



What Do You Believe About Truth?

Adapted from "The Basics" series by Bob Brock.

Is what you are believing the truth? Don't settle for half-truth. You may be getting the wrong half, and it will only bring you pain, confusion, and frustration. Consider the following two stories regarding truth.

My uncle told me the story of two ladies who were sharing women talk. One lady said, "She is suffering for what she believes." The other replied, "That's odd. Why did you say that?" "She believes that she can wear a size 6 shoe on an 8 1/2 foot." What she believed was not the truth regardless of how sincere she may have been and it caused her nothing but constant pain.

The second story comes from an excerpt from the book *The Peanut Man: The Story of George Washington Carver*. In his book, Harry Albus writes,

George Washington Carver became one of the most honored and respected scientists of his generation by focusing on the very simple peanut. Eventually he would discover some three hundred uses for this most basic and seemingly insignificant common food. Carver attributed all his scientific discoveries to God. He once said that he had asked God to explain the universe to him, but that he felt God saying that was too large a task. When he asked for something he could handle, Carver said that God directed his attention to the peanut. His focus and search for value produced amazing results. Carver never doubted that God was rewarding his faith and effort, and he said, "Without God to draw aside the curtain I would be helpless."

In a day when many people deny that truth even exists as an absolute reality, those of us who know God need to be more focused than ever on seeking for it. Truth is not an abstract concept that varies with time and place and can never be fully known. Truth is part of the very nature of God.¹

Read the previous stories and then begin to process the following questions.

¹ Harry Albus, *Finding the Truth*, ministry127.com/resources/illustration/finding-the-truth (accessed July 6, 2017).

COURAGE

C1: When you hear the word “truth” what comes to your mind?

C2: When you hear the words “biblical truth” what comes to your mind?

C3: Read the following verses and answer the questions.

Daniel 1:3–20 (NLT) Then the king ordered Ashpenaz, his chief of staff, to bring to the palace some of the young men of Judah’s royal family and other noble families, who had been brought to Babylon as captives. “Select only strong, healthy, and good-looking young men,” he said. “Make sure they are well versed in every branch of learning, are gifted with knowledge and good judgment, and are suited to serve in the royal palace. Train these young men in the language and literature of Babylon.” The king assigned them a daily ration of food and wine from his own kitchens. They were to be trained for three years, and then they would enter the royal service. Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were four of the young men chosen, all from the tribe of Judah. The chief of staff renamed them with these Babylonian names: Daniel was called Beltshazzar. Hananiah was called Shadrach. Mishael was called Meshach. Azariah was called Abednego. But Daniel was determined not to defile himself by eating the food and wine given to them by the king. He asked the chief of staff for permission not to eat these unacceptable foods. Now God had given the chief of staff both respect and affection for Daniel. But he responded, “I am afraid of my lord the king, who has ordered that you eat this food and wine. If you become pale and thin compared to the other youths your age, I am afraid the king will have me beheaded.” Daniel spoke with the attendant who had been appointed by the chief of staff to look after Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. “Please test us for ten days on a diet of vegetables and water,” Daniel said. “At the end of the ten days, see how we look compared to the other young men who are eating the king’s food. Then make your decision in light of what you see.” The attendant agreed to Daniel’s suggestion and tested them for ten days. At the end of the ten days, Daniel and his three friends looked healthier and better nourished than the young men who had been eating the food assigned by the king. So after that, the attendant fed them only vegetables instead of the food and wine provided for the others. God gave these four young men an unusual aptitude for understanding every aspect of literature and wisdom. And God gave Daniel the special ability to interpret the meanings of visions and dreams. When the training period ordered by the king was completed, the chief of staff brought all the young men to King Nebuchadnezzar. The king talked with them, and no one impressed him as much as Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah.

So they entered the royal service. Whenever the king consulted them in any matter requiring wisdom and balanced judgment, he found them ten times more capable than any of the magicians and enchanters in his entire kingdom.

- Some people in Christian circles call for as much detachment from ungodly culture as possible. What do you see as the advantages and disadvantages of such a philosophy?

- What insight does Jesus' prayer in **John 17:5-19 (NLT)** give us about this topic?

STRENGTH

S1: Read the following verses:

John 1:14 (NLT)

1 Peter 2:22 (NLT)

Revelation 19:11–12 (NLT)

- Write down and discuss how you believe these verses describe Jesus as truth.

S2: Read the following verses:

John 16:7 (NLT)

John 16:13 (NLT)

- What role does the Holy Spirit play in displaying truth to the believer?
- Who is the fountainhead of truth?
- How well should you know the person of truth? What do you do to ensure you know Him?

S3: Write out a ninety-day spiritual growth plan this week. When will you begin your plan? Who will hold you accountable to your plan? Share your plan with your spouse and/or a trusted friend.

ENDURANCE

E1: Read the following verses and answer the question.

Acts 17:16–34 (NLT)

- From the reading, list six ways Paul confronted his culture with truth.

E2: In the article, *Culture Wars*, Don Closson stated,

Unfortunately, in the eyes of the secular world Christians are often seen as angry, intolerant people. At school board meetings, outside abortion clinics, even at the funeral of a homosexual who was murdered because of his lifestyle, Christians are there to angrily condemn sin and its perpetrators. It is almost as if Christians are surprised by sin and feel that their only response is to point people to the law of God. As a result, many outside the church see Christianity as a religion of law, similar to most other world religions.²

- Do you think this statement is accurate?
- How does an angry Christian differ with the picture of God's people in **Psalms 126:1-3 (NLT)**?
- How might we overcome the “angry Christian” stereotype as we present truth to our culture?

² Don Closson, *Culture Wars: The Angry Christian*, <https://probe.org/culture-wars/> (accessed July 6, 2017).

E3: Proper biblical evaluation of the culture is necessary before it can be addressed properly. We need a biblical “lens” through which we can see the culture and dispense truth amid our culture. The light of God’s Word needs to be focused on the questions our culture is asking.

- Read the Gospel of John with your group. Pick out the different verses that John uses to address his culture with truth.