

What about truth?

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Key: Truth is foundational to salvation, gifts, fruit, maturity.
Lack of truth/ absence of correct belief results in hopelessness, unbelief, deception and loss.

- Questions**
- What is truth?
 - Why is truth so important?
 - Factors that assist application and response to truth and will enable us to put on the belt of truth.
 - Factors that hinder application and response to truth and will loosen the belt of truth.

A. What is truth?**Dictionary definition:**

Truth: "True or actual state of the matter."

"A verified or indisputable fact, proposition, principle or the like."

- God's Word God's words are truth, *Jn 17:17*.
God is not a man that He should lie, *Num 23:19*. [The principles of truth]
- Jesus Christ "I am the truth," *Jn 14:6*. [The shining example of how to apply the principles of truth.]
- Holy Spirit The Holy Spirit is a Spirit of truth, *1Jn 5:6*, who teaches and leads into all truth, *Jn 14:17*, *Jn 16:13*. Bears witness to truth, *1Jn 5:6*. [The daily commentary on how to apply the principles of truth in each situation.]

B. Why is truth so important?

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| Salvation | Based on a knowledge of the truth, <i>1Tim 2:4</i> , <i>2Thess 2:13</i> . |
| Deliverance | Based on knowing the truth, <i>Jn 8:32</i> . |
| Wisdom | To hear and act on truth is wise, <i>Mat 7:24-27</i> "the wise build on the rock of God's Word." |
| Cornerstone | To hear and act on truth is the sure foundation, (<i>Mat 7:24-27</i> 'the rock as the foundation') |
| Springboard | Firstly truth, then hope, then faith and love, <i>Col 1:5-6</i> . Truth of God's Word is the basis for hope, <i>Heb 6:17-19</i> , which is the basis for faith, <i>Heb 11:1</i> . |
| Enduring fruitfulness: | Receiving the Word/truth "with understanding" of the heart produces endurance and fruitfulness, <i>Mat 13:19,23</i> , parable of the Sower. |
| Gifts and fruit | The Holy Spirit of truth leads into all truth, <i>Jn 14:17</i> , <i>16:13</i> , bears fruit, <i>Gal 5: 22-23</i> , and gives gifts, <i>1Cor 12:8-11</i> . |
| Belt of Truth | Enables you, having done all, to stand firm, <i>Eph 6:14</i> , <i>Lk 4:1-13</i> . |

C. Correct approach/response to truth?

- Will to do God's will and you will know the truth, *Jn 7:17*, *Jn 14:17*.
- Seek truth, "Buy the truth and sell it not." *Pro 23:23*, *Ac 17:11*, *Jer 33:3*, *Jam 1:5*.
- Wait to hear counsel/truth: "They waited not for my counsel," *Ps 106:13*.
- Hear/listen to truth: "Today if you will hear my voice," *Heb 3:7-15*, *4:7*, *Ps 95:7-11*.
- Invite the Holy Spirit to teach/guide, *Jn 14:15-17*, *26*, *Jn 16:13*.
- Be teachable, humbly accept/yield to truth. Naaman, *2K 5:12*. The proud are resisted, *Jam 4:6*, *Pro 3:34*, Pharisees, *Jn 9:39-41*.
- Act on truth in a timely manner. "Abraham arose early," *Gen 22:3*. "Lot lingered," *Gen 19:16*. There may be adverse consequences of delay. Be a doer, not just a hearer of the truth, *Jam 1: 21-25*.
- Act fully in accordance with truth, not half-heartedly, *2K 13:18,19*; *25:2*.
- Do not presume to operate beyond the truth you do know - instead seek truth before you act, *Ps 19:12-13 AMP*.
- Be gracious and merciful to others who lack knowledge of truth, just as God is merciful, *Lk 10:14*, *1Tim 1:13*.
- Gently entreat others in the hope they may come to know truth, *2Tim 2:25*.

D. Hindrances to receiving/applying truth include:

- Absence of a will choice to seek the truth, *Jn 7:17*, *Jn 14:17*.
- Ignorance of the truth. "Error arises through lack of knowledge of scripture (truth)," *Mat 22:29*.
"My people perish through lack of knowledge," *Hos 4:6*.

cf Grace to those who lack knowledge *Lk 10:14, 11:29-32*.

3. Failure to ask for wisdom/ truth - You have not because you ask not, *Jam 1:5, 4:2*.
4. Impatience/ Failure to listen. "They waited not for my counsel," *Ps 106:13*. "What is truth?" asked Pilate but he failed to press for a reply, *Jn 18:38*.
5. Carelessness, half-heartedness towards the truth. *2K 13:18,19; 2K 25:2*.
6. Failure to act upon the truth you do know, *Mat 23:1-33*, or say you know, *Jn 9:41*.
This one failing is almost exclusively the target of all reprimands in the Gospels, *Mat 23: 1-33*, whilst mercy and grace are extended to every other human failing. Why? Because it blinds the person who does it and blinds others who follow. ('the blind lead the blind').
7. A "we know we are right" attitude - prejudging/ failure to inquire. "We know," *Jn 9:24,29*. "Wise in your own eyes" *Pro 26 :12*. Prejudice blinds and prevents the right questions being asked.
Example one:
 - a "We know" no prophet comes from Galilee, *Jn 7:41,51,52*.
 - b Bethlehem was widely known as the Messiah's town of origin, *Mic 5:2, Jn 7:42*.
 - c. Accordingly questions should/could have been asked as to where Jesus was born, including:
 - (i) Of Mary and family, (as per the precedent of *Jn 9:18*), as Mary was in Jerusalem, *Jn 19:25-27*;
or,
 - (ii) Consultation of official census records, *Lk 2:1-4*.
 - d. The answers to such inquiries would have given pause for re-consideration.
 Example two:
Thomas admitted he did not know the way. He asked a question and received an illuminating answer, *Jn 14:5-6*.
8. Pride of place/position/heritage can result in unreceptiveness to truth.
"How dare you lecture us," *Jn 9:34*. Love of the praise of men, *Matt 23:5-7*.
Refusal to act on truth because of pride of position, *Jn 12:42-43, Jn 5:44*.
Pride blinds. God resists the proud, *Jam 4:6, Lk 18:9-14*.
9. Improper connections/partnerships that eventually prevent timely action/response to revealed truth:
 - a. Lot's choice of a place to live, *Gen 13:12*.
 - b. Improper partnerships/ arrangements - the rub is that they impinge on one's sovereignty and hence ability to obey.
10. Inappropriate weight placed on the views of others.
Pilate asked the question "what is truth?" *Jn 18:38*, but failed to persist in seeking/waiting for the answer in part due to concern as to the views of others, *Jn 19:12,13*.
11. Mocking the truth
Lk 23:11 - Herod mocked and Jesus declined even to speak to him.
Pro 21:24 - A mocker is not wise and is motivated by pride. Pride blinds.
12. Action deliberately contrary to revealed truth.
"Just show me the way and I will obey," *Jer 42: 1-22*.
Pilate - *Jn 19:6,16*. Hold to the truth - do not sear the conscience, *1Tim 4:2*.
13. Outright rejection of the truth.
Examples:
 - a. Saul *1Sam 15:26*.
 - b. Israel *Jer 9:12-14*.
 - c. Remnant of Israel asks for divine guidance, but then rejects it, *Jer 42: 1-22*.
 - d. Rejection and betrayal of the truth by Judas, *Jn 13:27-30*, led to self destruction, *Mat 27:5*.
 - e. Outright rejection of the truth leaves one in a worse position than if one had never known the truth, *2Pet 2:20*.

Final outcome

Although God is gracious and merciful, the consequences of deliberate rejection of the truth are:

- a. Self deception, *Jam 1:22-24*.
- b. And finally, rejection by God, *1Sam 15:26, Pro 1:23-33*.