

Live Not By Lies

I. Introduction

Postmodernism, which currently holds our culture captive, does not believe in truth in the old sense. Consequently, according to this argument, if truth does not exist as they claim, *neither do lies*. This leaves us with a huge dilemma as discovered in Eastern Europe and the old Soviet Union where everything, and I mean everything the government proclaimed was a lie. Everyone knew they were lies, but you had to go along to get along, that is, you had to pretend they were true if you wanted any semblance of existence and not be sent off to the Gulags! The title of this briefing comes from Rod Dreher's 2020 highly recommended book: *Live Not By Lies*, which he took from an essay by Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn who refused to live by the lies of the old Soviet Union.

II. The Problem

- A. Every Christian (even many non-Christians) in this PM, post truth world, currently have issues of trust. How can we know if what we are being told is the truth? Can we trust our government, the major networks (the old media), the CIA, the FBI, educators, scientists, modern medicine, etc.? How do you go about living a normal life if you can't trust the major institutions in the culture? If you are not Rip Van Winkle the answer to the query above is, *no*. We must now be skeptical of all the above institutions of our society and culture. If you are awake, you know there has been a major paradigm shift!
- B. In a PM, post truth world everything, i.e., all issues then by default become political; there is no other way. If there is no truth or logic, how do you settle issues? Everything becomes a power struggle, i.e., a political matter.
- C. The scientific establishment, perhaps the last holdout and the one we could formally trust, for the most part is now following the rest of society and is becoming ideologically driven. There are even new web sites appearing every day with the sole purpose of debunking *junk science*! Science is not alone: the news media is fabricating stories almost on par with the old Soviet media. A historian has recently written a book purporting to be the real reason for the founding of the Thirteen Colonies. It's on the *New York Times* bestseller list even though it is totally false (*The 1619 Project*)! Why would a historian prevaricate the truth? **In a PM world the purpose is political: to gain power for a certain group.**
- D. Postmodernism (PM), the new reigning paradigm, ironically says there is no metanarrative, that is, no one worldview that explains all of reality. (Hmmm, isn't this an all inclusive worldview statement?) They declare there are only narratives or stories; there is no such thing as a proposition that is true for all time and all people. In other words, there is no true truth (objective truth). Truth is relative, and arises out of what a group says is true for them. Hence, truth in this PM world is a social construct.

- E. With the breakdown in the major elements of Western Civilization over the last 100 years, and with this radical paradigm shift resulting in subjectivism and relativism, how does a believer in the Christian Worldview live his every day life?

III. Definition of Truth

Truth is that which corresponds to reality as perceived by God.

- A. What we perceive is partial and limited; we can never arrive at certainty. This needs some explanation: God is the Creator of all that exists seen and unseen. Therefore, the Creator decides meaning, and indeed *all truth is God's truth*. Without revelation from God, we can never arrive at certainty. God is the One who gives meaning to the many (the particulars of life).
- B. How can we put the pieces of the puzzle of life together? Imagine putting together a puzzle of a thousand pieces and not having the reference of the picture on the boxtop! Through man's fallen logic and reason he can manage to fit some pieces, but without the boxtop he can never find ultimate meaning to existence. He needs the picture on the boxtop. That was given to us through revelation. With the worldview revealed in Scripture, and through the revelation of God in Jesus, the Second Person of the Trinity, we can find true meaning, real objective knowledge.

IV. Discerning the Truth

- A. Human reason (logic) is important in the search for truth, but ultimately, it can only tell us what is not true. If a proposition is not logical, it cannot be true. Finite man cannot find truth with reason alone, and if he could, reason would then be the ultimate authority. You cannot arrive at the infinite by starting from the finite. This was the major flaw in the Enlightenment. By human reason alone all man did was discover more pieces to the puzzle! Scientific discoveries during this period were amazing and a benefit to us all, but meaning was more elusive than ever without a word from the Creator of all facts.
- B. To discern real objective truth we must have Revelation from the Creator (The Boxtop). God's revelation in Scripture and His Son, gives us sufficient truth (not exhaustive) to live meaningful lives and experience redemption. As we study Scripture over time, we begin to put together a worldview that is in harmony with the way things are. Only one worldview can correctly mirror reality. If that latter statement were not true then we would live in an absurd world.
- C. The irony of ironies was Pilate asking Jesus, *what is truth?* (Jn. 18:38). Little did he know that Jesus, the Second Person of the Trinity, was the source of all truth!

- D. The fact that God is triune is one of the most significant facts theologically. Why? Because the three Persons of the Trinity were personal and have communicated among themselves for eternity. *You cannot communicate without logic.* (A is not non-A). Therefore, the laws of logic are part of the nature of the Trinity. God is a God who speaks and He has revealed Himself. The Apostle John (1:1) refers to Jesus as the Eternal Word. Postmoderns may eschew logic and believe the irrational is just as important, but they must, without exception, employ logic to communicate.

V. Basics of the Christian World View

The very basics of the Christian worldview are: a Triune, personal, infinite, eternal Creator-God exists, and He has revealed Himself. To learn more, Consult some of the great Creeds of Christendom like the Nicene Creed or the Westminster Confession of Faith. See also Briefing Outlines #35, and #78.

VI. Finding reliable contemporary sources of information that mirror reality

This can be a challenge; it involves the practical, everyday search for truth. How do we as believers do this?

- A. First, look for sources that mirror your worldview. This may take some time. Read a source, either a news source, or a commentator (blog), over a period of time and gradually you will find an affinity with certain sources. It is also important to read on occasion, sources you do not agree with, just to get a feel for what opposing sources are saying.
- B. Second, I personally rule out newspapers and tv news broadcasts. Why? Most all newspapers on the front page simply reprint syndicates like the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, or *Associated Press*. These sources are dreadfully biased toward a naturalist, materialist, postmodern view of life. It's may be advisable to consult them from time to time just to see how an issue is being reported, but we must realize these sources, for the most part, are very hostile to truth in the old sense, and the Christian worldview. For me, I find that tv commentators are dreadfully and poorly educated; they are little more than talking heads!
- C. Third, there is the world-wide web. It is here that we can find sources that are more in harmony with a biblical worldview. Just be aware, the Web is soup-to-nuts! Over a period of time, however, we can observe and isolate some who are faithful to accurately represent reality and interpret issues that are closer to a biblical perspective.
- D. Some sources that I find helpful on a daily basis: *Newsmax*, *Just The News*, *One America News*, *Epoch Times*, *First Things*, *Free Republic*, *Lucianne*, *The Federalist*, *Christian Post*, *The Stream*, *The Gospel Coalition*, *Zero Hedge*, *Frontpage*, *American*

Thinker, American Greatness, PJMedia, and Townhall. There are many others I consult for speciality issues like Evolution, Creation, Archaeology, and theological issues. What we must remember in consulting any website is everyone has a bias. Of all the above, I find the Free Republic the most useful because it represents postings from a large variety of sources.

VII. For Further Study

Copan, Paul. *"True For You, But Not For Me."*
Dreher, Rod. *Live Not By Lies: A Manual For Christian Dissidents.*
Edgar, William. *The Face of Truth.*
Groothuis, Douglas. *Truth Decay.*
Kostenberger, Andreas. ed. *Whatever Happened to Truth.*
Lindsley, Art. *True Truth.*
Pearcey, Nancy. *Finding Truth.*
Strachan, Owen. *Christianity and Wokeness.*