

WHERE DO YOU GET YOUR TRUTH?

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“I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life.” Jesus proclaims in John 14:6. Most all Christians can quote this verse. But most all of us are not aware of the RADICAL nature of this statement of Jesus.

By way of comparison this would compare today to some Professor of Logic or Philosophy stating that EVERYONE else is wrong in their philosophies and logic and that ONLY he now has the true understanding of the way things are, the nature of God, the beginnings of the Universe, the final resting place and state of the dead, and essentially ALL other questions of life and the existence of the Cosmos.

In reality he would be saying he is the light of the world. He is the ONLY one in which TRUTH reposes. Radical! Yet, when we look at the life of Jesus and His claims this is exactly what He did in his earthly ministry.

A little background...by the time Jesus came onto the scene there had been literally hundreds of philosophers and teachers parading through history with any and every kind of doctrine, philosophy, and “truth” imaginable. Everything from why the Cosmos was made in the first place, how it was made, from what it was made, the inception of evil into the creation, the afterlife of those doing good and the afterlife of those doing evil during their lifetime.

There was no shortage of “thinkers” the world had produced in the thousands of years before Jesus. There was one philosopher, however, who in his education and mental brilliance embodied the composite teachings of the ‘best’ of the ancient philosophers. He wrote on just about every subject imaginable. The Western world patterned its thinking after the elements of this man’s teaching. He wrote numerous treaties dealing with all aspects of life. He introduced the concept of “hell” as a place of eternal infernos of punishment for evil. His works included, Protagoras, The Republic, Apology, Phaedo, Timaeus, Symposium, The Laws, and Gorgias. This was a brilliant man. Respected. Admired. Followed. Revered. Acclaimed. And mostly, WRONG. The man was Plato of Athens, Greece who lived 400 years before Christ.

Plato’s teachings were just accepted as the way things are. They were considered the map and highway to a positive after life experience. Heaven if you will. A state of eternal bliss. Plato was considered a teacher of truth. Jesus comes on the scene in His ministry in about 30 A.D. and with His teachings explodes the concepts of ALL philosophers before Him including Plato when Jesus says, “I am the Way, the TRUTH, and the Life. No one comes to the Father—or gets to the heavenly afterlife—but by and through ME.” Talk about

radical. In this one statement Jesus repudiates EVERYTHING in the entire society they had come to believe. He is not making friends to say the least. Paul later does the same thing in Athens—Plato's home town—in Acts 17.

Paul further warns us concerning philosophy which mitigates against the Truth that is in Jesus in Colossians 2:8, ""See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ."

Why is all this important for us today? There are only two ways anything can be understood and explained when it comes to the Bible, doctrine, or theology. The first way is what Paul calls 'the BASIC principles of this world' which starts from the wrong premise of human reasoning. The second way to understand these principles is to begin with the TRUTH. The Truth is in Jesus (Ephesians 4:21). We must start with the Creator God. The Triune God. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. With His overflowing Love. With the fact that All things were created by, through, and for Jesus Christ and that He upholds and sustains ALL Creation. (Colossians 1:16-17). That He is LOVE. That He Adopted mankind and redeemed mankind and included mankind in His life before the foundation of the world. Before creation of the cosmos (Ephesians 1:3-14). Take your choice. Take God or man. Who's your daddy?

Philosophy of the world is complex and convoluted. The TRUTH that is in Jesus is simple. It is not rocket science. Paul says it this way in II Corinthians 11:3, "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the SIMPLICITY that is in Christ."(KJV)

This is all important to us because modern Christianity has taken many of its concepts from the pagan world, especially from Plato. The truth is not in Plato. It is in Jesus. The world has been redeemed and reconciled in Christ. Salvation for all mankind is a reality not a possibility. The Kingdom was prepared from the foundation of the world for all to enter. The question is: "Will you believe and choose to enter?"