

# TRUTHFULNESS vs. DECEPTION

*DECLARING WITH A TRANSPARENT LIFE WHAT IS GENUINE, FACTUAL, AND ILLUMINATING.*

## WHAT IS TRUTH?

This is the question Pilot asked. The Hebrew word for truth is “emeth.” It means “stability, certainty, right, and sure.” It is from “aman,” which means “to build up or support; to foster as a parent or nurse; to be firm and faithful; permanent, steadfast, and verified.

## THE SOURCES OF TRUTH

1. God is truth: “Ascribe ye greatness unto our God. He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he” (Deuteronomy 32:3–4).
2. Jesus is truth: “Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me” (John 14:6).
3. The Holy Spirit is truth: “And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth” (I John 5:6).
4. God’s Word is truth: “Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth” (John 17:17).
5. God’s Law is truth: “Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and thy law is the truth. Thou art near, O Lord; and all thy commandments are truth.” (Psalm 119:142,151).
6. The Gospel is truth: “Whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel; Which is come unto you, as it is in all the world” (Colossians 1:5–6).

## WHAT DOES THE TRUTH DO?

There is power in truth because it is the very essence of God and the means by which He carries out His work in the world.

1. Truth brings us into Christ “Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures” (James 1:18).
2. Truth brings us to the light “But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God” (John 3:21).
3. Truth purifies our soul “Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently” (I Peter 1:22).
4. Truth makes us free “And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:32).

Truth frees us by tearing down false ideas and conclusions that keep us in bondage “(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ” (II Corinthians 10:4–5).

5. Truth leads us in the right way “O send out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me” (Psalm 43:3).
6. Truth allows us to worship God “But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.” (John 4:23–24).
7. Truth cleanses us from iniquity “By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and by the fear of the Lord men depart from evil” (Proverbs 16:6).

Lust and addictions hold many in bondage. The control comes from a spirit of uncleanness. The first step of purging is crying out to God for mercy. “And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me” (Psalm 50:15). The second step is to confess and repent. “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (I John 1:9).

The third step is to fill our heart with God’s truth and meditate on it day and night. “Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed [thereto] according to thy word. With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments. Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee” (Psalm 119:9–11).

There may be a further need to acknowledge the iniquities of our forefathers (Daniel 9:16), regain surrendered ground (Ephesians 4:27), and engage in serious fasting and prayer (Isaiah 58:6). When the disciples were unable to deliver a boy from an unclean spirit, they asked Jesus why and he replied, “This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting” (Mark 9:29).

8. Truth preserves leaders “Mercy and truth preserve the king: and his throne is upholden by mercy” (Proverbs 20:28).

It is significant that the throne is not established by truth and justice, but by truth and mercy. When people violate truth it is natural to be harsh, but loyalty is built when a leader teaches truth with qualities of kindness, gentleness, patience, meekness, and self-control. Therefore, we are instructed to speak the truth in love.

## **HOW CAN LEARN THE TRUTH?**

Our natural tendency is to accept false ideas because the ways of death appeal to our human reasoning. “There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death” (Proverbs 14:12). Therefore, it is easy to believe lies, which come from Satan since he is a liar and the father of lies. “When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it” (John 8:44). Furthermore, if a person rejects the truth, then God will send him strong delusions, and he will believe a lie. (See II Thessalonians 2:11.) Based on all this, learning truth takes initiative and diligence in the following ways.

1. By filling our soul with truth. “Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls” (James 1:21).

2. By studying the meaning of truth “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (II Timothy 2:15).

3. By learning to answer with truth “Bow down thine ear, and hear the words of the wise, and apply thine heart unto my knowledge. For it is a pleasant thing if thou keep them within thee; they shall withal be fitted in thy lips. That thy trust may be in the Lord, I have made known to thee this day, even to thee. Have not I written to thee excellent things in counsels and knowledge, That I might make thee know the certainty of the words of truth; that thou mightest answer the words of truth to them that send unto thee?” (Proverbs 22:17–21).

4. By walking in fellowship with others “If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth” (I John 1:6; see also I John 3:16–24).

5. By designing good works “But mercy and truth shall be to them that devise good.” (Proverbs 14:22). Therefore, “let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works” (Hebrews 10:24).

6. By testing the Spirit “Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God” (I John 4:1–2). We are warned to beware of the following:

- False prophets—Matthew 7:15
- False christ—Matthew 24:24
- False apostles—II Corinthians 11:13
- False teachers—II Peter 2:1
- False brethren—II Corinthians 11:26
- False accusers—II Timothy 3:3
- False witnesses—Matthew 26:60

## **THE GOAL OF THIS QUALITY**

“Only fear the Lord, and serve him in truth with all your heart: for consider how great things he hath done for you” (I Samuel 12:24). “I have chosen the way of truth: thy judgments have I laid before me” (Psalm 119:30). “The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth” (Psalm 145:18).

## **BIBLICAL EXAMPLES OF TRUTHFULNESS**

Nathan spoke truth to David and brought conviction. (See II Samuel 12:7.)

Ananias and Sapphira lied to the Holy Spirit and died. (See Acts 4:4.)