**We Can Know the Truth** *John 8:31-32*

**Introduction**

1. Jesus said, ***“you shall know the truth” (John 8:32)***.
2. This is a concept we must accept and understand. Yet, many in the world do not, and sadly, even some brethren do not believe it to the full extent.
   1. I**n the world there is the concept of relative truth, or subjective truth. (Each has his own truth, but there is not one objective truth.)**
   2. **Some brethren seek to make a distinction between the gospel of Christ, and the doctrine of Christ, suggesting one unfailingly promotes a unity in thought, but the other we can differ on because there is no way for everyone to be on the same page.**
      1. The claim is that there are some things too ambiguous to know for sure, and to come to a unified understanding of. (**MDR is an example**.)
      2. They claim it is divisive, and unreasonable to suggest there is but one interpretation of scripture.
3. These concepts fail to realize Jesus’ statement about the truth.
   1. Not only does Jesus’ statement in **John 8:32** suggest we CAN know the truth, but that it is NECESSARY to know the truth.
   2. ***“the truth shall make you free”*** – lack of truth will only cause us to remain enslaved.
   3. **Slave of what?** – **John 8:33-36** – slave of sin – wages are death (**cf. Romans 6:23)**
4. It is a must that we are ABLE to know the truth, and that we DO KNOW the truth.
5. What is truth?
6. Pilate’s Question **(cf. John 18:33-38**)
   1. When Jesus mentioned ***“the truth,”*** Pilate asked his question **(v. 38)**.
      1. It is impossible to know how Pilate asked this question, and what exactly was going through his mind when he said it.
      2. **However, it is reasonable to assert that Pilate was skeptical about absolute truth.**
   2. ***Rome was filled with different ideologies and philosophies. Many claimed truth, yet all differed.***
      1. Pilate knew of such claims, and apparently was skeptical that there was any truth.
      2. **(v. 38b)** – He did not wait for Jesus to answer. (**His question was not intended to find, but to state his thought about truth – it showed his skepticism.**)
         1. **NOTE**: Pilate did not ask, “What is THE truth?” He asked, ***“What is truth?”***
         2. **If he wished to know the truth to which Jesus referred, he would have asked about THAT specific truth – “the truth**.” (And then waited to hear Jesus’ answer.)
         3. **He did not believe in A truth, or THE truth, but was skeptical about the VERY IDEA of truth**.
7. Truth Today
   1. Many today express the same mindset as Pilate.
   2. **Truth is no longer an absolute thing, but a subjective reality.**
      1. “Truth is whatever you want it to be.”
      2. “My truth is different than your truth.”
   3. As such, any who claim to know, or possess THE ONE TRUTH are labeled as divisive, arrogant, and foolish.
8. The Affirmation of “Subjective Truth” is Self-Defeating
   1. “Subjective truth” suggests there is no absolute truth.
   2. **However, the statement, “there is no absolute truth” is a statement of absolute truth with those who claim it. (self-contradictory)**
   3. Truth in and of itself is OBJECTIVE.
      1. Truth – the actual state of a matter.
      2. **Truth remains unchanged by subjective thought. (One can believe the truth, or disbelieve the truth, but the truth is still the truth.)**
9. Regardless of whether you know the truth, the truth exists.
   1. The question remains, can we know the truth?
   2. Considered in light of “the truth” of the gospel, Jesus said, ***“And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:32)***.
10. We Can Know the Truth
11. Jesus Requires Us to Know
    1. **Ephesians 5:17** – We are to understand what God’s will (THE truth) includes.
    2. **Matthew 22:23-33** – The Sadducees sought to trap Jesus with a difficult question concerning the resurrection.
       1. **(v. 23-28)** – whose wife will she be?
       2. **(v. 29-32)** – rebuked for not KNOWING the TRUTH concerning the resurrection.
          1. **Scriptures** – written for our knowledge – **required knowledge**.
          2. ***“have you not read?” – (v. 32*** – said nothing concerning specific hypothetical, **but reveals truth required to know**. – There is a resurrection because God is not the God of the dead.).
    3. **Ephesians 6:14** – truth is an essential spiritual garment. We MUST put it on (Sadducees did not have it on.).
       1. **(v. 10-13)** – The garment of truth is necessary to stand against the devil – along with the other pieces of armor.
       2. ***If truth is required to defeat the devil, it must be possible to discern.***
       3. **If we cannot gird ourselves with truth as Jesus requires, we will lose our souls.** 🡪
    4. **2 Thessalonians 2:9-12** – Those who do not KNOW because they did not RECEIVE and BELIEVE the truth are condemned.
       1. Those in this passage are deceived by the Devil.
       2. It is not that the truth was unavailable, but because they ***“had pleasure in unrighteousness.”*** (**Deceived to think unrighteousness is more valuable than truth.**)
       3. ***We must not give the truth up for anything 🡪***
    5. **Proverbs 23:23** – the truth is INVALUABLE. We are required to know it, and it is imperative that we SECURE it.
       1. **John 14:6** – Jesus is the truth, and the truth is THE ONLY way to the Father.
       2. **Matthew 13:44-46** – When we discover the truth of God’s kingdom, the gospel of Christ, we must not give it up for anything, but protect it at all costs.
    6. All of these passages show the knowledge of the truth, and protection of the truth to be ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY to please God and receive salvation.
       1. *If we never come to know the truth, we cannot be saved.*
       2. *If we come to know the truth, but leave it for something else, or are deceived and believe an untruth, we cannot be saved.*
    7. **If truth is so required, how could it be that we cannot come to an unequivocal understanding of the content? We CAN KNOW, but how? 🡪**
12. Jesus Says We Can Know (Have to search for the truth.)
    1. ***“Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth” (John 17:17).***
       1. If we desire to know the truth, we must know God’s word.
       2. **As discussed before, this is completely within our ability to know, but we must search. 🡪**
    2. **Ephesians 3:3-4** – We must READ the revelation of God’s word in order to understand the truth.
       1. **Acts 17:10-12** – Paul and Silas preached the truth to the Bereans.
       2. They had God’s word – the OT – and searched what they knew was truth to discern whether Paul’s message was truth. **IT TAKES EFFORT ON OUR PART – diligent study.**
          1. ***“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (2 Timothy 2:15)***.
             1. The ***“word of truth”*** can be RIGHTLY divided. How? 🡪
             2. It can be understood correctly, or RIGHTLY divided, by being ***“diligent.”*** (***Putting forth the effort in study.***)
    3. **2 Peter 3:15-18** – Those who differ from truth are in that position because of their lack of honesty, and diligence in study.
       1. **Untaught** – because they have not sufficiently searched God’s word.
       2. **Unstable** – because they do not know the truth, and are ungrounded.
       3. **(v. 17)** – there is such a thing as error, which means there is a specific and unchanging truth.
       4. **(v. 18)** – in order to know the truth, and be free from error, we must grow in knowledge – by studying.
    4. **Truth is not just necessary to know, but is completely within our comprehension, and Jesus has made it available to know.**

**Conclusion** – we must not give heed to the notion that truth is relative, and therefore it is impossible to reach a common understanding of it. Remember, ***“God is not the author of confusion” (1 Corinthians 14:33).***