eternal *Logos* and the Incarnate Word of God, the Definition and Embodiment of Ultimate Reality. 2 Thessalonians 2:13 states, "God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the spirit and the belief in truth." This scripture reveals that salvation is a result of a person's belief in God's truth claims.)
- 2) **How does one's concept of *truth* affect or determine one's concept of *faith*?** (Genuine biblical faith has to have an *object*. It cannot be simply "faith in faith." Our faith is only as real and as strong as the *objective truth* upon which it is based.)
- 3) **What is the *key point of distinction* between the biblical concept of truth and popular cultural ideas about truth? How is this point related to the concept of *insanity*?** (Here again we are referring to the definition of truth as "conformity to fact or reality" [Webster's 1828 Dictionary]. Truth has reference *not* to our subjective imagination but to that which *really exists* external to ourselves. *Insanity*, by definition, is the denial or loss of touch with objective reality.)
- 4) **Read 2 Timothy 2:24, 26 and Colossians 4:5, 6. Why does Paul advise believers to be "gentle" rather than "quarrelsome" in their dealings with outsiders? How does our understanding of the *Cosmic Battle* affect the way we relate to non-believers?** (We deal gently with non-believers because we understand that, within the context of the *Cosmic Battle*, they have actually been taken *captive* by the deceptive power of lies. There is a supernatural dimension to the conflict in which we are engaged. Ultimately, we cannot free anyone from this captivity by argumentation, but by helping them come to a belief in God's truth claims - See Luke 4:16-21 and Isaiah 61:1-2.)
- 5) **Dr. Tackett poses the question, "Do you really believe that what you believe is really real?" How can we know what we *really* believe?** (Dietrich Bonhoeffer said, "To believe is to obey and to obey is to believe." Our actions and behavior are the most reliable index to our beliefs. If we are convinced that certain propositions are true, we will behave accordingly. You have a belief system, whether you realize it or not, and our lifestyle often contradicts the beliefs we claim to hold.)