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Learning
Right
From
Wrong

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[LEARNING RIGHT FROM WRONG]

Knowing truth is the first step towards doing what is right. Still, many times in our lives we are in situations where we don't know what is best. This class introduces several different ideas that will help you choose between right and wrong.

CONTENTS

How Do I Know What is Right or Wrong?	2
Truth Matters:	2
Where do we look for truth?	2
God's truth always	3
When we think Human Leadership or Wisdom is Better Than God's:	4
Why Does God Give Commands?	5
What should you do if you are having trouble deciding what is true?	5
How To Learn the Truth	5
Why is Truth important?	6
Who Does It Help Test:	7

HOW DO I KNOW WHAT IS RIGHT OR WRONG?

TRUTH MATTERS:

Truth is not an opinion or feeling. Truth is a Fact.

Truth is something that is "true for all people, for all times, for all places". (Josh McDowell)

Memory Verse: **God's ways are right for all people, in all times, at all places.**

Example, if I said that a red flower was blue could I be right? No. What if I really like it was a blue flower. No. There is Truth. If there is truth then there also is right and wrong.

Four Questions to Help You Determine Truth

1. Is there a Bible story that might help me know what is right?
2. If everyone else in the world did this action would that make the world better or worse?
3. If someone did this to me how would I feel (do unto others).
4. Would God ever do this action? What is God like?

WHERE DO WE LOOK FOR TRUTH?

God created the world. God also created the world structure and order. Because of this God knows the best way to lived a blessed life.

Illustration: If you Digicel phone broke who would you want to fix it? Just anyone you meet or the person who made and designed the phone?

In the creation of the world God has established certain natural truth. This truth applies to all people of the world and is typically experienced by all people (Christian and non-Christian). This kind of truth follows the patterns and the laws of nature put in place by God. Because God created the world he also created the world order (pattern). In the world order God has determined that certain actions will not bring blessings to our lives. An example of natural truth is that if you sleep around you are more likely to get AIDS. AIDS is a consequence of sin.

This kind of truth is usually expressed through principles and proverbs.
If you do X you can expect Y result.

Yet, God stands above and beyond natural truth. God, as the creator, does things according to his will. As a result, one might be perfectly obedient to the proverbs of natural truth, but if God has a different plan for a person's life then that plan will prevail. The story of Job is an example of this.

Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers. (Psalm 1:1-3 NIV)

GOD'S TRUTH ALWAYS ...

- Has long term benefits, but may even have negative short term results
- Removes guilt and replace it with peace
- Is right and never wrong.

What happens when we live in God's Truth?

*I will surely gather them from all the lands where I banish them in my furious anger and great wrath; I will bring them back to this place and let them live in safety. They will be my people, and I will be their God. I will give them singleness of heart and action, so that they will always fear me **for their own good and the good of their children after them.** I will make an everlasting covenant with them: I will never stop doing good to them, and I will inspire them to fear me, so that they will never turn away from me. **I will rejoice in doing them good and will assuredly plant them in this land with all my heart and soul.** (Jeremiah 32:37-41 NIV)*

Many times we must decide between right or wrong/truth or lie

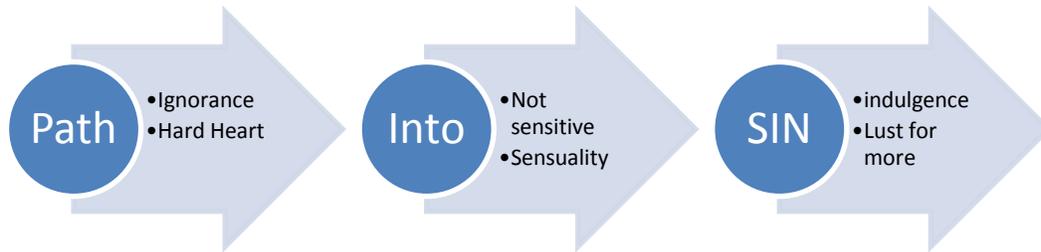
They **exchanged the truth of God for a lie**, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen. (Romans 1:25 NIV)

How does the darkening of understanding work:

They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts. Having lost all sensitivity, they

have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, with a continual lust for more. (Ephesians 4:18-19 NIV)

1. Ignorance
2. Hardening of heart
3. Lost sensitivity
4. Given over to sensuality
5. Indulge
6. Continual lust for more



The path into sin starts with ignorance. Therefore, we must always remind ourselves of the knowledge – a knowledge of what is Right and what is True.

WHEN WE THINK HUMAN LEADERSHIP OR WISDOM IS BETTER THAN GOD'S:

1 Sam. 8:11-18 – Israel asks for a King. They knew what was good and right, yet they preferred their own ways.

So did their lives become better or worse?

We do, however, speak a message of wisdom among the mature, but not the wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. No, we speak of God's secret wisdom, a wisdom that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began. (1 Corinthians 2:6-7 NIV)

What happens when we follow our own truth?

- Adam and Eve
 - What does the commandment not to eat from the tree tell us about God? He has standards of right and wrong. God has plans for our lives. We live our lives trying to accomplish God's plans.

Things we usually confuse for truth:

1. Family values, teaching, and beliefs
2. Our feelings
3. Cultural practices
4. The demands of a boss

WHY DOES GOD GIVE COMMANDS?

People will often say God gives commands for different reasons. Some of the following reasons are true and others are false:

- For His own reasons – unknown to us, but still good reasons
- For His own reasons, unknown to us, but to hurt us
- To test us – with the goal of making us stronger
- To test us with the goal of destroying our faith
- To punish us
- To bless us

God gives commands because he wants to bless us to help us enjoy the fruit of faithful living.

Think of the commandments of God like a fence. The fence is there for two reasons. First, to keep the bad out. Second, to keep the good protected. God commandments do the same thing, they increase our joy in life by keeping the bad out and protecting the good inside.

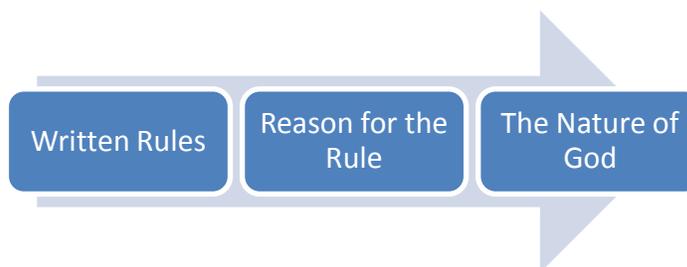
Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” (John 8:32 NIV)

If a construction company were using heavy machinery close to where you kids play how could they have more freedom? Put good boundaries in place to keep them safe, but allow them full **freedom within the boundaries.**

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU ARE HAVING TROUBLE DECIDING WHAT IS TRUE?

1. Pray for wisdom (James 1:5)
2. Read your Bible (John 17:17)
3. Ask someone who is a strong Christian (Prov. 15:22, Acts 15)
4. Do nothing until you know the Truth

HOW TO LEARN THE TRUTH



Step #1: Find as many Bible Verses you can that related to the Topic

Some issues there are clear laws that address that specific situation. Is it wrong to kill? The answer of course is yes because God says do not kill (Exodus 20:13). You will need to be ready to deal with difference between teaching in the Old Testament and the New Testament.

The problem, however, is that laws do not fully account for every specific situation we face.

The law does not answer if it is bad to smoke. For example, there is no verse that says “thou shall not smoke”.

Step #2: Ask why Jesus, God, or one of the Bible writers would have said the things he did

If there is a teaching not directly or specifically addressed in the Bible as a written rule you should then look at some similar teachings and ask, why would God say not to do that? This is even a good practice to do with all written rules in the Bible. To know why God would tell us about those things.

Step #3: Does your conclusion seem to match what is true about God.

The final step is to ask does this agree with the nature of God revealed in the Bible.

WHY IS TRUTH IMPORTANT?

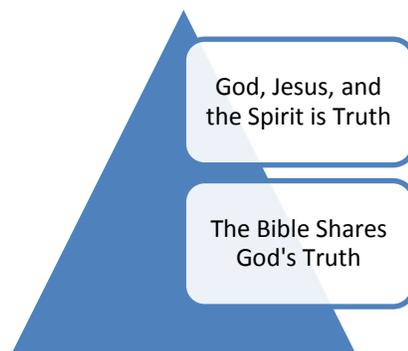
What we believe affects what we do.

“Don’t you see that **whatever enters the mouth** goes into the stomach and then out of the body? But the things that **come out of the mouth come from the heart**, and these make a man ‘unclean.’ For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander. These are what make a man ‘unclean’; but eating with unwashed hands does not make him ‘unclean.’ ” (Matthew 15:17-20 NIV)

The heart is where we store what we believe. Our actions will follow the leading of our beliefs.

Determining right from wrong:

1. How does it compare to the original?
2. Where does that idea come from? Yourself, others, God?



The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from **the Father, full of grace and truth.** (John 1:14 NIV)

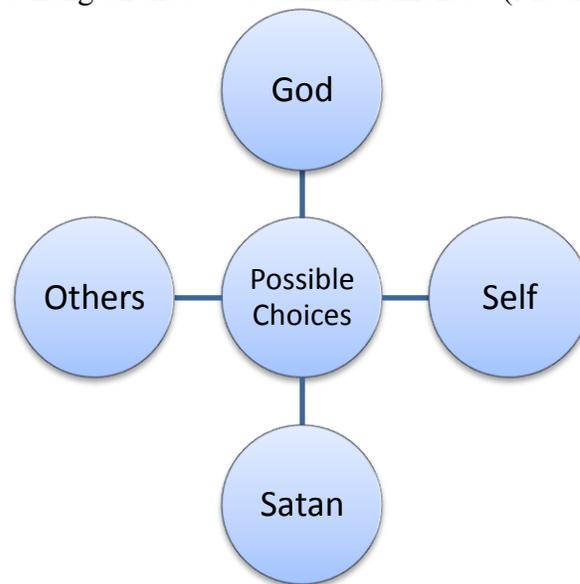
Jesus answered, “**I am the way and the truth** and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you really knew me, you would know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him.” (John 14:6-7 NIV)

Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. (John 17:17 NIV)

WHO DOES IT HELP TEST:

Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility **consider others better than yourselves.** Each of you should **look not only to your own interests,** but also to the interests of others. (Philippians 2:2-4 NIV)

“Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?” Jesus replied: “ ‘**Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.**’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘**Love your neighbor as yourself.**’ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.” (Matthew 22:36-40 NIV)



Most options will be good and right if we put them in the following order:

1. God
2. Others
3. Self

Any choice will be bad if it helps Satan.

Consider: Matthew chapter four and the temptation of Jesus as an example.