

CORE: MIND-SET



Though created with a sound mind aligned with Christ's, in our fallen nature our thinking is distorted by sin and needs to be redeemed by Him. Only He can renew our mind and help us to experience clarity. This section touches on "head-alignment" with Christ.

The Nature of Truth

Can truth be known? Does it change? What is truth? Is truth what you feel to be true or something else? Or both? Frankly, it's hard to learn and grow if nothing can be known and if there's no anchor in reality. No one can practically live daily without being rooted in unchanging truths. If you are a person who is 5'6" tall and sincerely believe or identify that your truth is that you are 6'5" tall, you'll have a rude if not comic reality check when you go to buy pants made for someone who in reality is 6'5" tall. The truth about the object (pants) is that they are made for someone 6'5" tall. This is objective truth. It's not going to change no matter how you feel about it. You can test the claim (use a tape measure.)



Subjective truth on the other hand is related to personal preferences and opinions. If the 5'6" person prefers to wear pants made for someone 6'5" tall because they feel they look good in them, that's their opinion. You can't really test their preference because it's subjective. If they were going before a panel of judges who were using an established criteria for what looks good, pants that measure well beyond that criteria will conflict with the individual's opinion. We see this type of thing with popular talent shows all the time.

We need to learn how to discern between objective truth and subjective truth. And we need to know how to verify the validity of objective truth claims. If the pants made for

someone 6'5" had a tag mislabeled as being for someone 6'0", you could verify the truth claim of that tag with a standard, a tape measure. It wouldn't be a matter of opinion; it would be a matter of fact.

Jesus made a truth claim that contradicts all other world religions, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." Jesus (John 14:6) This wasn't a "true for you, but not for me" statement. He stated it as an exclusive objective fact for which we can test the validity.

We can also discern true love by its relationship to evil and truth: "Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth." (1 Corinthians 13:6) If something claims to be love, but delights in evil, brokenness, distortion, or corruption, then the truth is it is not love.

Our culture tells us to "live your truth." But truth isn't something that you possess. It is what *is*. Choices always have consequences. Base life decisions on reality, not on what you *feel or even want* to be true. "test everything; hold fast what is good." (1 Thessalonians 5:21 ESV) In doing so, you'll make better decisions that will lead to flourishing, not floundering. "And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." (John 8:32 ESV)

Spiritual Disciplines

We were created for intimate relationship with God. In our broken nature, in this broken world, it can be difficult to feel connected to God. But just like in relationships with those we desire to be close, being intentional and purposeful in our relationship with God requires some discipline, some prioritization, intentionality, and purposefulness in our communication and connection. Spiritual disciplines help us facilitate that connection. They need to be part of our core, strengthening our core. Practicing various spiritual disciplines like regular contemplative bible reading, prayer, fasting, listening, scripture memorization, and solitude, can catalyze a deeper relationship with and maturity in Christ. "Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded." (James 4:8 ESV) "Have nothing to do with irreverent, silly myths. Rather train yourself for godliness; for while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come." (1 Timothy 4:7-8)

Obedience (Lordship)

Jesus said, "If you love me, keep my commandments." (John 14:15) And "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." (Matthew 22:37 ESV) Change agents are ambassadors of their Lord. To be an ambassador is to serve and represent the interests of the sender, not the ambassador. Ambassadors are accountable to their sender. (And all creation- including humanity- is accountable to its Creator.) If we are not submitting our will to Christ as Lord of our lives, then we will not be optimally effective. James said, "Be doers of the word, and not hearers only. Otherwise, you are deceiving yourselves." (James 1:22) "For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome, because everyone born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world: our faith." 1 John 1:3-4 Even though our sinful nature resists the law of God, through Christ we can press into it. (Romans 7:21-25). As we do, we can expect a flourishing life. "Blessed are those whose way is blameless, who walk in the law of the LORD! Blessed are those who keep his testimonies, who seek him with their whole heart..." (Psalms 119:1-2)

We don't get our acceptance with God by our obedience to rules or laws: Christianity is different than all other religions in that we are accepted by grace and Jesus' "paying the fine" for the rules that we have broken and will break. However, obedience to Christ is an essential part of being an effective change agent for Him. And when we follow how He designed life to work, we will experience more flourishing and effectiveness. "This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it
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day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.” (Joshua 1:8) (Proverbs 3:5-6, Proverbs 10:8.) I’ve discovered that when I obey Him, I don’t feel fettered by restrictions, but free to be who I was created to be.

Everyone obeys someone. “Don’t you know that when you offer yourselves to someone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one you obey—whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness” (Rom 6:16) Choosing to obey Christ leads to the good life that God intends for us (which may not look like good life as the world thinks of it.)

Biblical Literacy

Jesus said, “If you love me, keep my commandments.” (John 14:15) If we want to flourish, and if it’s true that obedience to Christ leads to flourishing and intentional love choices lead to relational intimacy, then it only makes sense to figure out what commands we are asked to obey. We find those commands in the bible. Psalm 119:11 says, “I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.” (ESV)

The bible is much more than a book of do’s and don’ts (that’s actually a very small part.) It reveals the greater story of God, wayward humanity, and the unfolding of His plan to restore humanity back into relationship with Him, their Creator. Because He is the Creator of humankind, He knows the designed intent for how things in this life ought to work in everyday life. We can find these things in the bible. The book of Proverbs is great relevant wisdom for everyday life, and the New Testament books of Colossians, Ephesians, Thessalonians, and Peter are great for learning how to mature in Christ.

We are encouraged to grow in our knowledge of it so that we can experience its benefit and help others benefit too. “But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ...” (2 Peter 3:18). “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.” (Colossians 3:16) “Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.” (2 Timothy 2:5) “Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers, but whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditates on his law day and night” (Psalm 1:1-2). Through knowing scripture we get direction, “Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path” (Psalm 119:105).

Through knowing and using God’s Word we fight spiritual battles, “Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God” (Ephesians 6:17).

And like a surgeon’s scalpel cutting away toxic tissue in our body, God’s word can address the rottenness within us as we learn and apply it. “For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.” (Hebrews 4:12 ESV; see also 2 Timothy 3:16–17)

Becoming intimately knowledgeable with God’s Word typically precedes understanding what He is calling us to obey. Biblical literacy is a core factor that is essential for a redemptive influencer. With it you’ll also be able to navigate around foolish philosophies that only sidetrack you from a life of fulfillment and effectiveness.

Ask Your Mentor

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1. Of The Nature of Truth, Spiritual Disciplines, Obedience (Lordship), and Biblical Literacy, which one do you feel is your strongest area? Weakest? Why?
2. How have these things influenced how you work, interact with coworkers, or how you lead?
3. What do you wish you would have known about these things in your 20s?
4. What are some things that you have learned about these areas?
5. Spiritual Disciplines and Prayer. What role does prayer play in your life? What are things we should pray for ourselves as relates to our workplace? What are things we should pray for our coworkers?

Go Do

Self-rate, 1-10. How would you rate yourself in each of the above areas?

What's one area that you think you should focus on over the next few weeks? How will you focus on it?

Go Deeper: Further Conversation & Study

1. What big problem do you think this section may be addressing?
2. What emotions, if any, did you have from what you learned in this session? Was there anything that surprised, excited, or angered you?

Sources & Resources

Book- (Spiritual Disciplines) The Common Rule: Habits of Purpose for an Age of Distraction, Justin Early.

Book- A Celebration of Discipline, by Richard Foster

Video- True for You but Not for Me, Prager U, <https://www.prageru.com/video/true-for-you-but-not-for-me>

Video- Why Truth Matters Today More Than Ever, SeanMcDowell.org, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=noVHQEqqd1A>