

Session 2: Is Absolute Truth Relevant?

MISSIONAL APOLOGETICS TRAINING

Session 1 Review

- Survey Review
- Discussion on Current Evangelism Methods
- Evangelism and Results
- Challenges in Post Modern Generation Outreach
- Methodologies
 - Agnosticism
 - Atheism
 - Rationalism
 - Fideism
 - Pantheism etc.

Session 2 Outline

- Absolute vs Relative Truth
- Worldviews
- Truth – God- Jesus –Action Framework

Absolute vs Relative Truth

- **The definition of Relative truth-** Truth that is true at only one time and at one place. It's true to some people and not to others. It's true now but it may not have been true in the past and it may not be again in the future, it's always subject to change. It is also subject to perspective of people
- **The definition of absolute truth-** Whatever is true at one time and at one place is true at all time's and at all places. What is true for one person is true for all person's. Truth is true whether we believe it or not. Truth is discovered or it is revealed, it is not invented by a culture or by religious men.

Assignment Review - 1

- Reading 1 - Absolute Truth
 - Humanism's exclusion of God necessitates moral relativism.
 - Humanist John Dewey (1859-1952), co-author and signer of the Humanist Manifesto 1 (1933), declared, "There is no God and there is no soul. Hence, there are no needs for the props of traditional religion. With dogma and creed excluded, then immutable truth is also dead and buried. There is no room for fixed, natural law or moral absolutes." Humanists believe one should do, as one feels is right.
 - Absolute Truth - A Logical Necessity

Assignment Review -2

- Reading 2 -What is the Difference Between Absolute and Relative Truth?
– Natasha Crain
 - Bird Color
 - To say that something is absolutely true means that it is independently true for all people, even if they do not know it or recognize it to be true.
 - The existence of absolute truth is a necessary foundation of Christianity.
 - Four common statements –
 - “All religions point to the same truth.” – Some things can contain part of absolute truth
 - “Christians are not tolerant of other beliefs.” - To agree with all ideas is the ultimate nod to relative truth.
 - “I like to live according to compassion, rather than a pre-determined set of beliefs.” - This quote suggests that it’s OK to decide what we believe based on what we like, as if spiritual truth is simply a matter of preference (a relative truth)
 - “Christianity just doesn’t make sense to me because (fill in any number of reasons).”

Assignment Review 3

- Video 1 - The Truth Cannot Be All Relative - Interview with Ravi Zacharias | The Leadership Collective
 - Commitment to relativism
 - Self-Defeating Statement- All truth is relative
 - Radical Relativism
 - You shall know the truth and it will set you free

Assignment Review 4

- Video 2 - How do you know that Christianity is the one true worldview?
 - Only Universe exists
 - Only God exists
 - Universe & God exists

Worldviews

- A worldview is the framework from which we view reality and make sense of life and the world. "[It's] any ideology, philosophy, theology, movement or religion that provides an overarching approach to understanding God, the world and man's relations to God and the world," says David Noebel, author of *Understanding the Times*.
- Whether or not we realize it, we all have worldviews! We each have presuppositions that influence our outlook on life. A worldview has been compared to a lens which alters the way we view life and how we perceive the world we live in. There are a variety of worldviews.
- A biblical worldview is based on the infallible Word of God. When you believe the Bible is entirely true, then you allow it to be the foundation of everything you say and do. That means, for instance, you take seriously the mandate in Romans 13 to honor the governing authorities by researching the candidates and issues, making voting a priority.
- <http://www.xenos.org/sites/default/files/essay-pdfs/Five%20Worldviews.pdf>

Naturalism (e.g. Atheism, Agnosticism, Existentialism)

- **Reality**

- The material universe is all that exists. Reality is "one-dimensional." There is no such thing as a soul or a spirit. Everything can be explained on the basis of natural law.

- **Man**

- Man is the chance product of a biological process of evolution. Man is entirely material. The human species will one day pass out of existence.

- **Truth**

- Truth is usually understood as scientific proof. Only that which can be observed with the five senses is accepted as real or true.

- **Values**

- No objective values or morals exist. Morals are individual preferences or socially useful behaviors. Even social morals are subject to evolution and change.

Pantheism (e.g. Hinduism; Taoism; Buddhism; much New Age Consciousness)

- **Reality**

- Only the spiritual dimension exists. All else is illusion, *maya*. Spiritual reality, *Brahman*, is eternal, impersonal, and unknowable. It is possible to say that everything is a part of God, or that God is in everything and everyone.

- **Man**

- Man is one with ultimate reality. Thus man is spiritual, eternal, and impersonal. Man's belief that he is an individual is illusion.

- **Truth**

- Truth is an experience of unity with "the oneness" of the universe. Truth is beyond all rational description. Rational thought as it is understood in the West cannot show us reality.

- **Values**

- Because ultimate reality is impersonal, many pantheistic thinkers believe that there is no real distinction between good and evil. Instead, "unenlightened" behavior is that which fails to understand essential unity.

Theism (e.g. Christianity; Islam; Judaism)

- **Reality**

- An infinite, personal God exists. He created a finite, material world. Reality is both material and spiritual. The universe as we know it had a beginning and will have an end.

- **Man**

- Humankind is the unique creation of God. People were created "in the image of God," which means that we are personal, eternal, spiritual, and biological.

- **Truth**

- Truth about God is known through revelation. Truth about the material world is gained via revelation and the five senses in conjunction with rational thought.

- **Values**

- Moral values are the objective expression of an absolute moral being.

Spiritism and Polytheism

- **Reality**

- The world is populated by spirit beings who govern what goes on. Gods and demons are the real reason behind "natural" events. Material things are real, but they have spirits associated with them and, therefore, can be interpreted spiritually.

- **Man**

- Man is a creation of the gods like the rest of the creatures on earth. Often, tribes or races have a special relationship with some gods who protect them and can punish them.

- **Truth**

- Truth about the natural world is discovered through the shaman figure who has visions telling him what the gods and demons are doing and how they feel.

- **Values**

- Moral values take the form of taboos, which are things that irritate or anger various spirits. These taboos are different from the idea of "good and evil" because it is just as important to avoid irritating evil spirits as it is good ones.

Postmodernism

- **Reality**

- Reality must be interpreted through our language and cultural "paradigm." Therefore, reality is "socially constructed."

- **Man**

- Humans are nodes in a cultural reality – they are a product of their social setting. The idea that people are autonomous and free is a myth.

- **Truth**

- Truths are mental constructs meaningful to individuals within a particular cultural paradigm. They do not apply to other paradigms. Truth is relative to one's culture.

- **Values**

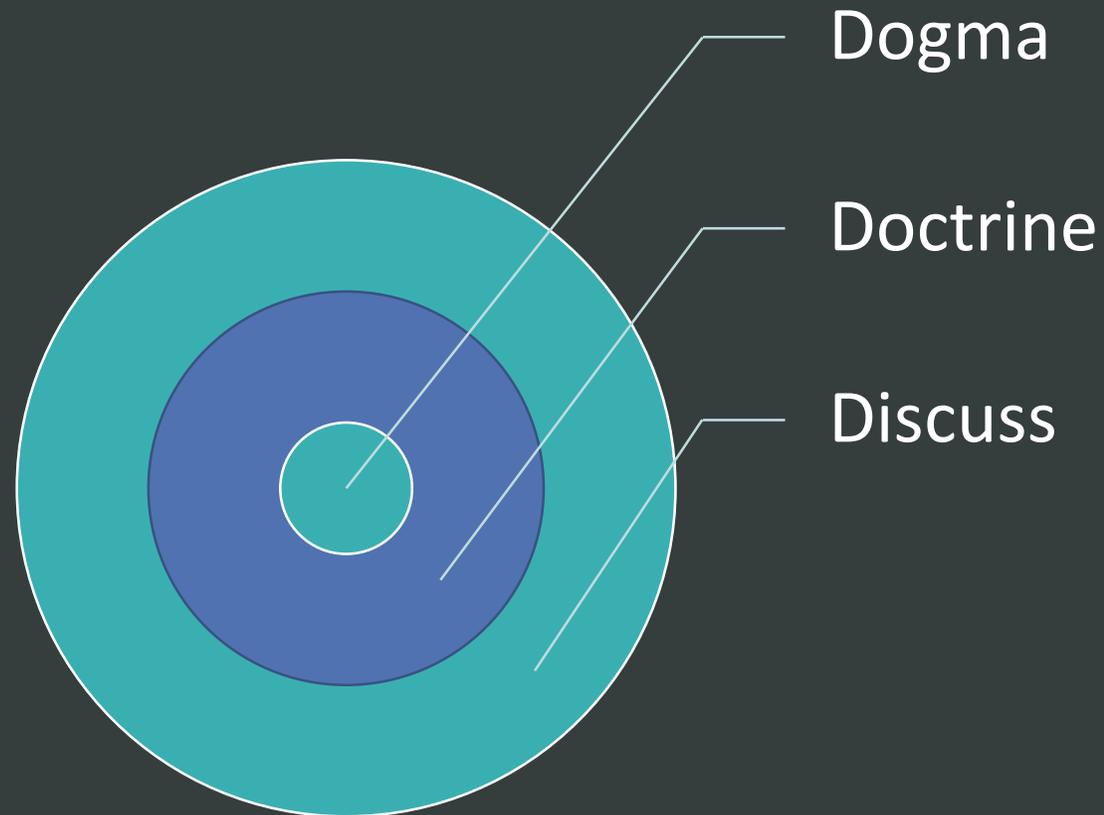
- Values are part of our social paradigms as well. Tolerance, freedom of expression, inclusion, and refusal to claim to have the answers are the only universal values.

Theism vs Trinitarianism

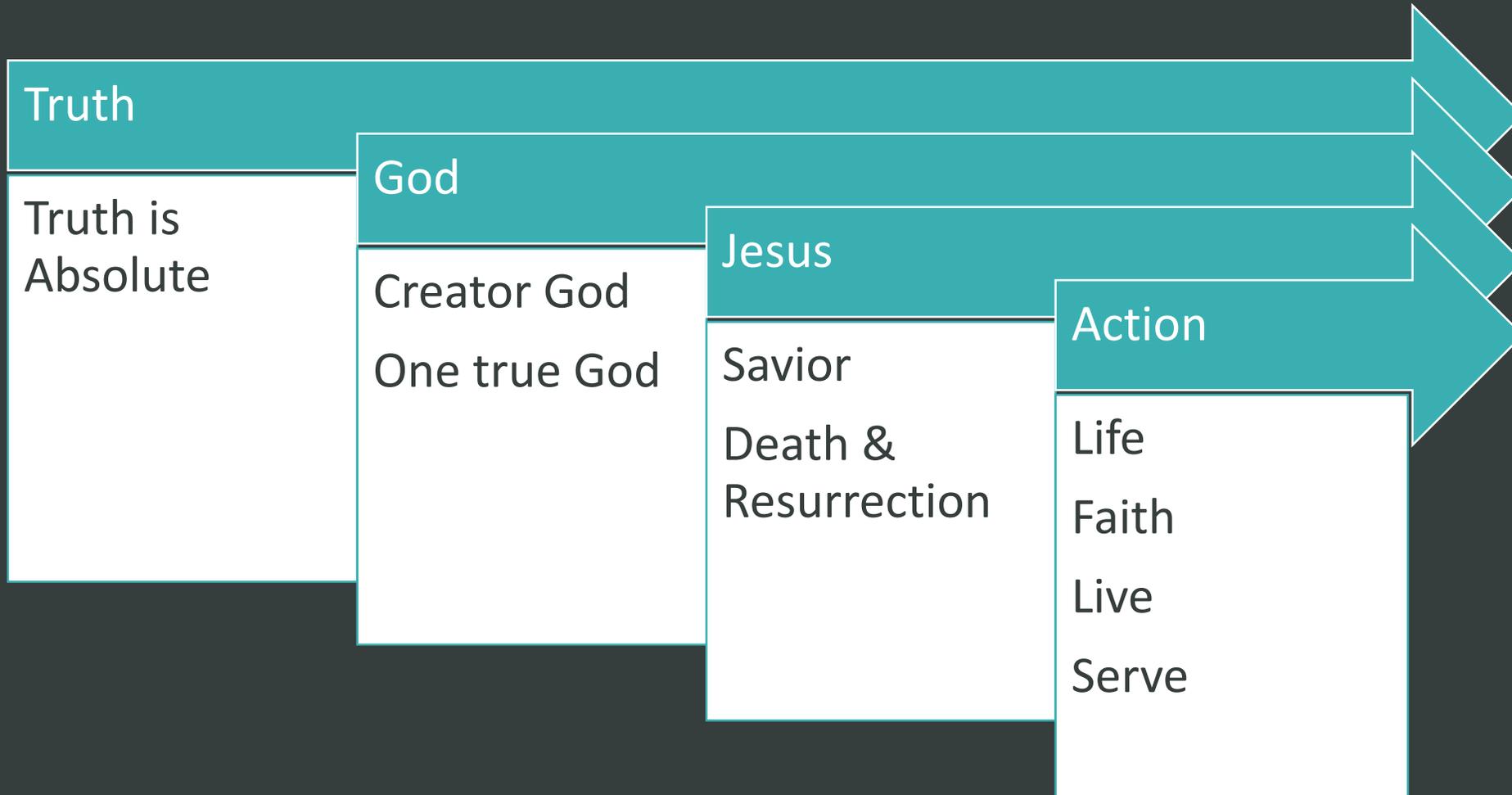
- As nouns the difference between theism and trinitarianism is that theism is (belief system) belief in the existence of at least one deity while trinitarianism is (theology) the monotheistic Christian doctrine that defines god as three divine persons or : the father, the son (Jesus Christ), and the holy spirit.

Truth – God – Jesus – Action - 1

- Sin – Savior – Salvation -> Is God missing?



Truth – God – Jesus – Action - 2



Conclusion

- Absolute Truth
- Worldviews
- Truth – God- Jesus Christ – Action Framework
- Next Session - What to do with all the Challenging Questions?