

THE DIFFICULTY AND GLORY OF TRUTH

When we are seeking to know the truth, we need to be seeking a person – not just facts.

If we are interested in facts, we could check them out with several knowledgeable people rather than just gravitate to the first one who speaks, for as Scripture points out, ***“The first to plead his case seems right, Until another comes and examines him.”*** [Pro 18:17]

No one person has all the truth nor can he accurately present it to others, and even when we hear several people on an issue, it is difficult to know what the truth is concerning the issue because of the non-specificity of the word-symbols we use.

For example, if you say you are “angry” about something, you may know exactly what you mean when you use the word “angry”. I have an idea what you mean, but your exact meaning is almost certainly different from my understanding of the word you used, so my understanding of what you said is modified by my definition of the word “angry”. If you say “very angry” I understand you on the basis of my interpretation of “very angry” and so on.

This example of just one or two words is one of the problems relating to communicating truth. If you multiply that by the hundreds of word-symbols which we commonly use in speaking to one another, it is a wonder that we understand as well as we do!

If Joe were to tell Sally something as simple as, “I love you,” she might wonder what he meant by those three very simple words. If she were to take into account the place and the manner the words were spoken she might get a fair idea. If she were to ask his ex-girlfriend what Joe means when he says, “I love you,” she might get another idea. If she asked his mother, she might get a different idea. If she asked his buddy of many years, she would probably get a still different idea. If she were to ask each of them a month later, she might get still other ideas about what Joe is saying when he says, “I love you.” Communication is NOT simple.....nor is it necessarily straightforward.

It is not quite straight-forward because there are many motives for saying, “I love you.” Perhaps they are words of simple encouragement, if so, be encouraged! Perhaps there are romantic or even sexual overtones. Perhaps there is simply the desire to gain your friendship, or your vote in an upcoming election. It is entirely possible that Joe doesn't even know exactly why he said those three little words..... and..... it is also possible that the motivation for speaking them is different from one time to another.

Exactly what prompted those words? Does Joe know? And given the fact that it is likely that the motivation itself is a *mixed bag* of thoughts and emotions, how can Sally possibly know what is going on – even after asking several people who might know a little something based on their past experiences with Joe?

So, collecting facts as presented by one or more persons is seldom “an exact science” on the receiving end which may, at best, result in only a general idea of what is intended to be communicated. But even then, it is likely to only be a tiny glimmer of what the real truth is.

My initial premise stated above is that truth is a person, not just facts. In the last few paragraphs, Joe is not able to represent “truth” in part because he is a mixed bag of facts, feelings, motivations, and thoughts. Even the word “love” has multiple meanings for Joe all at the same time. If he were able to be honest with himself, he would acknowledge that - [at least to himself] - and if he were an honest man, he would attempt to give a clear and honest definition for the word “love” for those who are the recipients of his words.

And if I were an honest recipient of his words, I would need to accept his words based on his definitions rather than read my own meanings into his words. And if I were an honest and true friend, I might also be constrained to acknowledge to him that I can only receive some of what he says as truth, not because I see him as a liar, but because I know that he is not the container of all truth. At the very best, he can only relate a small fraction of *any* truth. Communication is difficult at best, and we are containers of only small amounts of truth.....even the truths about ourselves.

But there is ONE Who is Truth. When He speaks and reveals truth, it is not a mixed bag of truth and error; it is all truth, for HE, Jesus, is TRUTH.

Of course, when I am on the receiving end of His TRUTH, I still have that problem of understanding His revelations through my spirit with a dark and limited mind and short attention span. Whatever I hear, I can attempt to share, but whatever I share is already marred by my lack of receptivity and limited understanding. HE that IS TRUTH is perfect in every way. The problem is with me – not with HIM.

One of the reasons God has given us His Spirit is to help us individually come to know the TRUTH about HIM, ourselves, and God's purposes in our time. HE knows that whatever we figure out for ourselves is certain to be flawed. Even when we read the revelations found in the Scriptures, we universally misunderstand and misapply them. We don't understand the meaning of the words and we wrongly apply them to ourselves and others. The Jewish people have argued about these things for centuries, and now the Christian community with ten thousand denominations continue to argue about just what these inerrant words mean. How quickly we forget that Jesus said, ***"You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me; and you are unwilling to come to Me so that you may have life."*** [Joh 5:39-40] ***"I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me."*** [Joh 14:6]

The call of Jesus is that we come to HIM for HE is TRUTH. He reveals truth by taking up residence within us, not by tossing out a few ideas concerning what is true. HIS presence within releases TRUTH into us through Spiritual osmosis. Spirit-to-spirit; Life-to-life; out of Life into mind, soul, and experience.

Because this is how GOD'S TRUTH is communicated, Jesus told Nicodemus ***"That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be amazed that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit."*** [Joh 3:6-8] Thus Jesus made it very clear that Nicodemus ***had*** to be born of the Spirit in order to know and live according to truth. All his knowledge of Scripture, training, studies, argumentations, and abilities did not bring him into truth. His fleshly understandings could only be fleshly understandings; more study could accomplish nothing, so Jesus said, ***'You must be born again.'*** ***by the***

Spirit of God which is the Spirit of Truth. For... when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. [Jn.16:13]

We wrongly assume that we can know truth simply by mental manipulations and private assessments of carefully collected “facts”, but that is the deception of the Tree of Knowledge. Truth is a person; when we embrace HIM, we embrace **TRUTH**. When we pursue truth through mental processes we are remain deceived. That is the problem – **THE DIFFICULTY - with TRUTH.**

But the Person, the ONE WHO IS TRUTH, is available to every one, therefore TRUTH is available to everyone. **The glory of TRUTH** is that the TRUTH IS NOT LIMITED TO just the smart or the well-read. The most ignorant person alive can embrace the ONE WHO IS TRUTH and know TRUTH. He may not be able to explain it very well or write anything at all, but the TRUTH is his and **he is God's.** As Jesus stated, ***"I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life."*** [Jn.8:12]

The questions which demand answers are:

1. Are we ***born again*** of that ***“incorruptible seed”*** of which Peter speaks. [1 Peter 1:23]
2. Are we ones who ***hear HIS voice and follow Him?*** [Jn.10:27]
Being born again is the beginning; ***“growing in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ”*** is His urgent call!
[2Pet.3:17-18]

If we are not moving on with HIM, then we are almost certainly following other voices and walking in the darkness of our intellect and various other faulty ‘truths’. 2 Peter 3:17-18 ***You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard so that you are not carried away by the error of unprincipled men and fall from your own steadfastness, but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.***

***Blessings,
George***