



TRUTH—HOT AND SCARY STUFF

On the university campus, the place for the pursuit of knowledge and truth, we find today a place that is rather skeptical about its own mission. Many academics today have bought into and now teach some interesting theories about truth. It is as if we have “educated ourselves into imbecility” in the academy. Today we will tackle some of the major myths about the search for knowledge you may encounter on the contemporary university campus. Budziszewski separates these myths into three major categories: General Myths (the ones you may hear from anyone), Skeptical Myths (the ones you’ll hear from those who despair of finding any truth at all), and Relativist Myths (the ones you’ll hear from people who believe that we all have truth, but yours might be different than mine). (Budziszewski page 67) **Be careful, you may actually believe some of these yourself!**

GENERAL MYTHS

1

THINKING YOU KNOW THE TRUTH IS ARROGANT AND INTOLERANT.

Why is that some people will think it is intolerant if you claim to know the truth about life?

Can doubters of truth be just as arrogant and intolerant as those who think they know the truth?
If yes, how so?

2

THE IMPORTANT THING IN LIFE ISN'T HAVING TRUTH, BUT SEARCHING FOR IT.

Why is the statement “The good life is a life spent seeking the good life” a circular statement?

What is the difference between “t”ruth and “T”ruth

3

FAITH HINDERS THE SEARCH FOR TRUTH BECAUSE IT GETS IN THE WAY OF REASONING.

In what ways does our reasoning depend on faith or trust?

SKEPTICAL MYTHS

4

THERE ISN'T ANY TRUTH

Why is the smokescreen statement "There isn't any truth" so easy to strike down?

What do people usually mean when they say this?



IS THAT STATEMENT TRUE?



5

MAYBE TRUTH EXISTS, BUT WE CAN'T FIND IT

Why is this myth self-refuting like myth #4?

It is true that someone can always doubt the truth of anything? Why is it important to know if doubts are "reasonable?"

Read John 8:31,32 — Did Jesus share this idea that truth cannot be found?

6

MAYBE WE CAN FIND OUT SOME TRUTH, BUT NOT ABOUT THE BIGGEST AND MOST IMPORTANT THINGS.

Does the fact that many people believe different things about the big questions in life, give strength to this myth?

Read John 3:16-21 and 6:44,45

Why do some people see evidence for God so clearly but others do not?

"There's plenty of evidence about the big things. Skeptics just don't want to look"

Budziszewski page 74

RELATIVIST MYTHS — HOW MANY DO YOU BELIEVE?

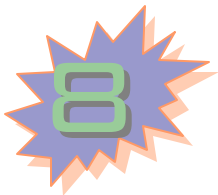


TRUTH IS WHATEVER YOU SINCERELY BELIEVE.

How is this akin to saying a person has the magical power to shape reality?

Can something be true for you, but not true for me?

What is someone really trying to say with the "true for you, not for me" statement?



TRUTH IS WHATEVER PEOPLE ACCEPT — OR WHATEVER YOU CAN GET THEM TO SWALLOW.

How is this belief stated in Political science, sociology, and philosophy?

Why is this myth **sometimes** true, but at other times **completely false and even dangerous**?



TRUTH IS WHATEVER WORKS

What is pragmatism and why is it so powerful among young people?

Why is the statement "Hey, it works for me" not a way to find truth but a wall to keep it out?

"Jesus was right: The truth shall set you free. But the myth of "whatever works" can only keep you in chains"

Budziszewski page 78

SOME SATIRE TO EXPOSE THE MYTHS OF OUR TIME

We believe in Marx, Freud, and Darwin.
 We believe everything is OK
 as long as you don't hurt anyone,
 to the best of your definition of hurt,
 and to the best of your knowledge.

We believe in sex before, during, and
 after marriage.
 We believe in the therapy of sin.
 We believe that adultery is fun.
 We believe that sodomy's OK.
 We believe that taboos are taboo.

We believe that everything's getting
 better
 despite evidence to the contrary.
 The evidence must be investigated
 And you can prove anything with
 evidence.

We believe there's something in
 horoscopes, UFO's and bent spoons;
 Jesus was a good man just like Buddha,
 Mohammed, and ourselves.
 He was a good moral teacher
 although we think His good morals were
 bad.

We believe that all religions are basically
 the same- at least the one that we read
 was.
 They all believe in love and goodness.
 They only differ on matters of creation,
 sin, heaven, hell, God, and salvation.

We believe that after death comes the
 Nothing
 Because when you ask the dead what
 happens—they say nothing.
 If death is not the end, if the dead have
 lied, then it's compulsory heaven for all
 except perhaps Hitler, Stalin, and Genghis
 Khan.

We believe in Masters and Johnson.
 What's selected is average.
 What's average is normal.
 What's normal is good.

We believe in total disarmament.
 We believe there are direct links between
 warfare and bloodshed.
 Americans should beat their guns into
 tractors
 and the Russians would be sure to follow.

We believe that man is essentially good.
 It's only his behavior that lets him down.
 This is the fault of society.
 Society is the fault of conditions.
 Conditions are the fault of society.

We believe that each man must find the
 truth that is right for him.
 Reality will adapt accordingly.
 The universe will readjust.
 History will alter.
 We believe that there is no absolute truth
 except the truth
 that there is no absolute truth.

We believe in the rejection of creeds,
 and the flowering of individual thought.

**He then adds this postscript
 entitled Chance:**

If chance be
 the Father of all flesh,
 Disaster is his rainbow in the sky,
 And when you hear

State of Emergency!
 Sniper Kills Ten!
 Troops on Rampage!
 Youths go Looting!
 Bomb Blast School!

It is but the sound of man
 worshipping his maker

Quoted by Ravi Zacharias in his book
 "Can Man Live Without God" Word
 Publishing 1994 pp 42-44

READ TOGETHER FROM PAGE 79 STARTING WITH THE PARAGRAPH WHICH BEGINS
 "WHY MUST ALL THIS BE SO HARD?"

RESOURCES FOR FURTHER STUDY



1. Why bother with Truth? Arriving at Knowledge in a Skeptical Society by James Beilby and David Clark. Available through Ravi Zacharias International Ministries at www.rzim.org
2. True for You, But Not for Me by Paul Copan
3. When Skeptics Ask by Geisler and Brooks
4. Relativism: Feet Firmly Planted in Mid-Air by Francis Beckwith and Gregory Kouss
5. Why Should Anyone Believe Anything at All? by James Sire