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WHAT IS TRUTH?

It would seem that it should be fairly easy to define the word “truth”. Truth refers to being in agreement with provable facts and with identifiable reality. Truth is the opposite of lies or deception or falsehood.

Truth is not, or at least should not be, negotiable. Truth doesn’t depend on the person who is speaking, except when God is the One who is speaking. But when mortal human beings are speaking, then truth does not depend on the speaker. Something is either true or it is not true, irrespective of the mortal human being who is doing the speaking.

That’s how it should be, right?

But people have debated for thousands of years regarding what is truth. Almost 2000 years ago Pontius Pilate asked the question: what is truth? (see John 18:38). And Pilate was by no means the first person to ask this question. Philosophers centuries before Pilate had asked the same question.

Philosophers in their arguments talk about “the bearers of truth”. By this they refer to **the means by which truth comes to our attention**. The main “bearers of truth” for philosophers are: **beliefs, propositions, sentences, and utterances**. Notice that **facts** are not one of the main “bearers of truth” as far as philosophers are concerned.

Sorry if I have lost you already with this talk about philosophers. Why am I mentioning these things about which philosophers debate and argue? What has all this got to do with us?

Here is the point:

Many people believe there are different truths. Supposedly my truth may not be the same as your truth. In a recent Congressional Hearing the CEO of National Public Radio stated, in defense of why so much programming is in fact anti-conservative, that **“there are many different truths”**. She continued to say that **truth means different things to different people**.

Did you know that? I never knew that there are “different truths”. I didn’t know that truths can be based on beliefs. I have always understood that something is not necessarily true simply because there are some people who believe that something to be true. Something is true because it can be demonstrated to be true.

In a similar vein, we have had Congressional Hearings where highly educated professional people have refused to answer a simple question like **“what is a woman?”**. The true and correct answer to this question is obvious, but some people simply refuse to accept that correct answer. They **blatantly deny**

the truth regarding the existence of only two sexes.

This is an expression of our world today. As God tells us through the Prophet Hosea regarding the people of Israel:

Hear the word of the LORD, you children of Israel: for the LORD has a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because **there is no truth**, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God **in the land**. (Hosea 4:1)

For people who believe in God, the answer to how many sexes there are is very easy to understand. The first chapter of Genesis tells us:

So God created man in His *own* image, in the image of God created He him; **male and female created He them**. (Genesis 1:27, see also Genesis 5:2)

The only two sexes amongst human beings are male and female. But this is something we can also easily establish without appealing to any biblical statements. Later I will present the scientific, non-biblical evidence for this truth.

Here's what we should recognize:

When we are in a discussion or an argument with someone, where we have significant differences of understanding or opinions, then it very frequently is a case of: **they do not accept a truth on which we base our position**, and/or **we don't accept that their position is based on truth**.

Mostly we tend to be oblivious to other people not acknowledging truths that are obvious to us. We assume that what is logical to us must also be accepted as logical by other people. **But that is simply not always the case**. So whenever we can recognize that the people we are talking with don't accept a basic truth that is obvious to us (e.g. whether the Earth is a round sphere or a flat Earth), then there is no point in any further discussion about that specific subject.

When one side appeals to a truth, which truth the other side rejects from being a valid truth, then that is the end of the discussion, or it should be.

Yes, in many situations a claim for truth by one side can actually be disproved. However, that does not guarantee that people will then admit that their so-called "truth" has in fact been disproved. Frequently they continue to hold fast to their disproved "truth", and they do so blatantly.

For example, in our Church of God context:

One side believes that God the Father is the God who dealt with Old Testament Israel. The other side

believes that Jesus Christ is the God who dealt with Old Testament Israel. So those of us who believe that Jesus Christ is the God of the Old Testament appeal to the truth of Jesus Christ's statement recorded in John 5:37. There, in reference to God the Father, Jesus Christ plainly said:

You have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His shape.

This is a truth accepted by all those who believe that Jesus Christ dealt with Israel in the days of Moses. I have discussed this verse at length in my recent article "WHO WAS YHVH IN THE O.T.?". The truth of this statement by Jesus Christ means that God the Father did not deal with Abraham or Moses or the prophets, men who had heard "the voice" of the God who dealt with them.

But those people who believe that God the Father Himself dealt with Israel in Old Testament times, do not accept John 5:37 as truth. They reject or try to explain away the truth of the information Jesus Christ provided in this statement. And in this case there is no point in any further discussions with such people on this subject.

With **other biblical subjects** other Scriptures are appealed to as "truth" to support one side of the argument. But the issue is frequently the same. One side appeals to a plain, clear biblical statement, and the other side flatly rejects the validity or the applicability of that statement.

For example, regarding the name "Lucifer":

The Apostle Peter in 2 Peter 1:19 unambiguously called Jesus Christ "Lucifer" (or "Phosphoros" in Greek, which is 100% identical to "Lucifer" in Latin). This is a truth, though that truth is obscured by a gross mistranslation into our English Bibles. However, those who insist on applying the name "Lucifer" to Satan simply dismiss this truth regarding 2 Peter 1:19 out of hand. And when such a rejection is the case, once again there is no point in continuing to discuss the name "Lucifer".

Note! I am referring to factual biblical statements. I am not referring to biblical statements that require a difficult-to-follow interpretation. I am speaking about biblical statements that state a truth plainly and in clear terms.

For example regarding the use of a calendar:

In speaking to Judah (Isaiah 1:1) God very plainly says: **"My soul hates your new moons** (Hebrew chodesh)" in Isaiah 1:14. This is a truth that God has spelled out for us in a very emphatic way. It is also a truth that the Hebrew word "chodesh" is used in the Old Testament to refer to the concept of "a calendar", a concept which the Romans identified with the Latin word "kalendae". The truth of God's intense hatred for the Jewish "chodesh" expressed in Isaiah 1:14 is **either ignored or rejected outright** by those who insist on using the Jewish "chodesh" to determine the dates for the annual Feasts and Holy Days. When such rejection is the case, there is again no point in any further debate regarding which calendar to use.

The statement in Isaiah 1:14 is clear. It requires no interpretation. God's hatred is very clear. Isaiah 1:14 expresses a truth. So if this truth is dismissed or rejected, then all further discussion which rejects this truth is meaningless.

Or consider a basic truth in connection with the use of Hebrew-sounding "sacred names". It is an undeniable truth that all the New Testament writers (i.e. Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Paul, James, Peter and Jude) did **not** use any of the so-called "sacred names" in their references to God the Father and to Jesus Christ. They always used the Greek words "theos" for God, "kurios" for Lord, "Iesous" (and not the Hebrew "Joshua") for Jesus, and "Christos" for Messiah or the Anointed One. So-called "sacred names" are not used in the books of the New Testament. So if someone is not prepared to acknowledge this truth, then there is no point in any further discussion about "sacred names".

Note! It is logically not sufficient to try to show that **one NT writer** may **perhaps** have used Hebrew names for the Father and for Jesus Christ. It would have to be shown that **all the writers** used such Hebrew names **all the time**. Otherwise those writers would theoretically be in error in all the places where they used the Greek names for God ... i.e. if God really expected them and us to always use the Hebrew names. And if all those writers were in error, then it would call the validity of their writings into question.

This same principle of stopping all discussion when a demonstrable biblical truth is rejected by one side, also applies to many other biblical subjects.

Now let's consider what Jesus Christ tells us about truth.

JESUS CHRIST'S TEACHINGS

At His last observance of the Passover Jesus Christ said the following:

Jesus said to him, **I am the way, the truth, and the life**: no man comes to the Father, but by Me. (John 14:6)

Jesus Christ embodied truth. Everything He said was true. And there is absolutely no way for any human being to establish any kind of contact with God the Father, **except through Jesus Christ**.

In Acts 4:12 the Apostle Peter repeated the thought expressed in the second part of this verse as follows:

Neither is there salvation in any other: for **there is none other name under heaven** given among men, whereby we must be saved. (Acts 4:12)

John 14:6 again shows that Jesus Christ simply must have been the God who always dealt with the

people of Israel. It makes no sense to claim that God the Father Himself dealt directly with mortal human beings, without those human beings having to approach God through Jesus Christ, during the Old Testament; but from New Testament times onwards human beings cannot have any contact with God the Father, unless they approach God the Father through Jesus Christ.

Why would God the Father possibly suddenly become inaccessible to human beings, except by human beings appealing to the name of Jesus Christ, when in the past God the Father had supposedly freely interacted with human beings without that contact going through Jesus Christ? The statement “**no man comes to the Father but by Me**” is a truth that has to be denied by those people who claim that God the Father dealt directly with the people of Israel in Old Testament times.

Of all the religions in this world, the only one that potentially has any contact with God the Father is the one that comes to the Father through Jesus Christ. That is what Christ’s statement “**I am the way**” means! He is **the only way** to God the Father.

Now it is not enough for any religion to appeal to **the name** “Jesus Christ”. They also have to fully accept that they need to obey and observe all of God’s laws. As Jesus Christ said: “And why call you Me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?” (see Luke 6:46). To those people who make no effort to actually obey all of God’s laws, even if they appeal to the name of Christ, Jesus Christ will say “**I never knew you**” (see Matthew 7:23).

The point is:

When we believe Jesus Christ, then we believe the truth; and if we don’t believe Jesus Christ, then we also don’t believe the truth. The truth is inseparable from Jesus Christ.

In the same context Christ continued to say:

And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that it may abide with you for ever; even **the spirit of truth; which the world cannot receive**, because it sees it not, neither knows it: but you know it; for it dwells with you, and shall be in you. (John 14:16-17)

Jesus Christ was speaking about the holy spirit. Another designation for the holy spirit is “the spirit of truth”. The holy spirit gives a person spiritual understanding, the ability to understand the truth of God. But **unrepentant people** in the world, without access to the spirit of truth, **cannot understand the truth of God**. This means that they are going to reject the truth of God. Without access to the spirit of truth they are incapable of doing anything other than rejecting the truth of God.

So in dealing with the world we then have **two different “truths”**, except that only one of those two is in fact true. There is the truth of God, which is accepted by those who have God’s spirit of truth, and there is an opposing view accepted as truth by those who don’t have God’s spirit of truth. This latter view isn’t truth at all, even though the world will accept it as truth.

For example:

A belief in evolution is **rank stupidity**. But the world accepts **evolution as truth**. In fact, evolution is this world's largest religion. Evolution is a belief-system that is devoid of any supporting evidence, yet it is accepted as truth by all evolutionists. And evolutionists don't have access to the spirit of truth.

Notice what Jesus Christ said in John 4:24.

God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him **must worship Him** in spirit and **in truth**. (John 4:24)

First let's clear up a mistranslation in this verse.

New Testament Greek did not have any word for the English indefinite article "a/an", though the Greek word for "one" is at times used to function as the indefinite article, as it also is in some other European languages.

Here the Greek text for the opening expression reads "pneuma ho theos", and it literally means "spirit the God". In this expression the verb for "is" is not present, but it is implied. So that is fine.

Technically this expression could be correctly translated either as "(the) God is spirit", or as "(the) God is a spirit". The second part of this verse shows that in this context it should correctly be translated as **"God is spirit"**, and not as "God is a spirit". It is **the attribute** of God being "spirit" that is referred to here, rather than a numeric reference (i.e. God is **a** spirit) to identify the Father. It is because God is spirit, that we must worship Him "in spirit". **This attribute** of God requires that we therefore have to worship Him "in spirit".

For the record, there are a number of English translations that correctly render this text as **"God is spirit"**, including the 1865 Anderson New Testament, the Lexham English Bible, the New Heart English Bible, the New Revised Standard Version, the Revised Standard Version, the 1912 Weymouth New Testament, etc.

With this statement Jesus Christ also requires us to worship God the Father **"in truth"**. This is a very significant requirement. And it implies a prerequisite. Before we are able to worship God the Father "in truth", **we first have to know the truth!**

People who do not know the truth are incapable of worshiping God the Father!

Later in His ministry Jesus Christ said:

And you shall know the truth, and **the truth shall make you free**. (John 8:32)

“You” here refers to all those people who truly repent in this age, and who seek to obey God and His laws. Those are the people to whom God then gives His holy spirit (see Acts 2:38).

Jesus Christ continued to spell out that unrepentant people don’t want the truth. They just reject it outright. As Jesus Christ said:

And **because** I tell *you* the truth, **you believe Me not**. (John 8:45)

This is important for us to understand. When we are discussing God’s instructions and God’s requirements for us human beings, then the natural unconverted human mind simply does not want to know the truth! It will **reject the truth** about God and His way of life. Instead the carnal mind will gladly believe lies. Paul explained this in his letter to the Thessalonians.

And for **this cause** (of not wanting to believe the truth) God shall send them strong delusion, **that they should believe a lie**. (2 Thessalonians 2:11)

This can be seen very emphatically with those people who refuse to believe that a man cannot become a woman. Such people willingly “believe a lie”. They know that they are wrong, but they refuse to accept the truth regarding the two genders anyway. Their natural minds are hostile towards their Creator God, and no truth will change that hostility (see Romans 8:7).

And so they willingly believe lies.

Since the determination of “what is a woman” is a significant issue in our world today (think of some men wanting to compete in a wide range of women’s sports), I will briefly deal with “the truth about the two genders”. This is one example of people willingly believing lies.

THERE ARE ONLY TWO GENDERS

The following information is freely available at various websites on the internet. Some useful sites include PubMed and Google.Scholar, though there are many other helpful websites as well. The key is always to enter the best possible search terms to find accurate information. You yourself have to figure out what search terms to use.

A simplistic but not fully accurate view is that chromosomes determine the gender of a person. The truth is that chromosomes are only “an effective indicator of sex”, but **chromosomes do not determine the sex of a person**.

In simple terms:

XX chromosomes **indicate** that the person is a female, but XX chromosomes **do not determine** that the person is necessarily a female. That is because in extremely rare cases a person with XX chromosomes is actually a male.

Likewise, XY chromosomes **indicate** that the person is a male, but XY chromosomes **do not determine** that the person is necessarily a male. That is because in extremely rare cases a person with XY chromosomes is actually a female.

I'll explain in a moment. But first let's ask: **why** are there only two sexes?

The answer here is: there are only two sexes because there are **only two kinds of reproductive cells**, called gametes. Without the existence of a third type of reproductive cell there cannot be a third sex. The two kinds of reproductive cells are **sperm** and **eggs** (or ova), produced by males and females respectively. And a body that produces sperm is male, while a body that produces eggs is female. And there is no third type of reproductive cell, which would represent a third sex or gender.

Now back to the chromosomes.

The **X chromosome** is the larger of the two sex chromosomes and it carries a wide variety of genes. By contrast, the **Y chromosome** is much shorter and carries fewer genes. But the Y chromosome includes the **SRY gene**. This abbreviation SRY stands for "**Sex-determining Region (on chromosome) Y gene**". This SRY gene determines a person's sex.

If a person has this **SRY gene**, then that person is a **male**.

If a person does **not** have this **SRY gene**, then that person is a **female**.

As a matter of interest, while the relationship between the X and Y chromosomes and sex was discovered by biologist Nettie Stevens back in 1905, the SRY gene on the Y chromosome was only discovered in the early 1990s, about 30 years ago now. This discovery led to a refining of the knowledge about chromosomes which Nettie Stevens had discovered.

We need to realize that we **today** are a **very degenerate generation**. Large numbers of people around the world are born with inherited sicknesses and diseases and birth defects and deformities, etc. "Siamese twins" are an extreme example of such birth defects. We today are a far cry from the physically perfect human beings (Adam and Eve) which God created back in Genesis.

What this means is that pretty well **all of us**, including me and including you, carry within our bodies **some genetic damage** at the chromosomal level. For example, research has discovered that around **70% of all embryos** have complex chromosomal abnormalities, such as aneuploidy. And there are also other "complex chromosomal abnormalities".

Aneuploidy is a condition where a cell has **an abnormal number of chromosomes**, either **too many** or **too few**. Where a normal human cell has 46 chromosomes (23 from each parent), aneuploidy results in the cells in that embryo having 45 or 47 chromosomes. In most cases this is lethal for the embryo. The small number of pregnancies that involve aneuploidy which produce a live birth result in major health problems for those individuals.

It is staggering to consider that 70% of all pregnancies (i.e. pregnancies, **not** 70% of live births!) involve complex chromosomal abnormalities, of which aneuploidy is only one example. The majority of these pregnancies with chromosomal abnormalities die within the first few weeks of conception, and may just manifest as a heavier than usual period. Many times the woman may not realize that a conception had actually taken place, because it was terminated so quickly.

[As an aside: a French euphemism for a menstrual period is “**the English have landed**”, in reference to the red coats the English wore in the Napoleonic wars, and a Danish euphemism for a period is “**communists in the gazebo**”, not sure what that is based on, but it lightens the subject up a bit.]

All these things are consequences of our 6000 years of rejection of God’s laws and ways. Here is the point in our specific context:

For a small percentage of people a part of that universal degeneration involves our X and Y chromosomes. When God created Adam and Eve (I am obviously guessing) Adam had the XY profile, and Eve had the XX profile. Then all of their male children had the XY chromosome profile, while all of their female children had the XX chromosome profile. And chromosomal abnormalities did not exist.

All their male children had the SRY gene on their Y chromosome. And none of their female children had the SRY gene. Furthermore, the only chromosomal combinations their children had (for gender purposes) were either XX or XY. There were no other chromosomal combinations (i.e. for gender purposes).

But that is not the picture we find today!

Today there is clear evidence that it is possible for a male to have XX chromosomes. The XX male syndrome is also known as “**de la Chapelle syndrome**”, named after the Finnish scientist Albert de la Chapelle, who first described the condition. You can find a description of this on Wikipedia in the article “XX male syndrome”. This condition affects about 1 in every 20,000 boy babies that are born, or roughly 2,000 XX boy babies every year worldwide.

Then there is also what is called “**Turner’s syndrome**”, where females have only one X chromosome. You can search this term also for more information. It affects approximately 1 in every 2,500 female live births, or over 15,000 girl babies every year.

Then there is “**Swyer syndrome**”, where a female has XY chromosomes, but a mutation has deleted the SRY gene from the Y chromosome. And **without the SRY gene this person with the XY profile is**

female and will develop female sex organs. The technical term for Swyer syndrome is “XY complete gonadal dysgenesis”, a term for which you can search to find more information. This syndrome occurs about 1 in every 80,000 births, amounting to approximately 1,000 XY girl babies every year worldwide.

Another chromosomal variation is called “**Klinefelter syndrome**”, where males have a XXY profile. This occurs for approximately 1 in 650 male newborns. That amounts to over 50,000 boy babies every year worldwide.

The situation we face in our world today is that people can be born with a great variety of abnormal chromosome combinations, such as XXY, XXXY, XYY, XYYY, XXYY, etc. All of these chromosomal differences simply represent variations **within the two categories** of male and female.

Irrespective of the chromosomal picture, if the person has the SRY gene, then that person is a male, and such people live their lives as males. And if the person does not have the SRY gene, irrespective of what the chromosomes look like, then that person is a female, and people in this situation live their lives as females.

While people with these chromosomal variations can marry and have normal lives, including a sexual relationship with their spouses, in very many cases they are not able to have children.

I have presented this brief discussion because many of us still labor under the incorrect understanding that “all males are XY, and all females are XX”. Then, if someone who believes in more than two genders asks us: “what if a person has a XXY or XYY or XXXY or XXYY profile, what gender do they belong to?”, we might be pressured into agreeing with them regarding the possibility of a third gender, or even a third and a fourth gender. We need to be correctly informed.

The truth here is for us to keep in mind that the chromosomes do not determine a person’s gender. **A person’s gender is determined by the presence or absence of the SRY gene** in a person’s chromosomal picture. If the SRY gene is present on either chromosome (while it is almost always on the Y chromosome, in rare instances it can be translocated to the X chromosome), then that person will be a male, and will develop the male sex organs. On the other hand, if a person does not have the SRY gene, even if that person does have a Y chromosome, then that person will be a female, and will develop the female sex organs.

When in extremely rare cases in our degenerate age there seems to be some ambiguity at birth regarding a person’s gender, then **a genetic analysis** is the key to establishing that person’s gender with certainty. The genetic analysis will search for **the SRY gene**.

You may ask: how can there be any uncertainty? It’s obvious whether a baby is a boy or a girl, isn’t it? The answer is: a very small number of babies are born with external female organs, but within their bodies they also have a pair of testicles. Such people are one specific group within the “intersex people” category. Obviously the testicles are not visible at birth, but they will definitely affect the overall development of the person.

A genetic analysis looking for the SRY gene would clarify the person's gender. In the past, once the presence of the testicles within the body was established, doctors would commonly operate to remove the internal testicles. But this practice is also changing.

Anyway, in our world today we find a rather complicated picture, when we look at all the extant chromosomal variations for the X and Y chromosomes. It is no longer just a case of a person being either XX or XY, as far as these two chromosomes are concerned.

Here is the point we should keep in mind:

When people with such abnormal chromosome profiles want to be accepted either as women or as men, **that is not a problem for society in general!** Let them be what they would like to be. But they are not the people that cause problems for others. They just want to live their lives as normally as possible in their circumstances. In most cases they do not want to draw any attention to themselves.

The problems for society are when men want to be accepted as women! Such men have a normal chromosome profile of XY with the SRY gene on the Y chromosome. The motivation is either financial (they see a path to making a lot of money if they are accepted as women), or it is a desire for competing against women in some or other sport, where they start out with a huge advantage, simply by being XY males. Here the motivation is likely both fame and fortune. And then there are also perverts, who simply want an excuse to be able to go into women's locker rooms to see naked women.

It is these XY males wanting to be accepted as women, who are the real problem. They want the advantage of competing against women. While there are women who want to be accepted as men, **such women don't attempt to compete with real men** in playing football or rugby or soccer or in athletics or tennis or swimming, etc. No, it is always the other way around, where men who are mediocre in some sporting discipline when competing against other men, want to break records in sporting events for women.

But people who were born with X and Y chromosome abnormalities don't have those motivations. They have their own challenges of just coping with life. **And they are not a problem** for society, whether they live as males or as females.

We should appreciate that the people with abnormal X and Y chromosome profiles have difficult lives. In most cases life for them is extremely stressful; and feelings of shame and great insecurity are very common. The people in these situations have themselves done nothing whatsoever to deserve having to live with these difficult conditions; that is simply how they were born. And the best thing we can do if we are in contact with such people is to show acceptance and compassion and understanding. After all, there but for the grace of God go you or I.

Now in this article we are looking for the truth, right?

So in the confusion of all these various chromosomal combinations, the truth is that **there are only two**

genders, even though there are a small percentage of chromosomal variations **within each gender**. The key here is that there are only two kinds of genders because **there are only two kinds of reproductive cells**.

And here is another point to consider:

When **a male** takes large amounts of **estrogen supplements**, in an effort to become a woman, those supplements cannot remove the SRY gene from his Y chromosomes. No matter how much his outer appearance may change in response to the huge doses of estrogen, **he will still have the SRY gene**, and he will still be a male, even if outwardly he may in some respects begin to look like a female. The SRY gene is still in his chromosomes.

Likewise, when **a female** takes large amounts of **testosterone supplements**, in an effort to become a man, those supplements cannot create the SRY gene in her X chromosomes. No matter how much her outer appearance may change in response to those testosterone supplements, **she will not have the SRY gene** on either of her X chromosomes. She will still be a female.

A man cannot become a woman because a man cannot remove the SRY gene from his chromosomes. And a woman cannot become a man because there is no way that her chromosomes can obtain the SRY gene. It is the SRY gene that determines every person's gender.

But don't expect the people who defend men competing in women's sports, or men wanting to be accepted as women, to accept this truth.

Okay, let's move on.

MORE SCRIPTURES THAT DEAL WITH TRUTH

The unconverted natural human mind does not want to accept God's truth, and so the natural mind will either seek to hold back, or to repress, the truth of God; or if that fails, then it will attempt to replace the truth of God with lies.

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, **who hold the truth in unrighteousness**; (Romans 1:18)

The Greek verb "katecho" here translated as "hold" really means **"to hold back, to suppress"**. And so a number of translations render this verb as "to hold down, to suppress". For example, the NRSV appropriately reads:

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and wickedness of those who by their wickedness **suppress the truth**. (Romans 1:18 NRSV)

A few verses later Paul wrote:

Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served **the creature** more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen. (Romans 1:25)

A comment regarding this translation here:

The Greek noun “**ktisis**” (i.e. “ktisei” in the text) means “**creation**”, and by extension it means “the created thing”, i.e. “**the creature**”. It is always the context that will tell us whether this Greek noun should be correctly translated as “creation” or as “creature”. The choice to translate “ktisis” here in this verse as “creature” goes back to the Latin Vulgate translation, which rendered the Greek “ktisei” into Latin as “**creaturae**”. From this the early English translators opted for the English translation “creature”. And almost all English translations have stayed with “creature”.

But here is the point:

When we look at our world, **it is “creation” that most of humanity worships**. They worship **evolution**, the world’s largest religious denomination, by attributing all of God’s creation to a non-existent “evolution”. Evolution is the greatest of all false gods. And evolution is revered and worshiped by the world’s educational authorities.

If we translate this as “worshiped and served **the creature** more than ...”, then the question is: **which creature** (singular) have those who profess themselves to be wise (verse 22) actually worshiped? My point is that it is precisely **those who profess themselves to be wise** that **worship evolution**. They worship the creation itself, while denying the Creator God.

Two translations which render “ktisis” in this verse as “creation” are:

The **2010 Lexham English Bible** reads:

“who exchanged the truth of God with a lie, and worshiped and served **the creation** rather than the Creator, who is blessed for eternity. Amen.” (Romans 1:25 LEB)

The **2018 New Heart English Bible** reads:

“who exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served **the creation** rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.” (Romans 1:25 NHEB)

Anyway, those who claim to be wise have changed the truth of God into a lie.

Paul also expressed this same thought to Timothy.

For the time will come when **they will not endure sound doctrine**; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall **turn away their ears from the truth**, and shall be turned unto fables. (2 Timothy 4:3-4)

People don't want the truth, when it comes to God's laws and God's way of life. And so they **deliberately reject the truth**, and instead they will accept fables (i.e. lies) as truth. People will find teachers who will teach the things they want to hear, with both parties basically realizing that they are accepting a bunch of lies. As those lies are then spread as supposed truth, there will also be some simple, naive people who are genuinely deceived. But those who are actively promoting those supposed "truths" will not be deceived; they will know that they are promoting lies (e.g. men who claim to be women, etc.).

The Apostle James adds a motivation for people "lying against the truth".

But if you have **bitter envying and strife** in your hearts, glory not, and **lie not against the truth**. (James 3:14)

When people deliberately lie "against the truth", then they always have a motivation for lying. And that motivation is always bad; it is never a good motivation. Common motivations for lying against the truth are envy and bitterness. Envy and bitterness are usually strong enough to blunt the conscience's fear of lying. Envy and bitterness are strong enough to kill a conscience. That is what the Apostle James is warning about.

Now because evil men have replaced the truth with lies, therefore we need to conscientiously study the Bible, to avoid being deceived. Those who are deceived will err from the truth.

Study to show yourself approved unto God, a workman who need not to be ashamed, **rightly dividing the word of truth**. (2 Timothy 2:15)

It is not enough to read the Bible now and then. We have to study the Bible intently, seeking more understanding. Think of studying a textbook of biology to pass a tough university exam. To pass that exam we have to correctly comprehend the content of that textbook, so we can then answer any questions correctly. That is the kind of intensity we need to bring to Bible study.

If we don't study the Bible seriously, we are likely to err, and to be taken in with one or other false teaching, as was already the case with some people at Paul's time.

Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some. (2 Timothy 2:18)

On the other hand, if we do study, but never come to really understand the truth of God's plan, then there is something wrong somewhere. Paul described people like that as follows:

Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. (2 Timothy 3:7)

The Greek words here translated as "never able" are "medepote dunamena", and they literally mean **"to never at any time have the power** (i.e. the ability)". In other words, there are people who are not going to understand the truth, **no matter how much they study** and try to learn.

Why would that be?

Paul explained to the Corinthians that carnal people cannot possibly understand the truth of God.

But **the natural man** receives not the things of the spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: **neither can he know *them***, because they are spiritually discerned. (1 Corinthians 2:14)

If someone is diligently studying the Bible and yet never comes to really understand the truth of God, then **it means that the person is still unrepentant** and therefore does not have any access to help in understanding from God's holy spirit. The person has thus far never really repented.

Many millions of people have been in the past, and are in the present, in this exact situation. They read the Bible, they even study the Bible, but they never make any effort to change the way they use their own minds. This group of people includes experts in biblical Hebrew and biblical Greek, Bible translators and Bible commentators. They never really understand what they are reading or translating or writing commentaries on. And this group also includes many people who have attended the Church of God at some time or other.

If people do not have God's spirit, the spirit of truth, then they are also not going to understand the truth of God. For them it is not a matter of studying more; for them it is a case of not being willing to unconditionally submit their lives to God. Therefore God does not give them the ability to understand. That's what Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 2:14.

When God gives us an understanding of His truth, then that understanding makes us accountable to God. Earlier we looked at 2 Thessalonians 2:11 regarding people believing lies. Now let's look at the next verse.

That **they all might be damned** who **believed not the truth**, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. (2 Thessalonians 2:12)

Let's first correct the mistranslation in this verse.

The Greek verb “krino” (“krithosin” in the text) is translated as “might be damned”. That is not correct. The verb “**krino**” means “**to judge**”, without prejudice to the outcome of that judgment. A judgment might result in a condemnation, but a judgment may also result in an approval.

Judging is a process, whereas “being damned” is one particular outcome of the judgment process. It is in fact the worst possible outcome, because it refers to destruction in the lake of fire. Now while that may indeed be the case for many people who do not believe the truth in this age, the great majority of those who in this age do not believe the truth will appear in the second resurrection. Most of humanity has never believed the truth. And so most of humanity will be “judged” to appear in the second resurrection. But that means that they are not “damned”.

When New Testament writers wanted to refer to “judged and condemned”, i.e. found guilty, then instead of the verb “krino” they used the strengthened verb “**katakrino**”. The preposition “kata” means “down”, and so “katakrino” means “judged down”, i.e. found guilty and condemned. This verb “katakrino” is translated 17 times as “condemned” and 2 times as “damned”. It is a much stronger verb than “krino”. But “katakrino” is not the verb Paul used in 2 Thessalonians 2:12.

So 2 Thessalonians 2:12 should read: “That they all **might be judged** who believe not the truth ...”.

This verse tells us that if we don’t believe the truth, then we will be judged by God. Now those people whose minds God has opened to understanding God’s truth will be judged more strictly than those people whose minds have never understood God’s truth. So for us in God’s Church not believing the truth has far more serious consequences than not believing the truth has for people in the world. Those “more serious consequences” for us are spelled out by Paul in the Book of Hebrews.

For if we sin wilfully after that we have received **the knowledge of the truth**, there remains no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and **fiery indignation**, which shall devour the adversaries. (Hebrews 10:26-27)

The Apostle John highlighted the contrast between God’s people and the world as follows:

They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world hears them. **We are of God:** he that knows God hears us; he that is not of God hears not us. Hereby know we **the spirit of truth**, and **the spirit of error**. (1 John 4:5-6)

We who have submitted our lives to God are guided by the spirit of truth. We accept all truth, as it comes to our attention. But the world “hears us not”, meaning that the world does not accept the truth of God. Instead the world accepts “the spirit of error”, which spirit the world accepts as “truth”, like accepting without any evidence of any kind that evolution is (supposedly) true.

THE PRESENT TRUTH

Notice what the Apostle Peter said:

Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though you know *them*, and be established **in the present truth**. (2 Peter 1:12)

In this life we are always going to be limited to “the present truth”. All truth is not available to us in this life. All truth requires an awareness of all things. And that is something we simply don’t have in this life. As Moses stated it:

The secret *things* belong unto the LORD our God: but **those *things which are revealed* belong** unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law. (Deuteronomy 29:29)

The present truth is limited to “those things which are revealed”. But we need to recognize that there are also “secret things” which God has chosen not to reveal to us in this age.

Now calling it “the present truth” does not take away from something that is true. The present truth is truth. And the present truth may in fact be complete for a specific subject or area. But there are always other things and other areas where certain truths have thus far simply not yet been revealed by God.

IN CONCLUSION

Satan is the father of lies (John 8:44), and he is also the god of this present age (2 Corinthians 4:4), and on top of that Satan has deceived the whole world (Revelation 12:9).

So it is no surprise that Satan has inspired all unconverted people to reject truth in favor of lies. That goes so far as to distort the very definition of truth. Truth does not depend on what people say or believe or think to be true.

God is true. As Paul said, “**let God be true but every man a liar**” (see Romans 3:4). Everything God says is true. And if we say or teach or believe things that disagree with what God has said, then what we say or teach or believe is simply not the truth. But if the things we believe and say are in agreement with what God has said, then we believe and speak the truth.

The ministry of God’s Church has a responsibility to teach the truth. And to do that requires that we study the things God has said, so that we will be able to rightly divide the word of truth (2 Timothy 2:15 again). And we always need to be on guard in this world that rejects truth, and instead promotes lies, presented as supposed truths.

Claiming that evolution is true, and that men can supposedly be women, and therefore compete in women’s sports, if they want to be women, represents only the tip of the iceberg in our deceived world today.

We also need to recognize that when we are in a discussion with people who reject a truth that is obvious to us, then there is no point in us continuing that discussion. If people do not accept a truth that is obvious to us (e.g. there are only two genders), then any further discussion is futile.

When Jesus Christ establishes the Kingdom of God at the beginning of the millennium, then finally all lies will be banished, and then truth will cover the earth, in all areas of life.

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