

***The Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time***  
***February 24, 2019***

*“Pilate said to him, ‘What is truth?’” (John 18:38)*

As we continue these series of sermons, we have already stated two core principles which will serve as the foundation going forward. These two are: (1) there is a Supreme Being we call God and (2) He created everything out of His joyous love for (humanity - general, myself - specific). Today, we will focus upon one of the basic statements concerning our belief in God - God is Truth.

**What is Truth?** “Jesus answered, “I am the way and the **truth** and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” (John 14:6). “We attribute a kind of sanctity to the word ‘truth’ and allow it to ground our fundamental beliefs about the meaning and purpose of life, the dignity of human beings, and the goodness of culture. It has so much implicit power that we must be very careful about how we use it, and very precise about how we might establish its presence.” (Robert J. Spitzer, *Ten Universal Principles*, p. 5).

The Gospel of Saint John records Pilate asking the question of Jesus: “What is truth?” A basic definition of truth would be: to accept with my intellect that what I perceive a thing to be, it really is. We can come to our decision concerning the “truth” of a thing through facts, experiences, or a series of tests. Once accomplished, we place our faith into a statement: this thing, idea, or person is true. We may reconsider our conclusion if instances arise which throw doubt upon our original findings, but these findings (a scientific experiment for example) can provide different results due to the circumstances under which they were performed.

Furthermore, truth can be divided into two main categories: subjective and objective. A subjective truth can be understood using this example: Someone says the church feels cold while another says the church feels hot. A person perceives the church to be hot or cold based upon their own understanding of coldness or warmth. In both instances the temperature of the church is true for that individual. Subjective truths are based upon perception. An objective truth is something that is true for everyone no matter where they are, their culture, or in what period of time they lived. An example of an objective truth would be: a human needs nutrition (food), hydration (water), and air to sustain their life. We can live minutes, hours, days, or weeks without one of these. However, we need all three to live a full life.

Many problems we face in society today have arisen from a belief that there is no objective truth. All truths are subjective or relative to the experiences of the individual. This is often found under the terms “I Believe Relativism”. You believe the truth one way and I believe the truth another allowing us to live our lives only as long as you do not try to force your version of the truth upon my reality. Why is this important for our discussion today? Because we are seeing a growth in people using *perception* from subjective truth or relativism to “identify” as other than what they are. I recently took a DNA test which revealed I have a small percentage of African DNA in my history. If I were to now declare myself an African-American male could you disagree? What if I further stated that I now identified as a 6’5 female? Would you then be able to disagree with this second point? Finally, could anyone then disagree that I am not at

present a 6'5 African-American female? I know this appears a leap, but listen to young people on college campuses. Many who believe in subjective truth (my gender is what I *perceive* it to be) would not have a problem with the first two statements becoming dumbfounded only with the third statement. It would be absurd to propose anything other than the truth - I am a 5'5 Acadian-American male.

All of this may seem foolish to some, but what has happened is that this idea is becoming ingrained in our society. Since there are no objective truths, it would lead us to conclude there are also no morally objective truths. How can we stand opposed to some of the "life issues" in our society if we no longer have objective moral truths? Can we oppose human trafficking, child abuse, abortion if there is no longer a moral truth which recalls to mind the dignity of the human person? No society can stand for long if objective moral truths fail. That society, our society, will eventually implode.