
A Christian Philosophy Of Learning: What is Truth?

March - May 2002
CRPC Adult Sunday School
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Class #2

<http://www.logicteacher.com/pol/>

Outline For Week 2

P Review of Week 1

P What you need to know about propositions

P Definition of truth for this class

Review of Week 1

- P We're seeking a biblically sound, comprehensive way of thinking about acquiring and applying truth
- P V^2_1 : A wise person will continually seek to acquire and apply truth for the glory of God. An unwise person will not.
- P W^2_1 : Consider how to answer these questions:
 - ▶ What is truth?
 - ▶ What is the starting point for truth?
- P Quote identification challenge

About Propositions

P A proposition is a statement that is either true or false

P Some examples

▶ The following **are** propositions:

- We are in a class about learning.
- It is raining outside.
- If it is raining, then the exposed grass is wet.

▶ The following **are not** propositions:

- Are we learning anything?
- Do your homework!
- Twas brillig, and the slithy toves Did gyre and gimble in the wabe

Your Turn

P Propositions or not?

- ✓ ▶ Jesus is the only way to heaven.
- ⊘ ▶ Is Jesus the only way to heaven?
- ✓ ▶ Either Jesus is the only way to heaven or He is not.
- ✓ ▶ If Jesus is the only way to heaven, then Muslims are going to heaven because they believe in Jesus.
- ⊘ ▶ Believe on Jesus today.
- ✓ ▶ It is a sin to be unwise.

More About Propositions

P Proposition: statement that is either true or false

P A proposition is either **affirmed** or **denied**

- ▶ To **affirm** a proposition is to assert that it is true.
- ▶ To **deny** a proposition is to assert that it is false.

Your Turn (2)

P Affirm or deny?

- ✓ ▶ Jesus is the only way to heaven. *A*
- ⊘ ▶ Is Jesus the only way to heaven?
- ✓ ▶ Either Jesus is the only way to heaven or He is not. *A*
- ✓ ▶ If Jesus is the only way to heaven, then Muslims are going to heaven because they believe in Jesus. *D*
- ⊘ ▶ Believe on Jesus today.
- ✓ ▶ It is a sin to be unwise.

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P Key question: What constitutes assertion?

- ▶ Often, assertion is based solely on what a person *says*
- ▶ Scriptural view bases assertion on what a person *does*
 - It is common to call this the **head/heart** distinction (P_2^2)
 - It is more useful and scripturally accurate to call this the **words/works** distinction

Still More About Propositions

- P A proposition that is affirmed without 'proof' may be called
- ▶ An **axiom**, an **assumption**, or a **presupposition**
 - ▶ **Definitions** may be considered a special case

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- ▶ All right angles are equal.
- ▶ A circle is a plane curve everywhere equidistant from a given fixed point, the center.
- ▶ A proposition may not be both true and false at the same time and in the same way.
- ▶ There is no God.

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Denying a proposition is the same as affirming its opposite.

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- ▶ There is no God.
- ▶ (?) There is a God who has spoken in the Bible.

What is Truth?

P OED: conformity with fact; agreement with reality; accuracy, correctness, verity (of statement or thought).



P How can we describe what a particular person (let's call this person Adam) thinks is truth?

All the propositions that Adam affirms

$$\{p \mid A_{\text{Adam}}(p)\}$$

P Following the same idea, how can we describe truth?

All the propositions that God affirms

John 17:17, Psalm 119:160 $\{p \mid A_{\text{God}}(p)\} : \aleph$

Valuable Verity (V^2_2)

**Truth consists of
all the propositions
that God affirms.**

Q²₂: Jonathan Edwards

Truth, in the general, may be defined, after the most strict and metaphysical manner, as the consistency and agreement of our ideas, with the ideas of God.

Is a Given Proposition True?

A particular proposition, p ,
is true
if and only if
God affirms p .

$$p \Leftrightarrow p \in \mathcal{N}$$

In Coming Weeks

P We'll consider answers to these questions:

- ▶ What is the starting point for acquiring and applying truth?
- ▶ What is the relationship between regeneration and acquiring & applying truth?

P W^2_2 : Consider how to answer this question:

- ▶ Do there exist any propositions that are affirmed by every sane person?