

What Is Truth?

In recent years, there has been an assault not only on the *content* of truth, but also on the very *concept* of truth:

- *Moral relativism* holds that there are no objective, absolute moral values and duties.
- *Epistemological relativism* holds that all truth claims are subjective and relative, and therefore there are no valid objective, absolute truth claims.
- The *coherence theory* of truth asserts that conflicting truth claims can be equally valid, provided they cohere well with other truth claims in their respective systems.
- The *pragmatic view* of truth asserts that whatever has utilitarian value is “true.” Thus, there may be varying degrees of truth, depending on how useful a given set of beliefs happens to be in a given context.
- Postmodern thinkers have argued that humans are so bound by our presuppositions, observations, and linguistic structures, that we are incapable of making true assertions about the objective world.

These concepts are incompatible with Biblical Christianity. In contrast to these defective views of truth, we affirm the following:

- The Bible presupposes the *correspondence view* of truth: namely, *truth* is that which corresponds to the universe as it actually objectively exists (e.g., 1 Cor. 15:14–15).
- God Himself is the source of all truth, and He is utterly truthful (Ps. 119:160; Isa. 45:19; Rom. 3:4; Titus 1:2).
- The Bible is our inerrant source of truth. In it God has disclosed Himself to mankind in understandable language and through an accessible message (2 Tim. 3:15–17; 2 Pet. 1:21).
- The truths God has communicated to us are *knowable* (Isa. 40:28; 1 John 2:3, 18; 3:2, 14–16, 24; 4:6, 13; 5:19).
- Truth is most fully and ultimately manifested in the person and work of Jesus Christ, who proclaimed “I am the way, and the truth, and the life” (John 14:6, ESV). The *pursuit of truth*, in its highest and noblest form, is the *pursuit of Christ* (e.g., Phil. 3:7–11).
- Insofar as the Holy Scriptures and the good news about Jesus Christ have been entrusted to the church for their proclamation to the world, the church may rightly be called the “pillar and buttress of the truth” (1 Tim. 3:15, ESV). However, the church does not generate *its own* truth; rather, it boldly proclaims a *derived truth* that comes from God, in Christ, through the Scriptures. This truth is a sacred trust that we must steward well and pass to the next generation (2 Tim. 2:2).

In light of all these things, we urge Christian churches to resist aberrant views of truth (however popular they may be) and to embrace, champion, and cherish the Biblical view of truth, remembering the words of the Lord Jesus: “If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free” (John 8:31–32, ESV).

Resolved by the messengers of the General Association of Regular Baptist Churches, meeting together in regular conference June 27–30, 2022, at Calvary Baptist Church in Grand Rapids, Michigan.