

The Truthfulness and Faithfulness of God

Introduction:

There are many competing truths all around us. For example, some people believe in no God, some in many gods, and others still in just one God. Some believe that sex before marriage is permissible; others believe it is a sin against God. This is not just a modern problem, but has been around for thousands of years. Even Pilate, while trying Jesus, famously asked, “What is Truth?” (John 18:38). Against this backdrop, we are told that the God of the bible is truth, reveals truth, and acts truthfully.

God is truth

God is true in the sense that he is the only one who fully conforms to the idea of what God should be like, namely a being who is infinitely perfect in power, in wisdom, in goodness, in lordship over time and space, etc.

(Jeremiah 10:10a)

[10] But the LORD is **the true God**;
he is the living God and the everlasting King.

(John 17:3)

[3] And this is eternal life, that they know you **the only true God**, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.

The converse then is that all other gods/idols are not true, but are instead false and a lie.

(Psalm 115:4-8)

[4] Their idols are silver and gold,
the work of human hands.
[5] They have mouths, but do not speak;
eyes, but do not see.
[6] They have ears, but do not hear;
noses, but do not smell.
[7] They have hands, but do not feel;
feet, but do not walk;
and they do not make a sound in their throat.
[8] Those who make them become like them;
so do all who trust in them.

(John 8:44)

[44] You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is **no truth in him**. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is **a liar and the father of lies**.

Objection #1: Who decides what God is really like? Isn't it circular to say that the God of the bible is true and then use the bible to justify the claim?

God's words are true and the standard of truth

Not only is God himself truth, but he reveals truth. He speaks truth, and his revelation is the standard of truth.

(Job 37:14-16)

[14] "Hear this, O Job;

stop and consider the wondrous works of God.

[15] Do you know how God lays his command upon them
and causes the lightning of his cloud to shine?

[16] Do you know the balancings of the clouds,
the wondrous works of him who is perfect in knowledge,

(Psalm 12:6)

[6] **The words of the LORD are pure words,**
like silver refined in a furnace on the ground,
purified seven times.

(John 17:17)

[17] Sanctify them in the truth; **your word is truth.**

Objection #2: Many people have a hard time accepting this claim of absolute truth. It feels too exclusive to say that certain beliefs are true and all others are wrong. But truth, if it is true, must be exclusive.

Objection #3: Others may concede that there is truth, but that it doesn't lie in God. Religion is one huge ruse. This is an extremely narrow and arrogant view; Christianity offers a more liberal view.

"I have been asked to tell you what Christians believe, and I am going to begin by telling you one thing that Christians do not need to believe. If you are a Christian you do not have to believe that all the other religions are simply wrong all through. **If you are an atheist you do have to believe that the main point in all the religions of the whole world is simply one huge mistake. If you are a Christian, you are free to think that all those religions, even the queerest ones, contain at least some hint of the truth.** When I was an atheist I had to try to persuade myself that most of the human race have always been wrong about the question that mattered to them most; when I became a Christian I was able to take **a more liberal view.** But, of course, being a Christian does mean thinking that where Christianity differs from other religions, Christianity is right and they are wrong. As in arithmetic—there is only one right answer to a sum, and all other answers are wrong; but some of the wrong answers are much nearer being right than others."

— C.S. Lewis

God acts in truth, and is, therefore, reliable and faithful

God's faithfulness flows from his truthfulness. Because he has made certain promises and because he is always truthful, we can be sure that he will be faithful to his word.

(Numbers 23:19)

[19] **God is not man, that he should lie,**

or a son of man, that he should change his mind.

Has he said, and will he not do it?

Or has he spoken, and will he not fulfill it?

(Hebrews 6:17-20)

[17] So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose, he guaranteed it with an oath, [18] so that by two unchangeable things, in which **it is impossible for God to lie**, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to hold fast to the hope set before us. [19] We have this as **a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul**, a hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain, [20] where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

(Titus 1:1-2)

[1:1] Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the sake of the faith of God's elect and their knowledge of the truth, which accords with godliness, [2] **in hope of eternal life, which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began**

Therefore, we should seek to properly image God by being truthful

The reason we are truthful is not simply because it hurts others when we lie, although that is true. We speak the truth so that we can better image God. When we lie, when we curse, when we mock, we are not speaking truth, but rather lies. The devil is called the father of lies, contrasted from God in whom there is no darkness. We are called to speak the truth to one another.

(Colossians 3:9-10)

[9] **Do not lie to one another**, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices [10] and have **put on the new self**, which is being renewed in knowledge after the **image of its creator**.

(Ephesians 4:25)

[25] Therefore, having **put away falsehood**, let each one of you **speak the truth** with his neighbor, for we are members one of another.