

God The Fount Of All Truth And Rationality

"Without God there is no meaning (truth, rationality, etc.); therefore God exists."¹

Many years ago a man asked the question, "What is truth?"² We can only speculate about why he asked this question. It is, however, a question that we all must ask. What is truth? Truth is that which conforms to reality. It is the actual state of a matter, and it is also fidelity to a required standard or law³ Having this answer will help us move forward.

The greater problem is that all of us believe that we have truth on our side. Folks who believe in absolute truth argue for their position and do so quite strenuously. Those who do not believe in absolute truth are often absolutely sure of their position as well. Those who believe that there is no such thing as truth and that all things are meaningless are also convinced that their arguments have meaning and are true. How do we judge these claims? How do we deal with this issue? Who is correct? Whose truth is true?

The answer to the above questions brings us back to our definition of truth as that which is faithful to a required standard or law. There must be a standard of truth or we will never have anything by which to measure truth claims. Every man could, and would, be a law unto himself. Truth would be relative without an absolute standard. One man's truth would be another's lie, and one nation's lie would be another nation's truth. There must be a standard.

What is this standard? First of all the standard must be absolute, or else there will be no consistency or rationality. After all, if truth is forever changing, there is actually no truth at all; because what is true at one point in history would susceptible to becoming an untruth in a moment of time, though nothing but the standard changed. The goal posts would forever be moving and mankind would have no ability to be rational. "David Hume, the great skeptic, has effectively argued that if you allow any room for Chance in your thought, then you no longer have the right to speak of probabilities. Whirl would be king. No one hypothesis would have any more relevance to facts than any other hypothesis. Did God raise Christ from the dead? Perchance he did. Did Jupiter do it? Perchance he did. What is Truth? Nobody knows."⁴ There must be an absolute standard of truth.

We all are convinced that we have truth. Even the person who believes that truth does not exist, or is relative, is ironically certain that his position is the truth. The one who says that there is no truth, and that words have no meaning, still expects us to find meaning and truth in what he says. Cornelius Van Til responded to such ideas and said, "No human being can explain in the sense of seeing through all things, but only he who believes in God has the right to hold that there is an explanation at all."⁵

How does God even come into this discussion? Does logic equal God? Hardly, but, on the other hand, logic cannot exist without God. Truth cannot exist without God. Speaking of the Van Tillian view of knowledge, John Frame says, "Without God there is no meaning (truth, rationality, etc.); therefore God exists."⁶ Greg Bahsen spoke of God and said, "His existence is required for the uniformity of nature and for the coherence of all things in the world."⁷ This necessity for God is the thing we must prove.

We have already seen that there is a necessity for an absolute standard of truth if we are to have rationality. Why must this standard be God? First of all I must be clear that I mean the transcendent, immanent, eternal, immutable, personal, Trinitarian God of the Christian Scriptures. "Nothing is intelligible unless God exists, and God must be nothing less than the Trinitarian, sovereign, transcendent, and immanent absolute personality of the Scriptures."⁸ Here I speak of Him only as the eternal and immutable God. (The other attributes will be addressed later in this series.) This God is the standard of truth. He is the truth. John Frame has said that "the argument is transcendental. Rather than offering straightforward empirical evidence for God, it asks the deeper question: what must be the case if evidential argument and knowledge (and hence objective moral

1 . John M. Frame, *Apologetics To The Glory Of God*, P&R, Phillipsburg, NJ, 1994, pg 70

2 John 18:38

3 <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/truth?s=t>

4 Cornelius Van Til, *Defending The Faith, Torch and Trumpet*, 1951, Volume 1, Issue 1. Page 40

5 Cornelius Van Til, quoted by Greg L. Bahnsen, *Van Til's Apologetic*, P&R, Phillipsburg, NJ, pg 142

6 John M. Frame, *Apologetics To The Glory Of God*, P&R, Phillipsburg, NJ, 1994, pg 70

7 Greg L. Bahnsen, *Van Til's Apologetic*, P&R, Phillipsburg, NJ, pg 78

8 John M. Frame, *Apologetics To The Glory Of God*, P&R, Phillipsburg, NJ, 1994, pg 89

standards) are to be possible?"⁹ The answer is that God exists and the Bible provides the only grounds for truth and rationality. But we still must prove God's necessity.

This world has no other standard of truth than God. God is one (Deuteronomy 6:4-5), and He alone is the arbiter and source of knowledge and truth (Deuteronomy 32:4; 1 Samuel 2:3; John 14:6¹⁰; 2 Corinthians 1:18; 1 John 2:27). Why is He the standard? Because He is the only absolute, eternal, unchanging God. He also is our Creator. "If the Christian position with respect to creation, that is, with respect to the idea of the origin of both the subject and the object of human knowledge is true, there is and must be objective knowledge. In that case the world of objects was made in order that the subject of knowledge, namely man, should interpret it under God. Without the interpretation of the universe by man to the glory of God the whole world would be meaningless. The subject and object are therefore adapted to one another. On the other hand if the Christian theory of creation by God is not true then we hold that there cannot be objective knowledge of anything. In that case all things in this universe are unrelated and cannot be in fruitful contact with one another. This we believe to be the simple alternative on the question of the objectivity of knowledge as far as the things of this universe are concerned."¹¹ There is simply no other way that there can be coherence and rationality. Either God the Creator is the sole and absolute standard and authority, with all things relating to Him and subordinate to Him, or there is no knowledge, truth, or rationality.

Thus we conclude by saying, if God then absolute truth. If we know anything at all, it is because God is the fount of all knowledge and truth.

9 John M. Frame, *Apologetics To The Glory Of God*, P&R, Phillipsburg, NJ, 1994, pg 101

10 It is interesting to note the bearing that this has upon the discussion of the Genesis Creation Account, because John 14:6 builds upon John 1:1-4 and Jesus' being the creator. Cornelius Van Til said regarding this, "If the Christian position with respect to creation, that is, with respect to the idea of the origin of both the subject and the object of human knowledge is true, there is and must be objective knowledge. In that case the world of objects was made in order that the subject of knowledge, namely man, should interpret it under God. Without the interpretation of the universe by man to the glory of God the whole world would be meaningless. The subject and object are therefore adapted to one another. On the other hand if the Christian theory of creation by God is not true then we hold that there cannot be objective knowledge of anything. In that case all things in this universe are unrelated and cannot be in fruitful contact with one another. This we believe to be the simple alternative on the question of the objectivity of knowledge as far as the things of this universe are concerned."

Cornelius Van Til, *The Defense Of The Faith*, P&R, Philadelphia, PA, pg 43

11 Cornelius Van Til, *The Defense Of The Faith*, P&R, Philadelphia, PA, pg 43