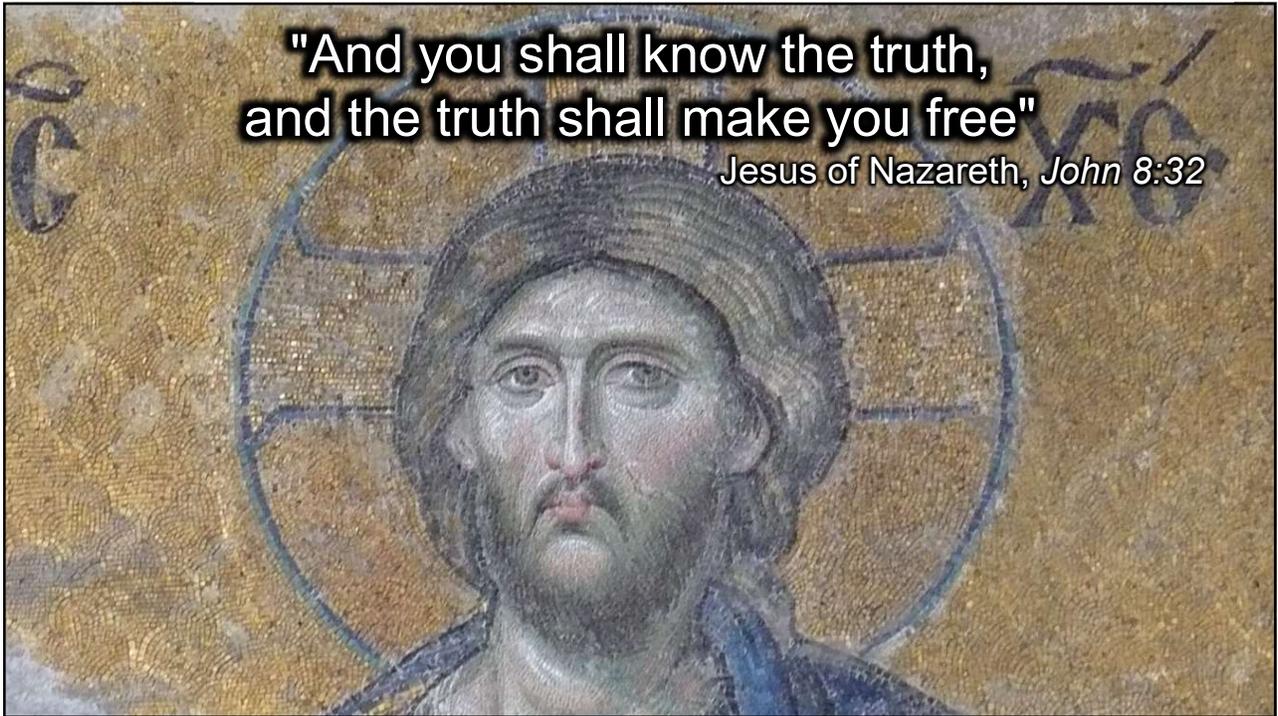


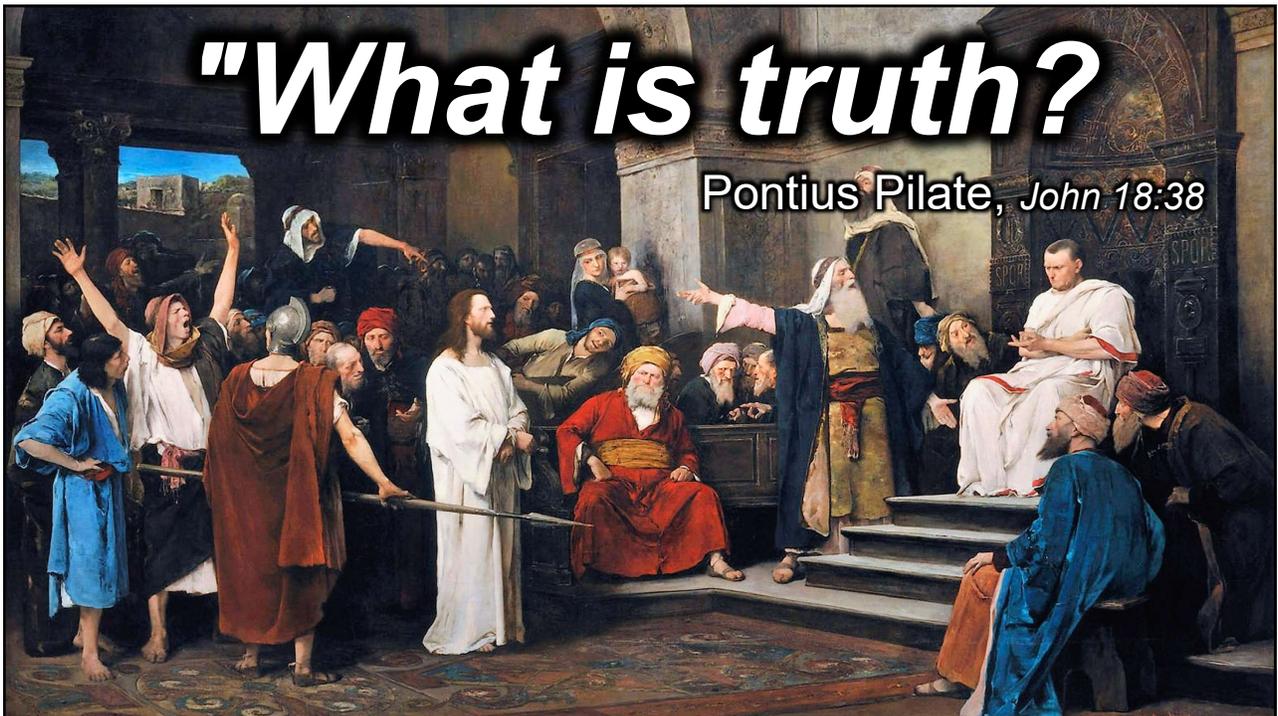
**"And you shall know the truth,  
and the truth shall make you free"**

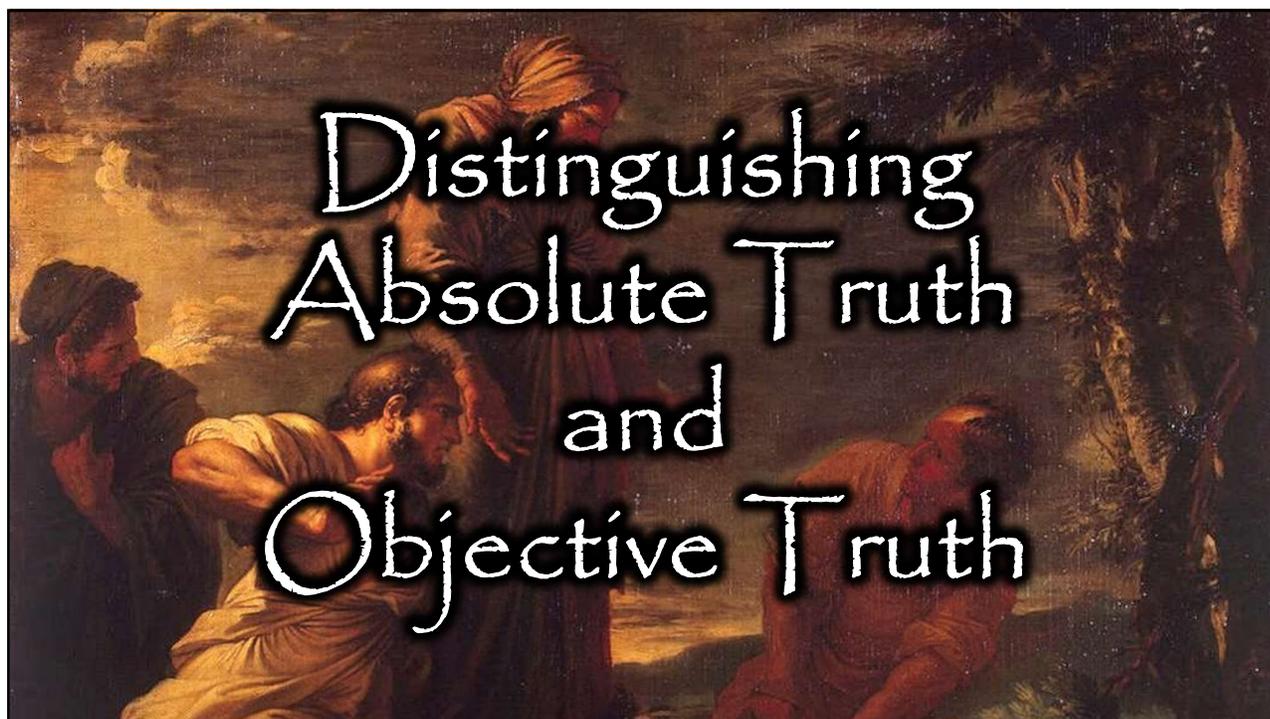
Jesus of Nazareth, *John 8:32*



***"What is truth?"***

Pontius Pilate, *John 18:38*





Philip D. Kenneson

CHRISTIAN APOLOGETICS  
IN THE  
POSTMODERN  
WORLD

EDITED BY  
TIMOTHY R. PHILLIPS  
& DENNIS L. OKHOLM

Copyright

Copyright

The image is a composite of two parts. On the left is a portrait of Philip D. Kenneson, a man with glasses and a striped shirt, smiling. On the right is the cover of the book "Christian Apologetics in the Postmodern World", edited by Timothy R. Phillips and Dennis L. Okholm. The cover features a blue rounded rectangle with the title in white and red text. The names of the editors are listed below the title. There are small "Copyright" notices at the top and bottom of the cover.



Philip D. Kenneson

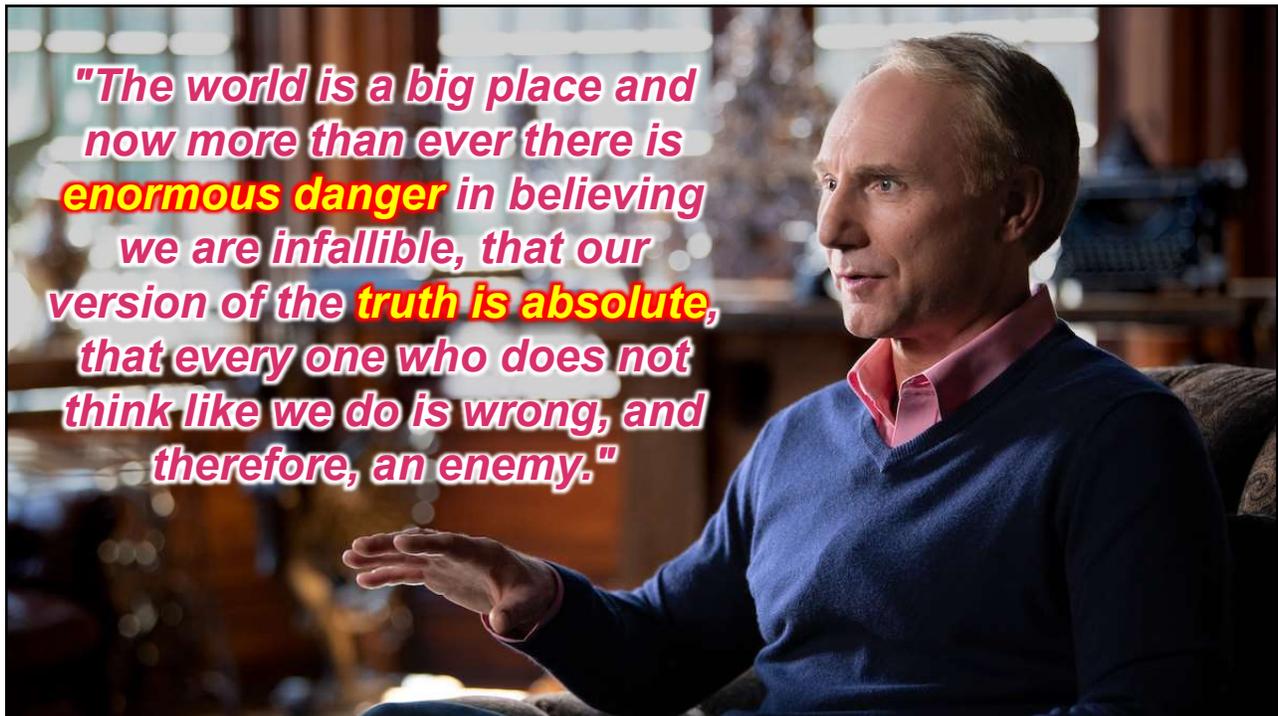
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8  
THERE'S NO  
SUCH THING  
AS OBJECTIVE TRUTH,  
AND IT'S  
A GOOD THING,  
TOO

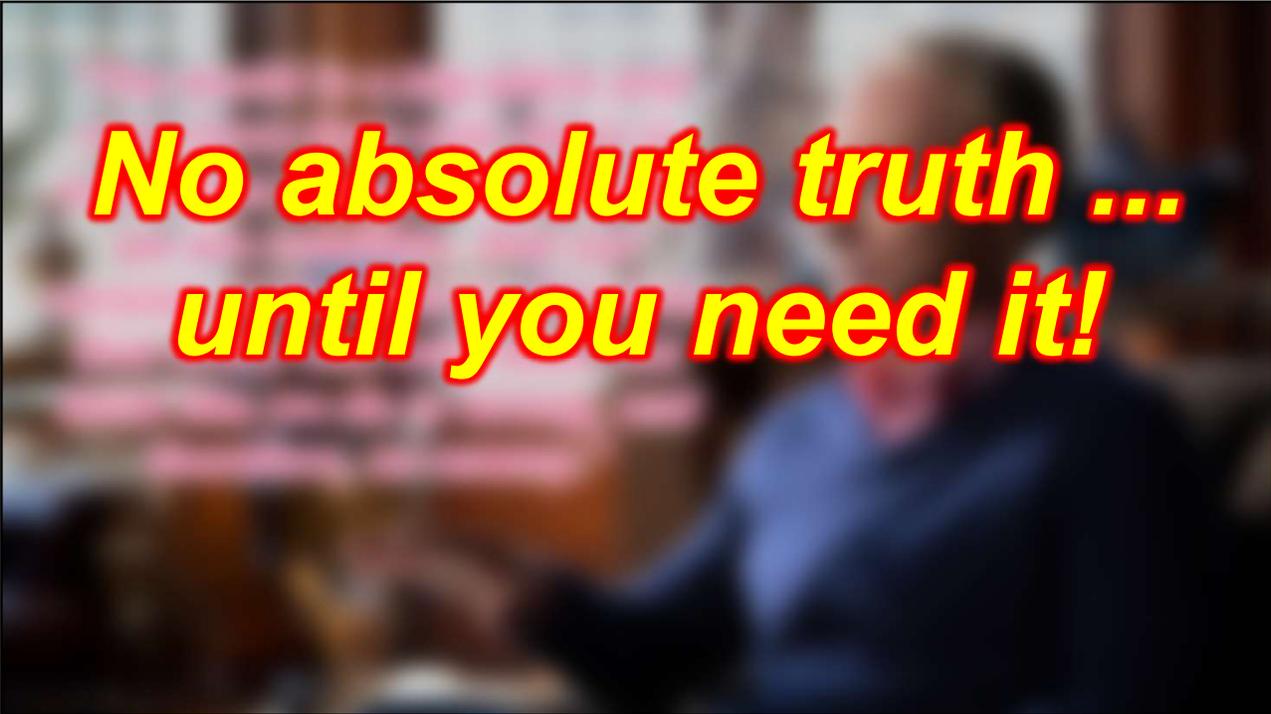
*Philip D. Kenneson*

The way to solve the problem you see in life is to live in a way  
that will make what is problematic disappear.  
*Ludwig Wittgenstein*<sup>1</sup>

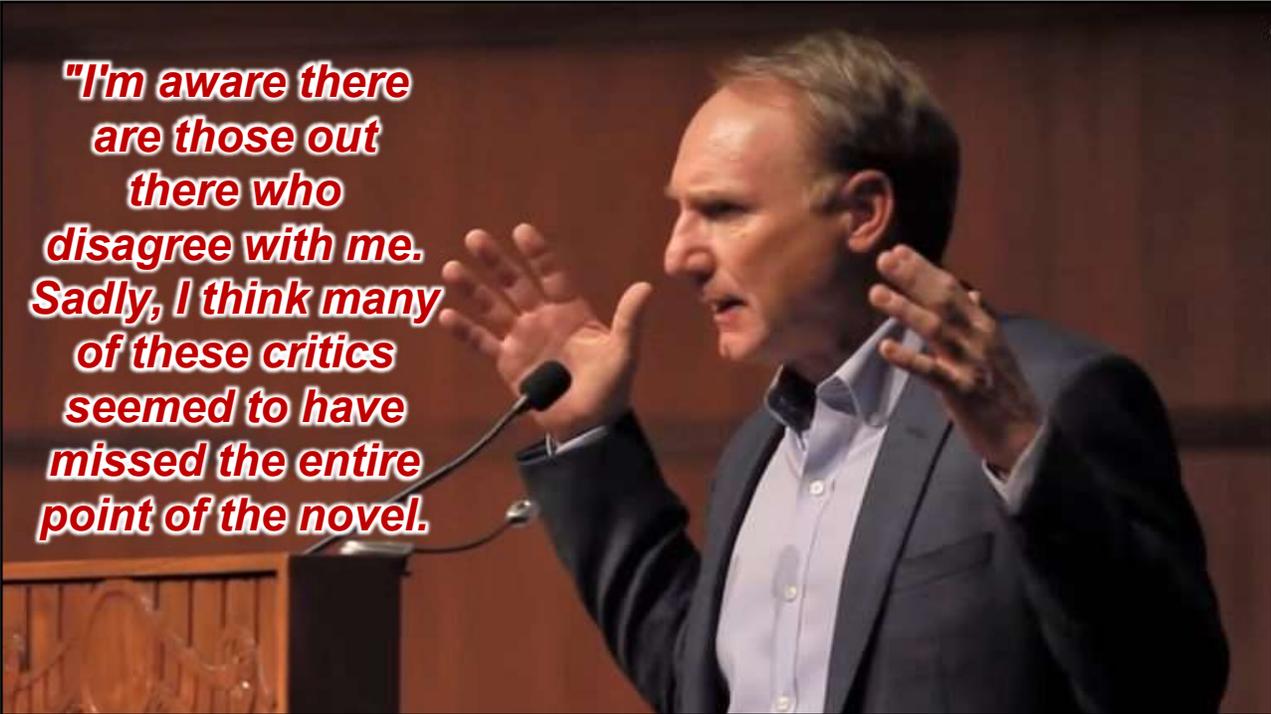
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**"The world is a big place and now more than ever there is enormous danger in believing we are infallible, that our version of the truth is absolute, that every one who does not think like we do is wrong, and therefore, an enemy."**

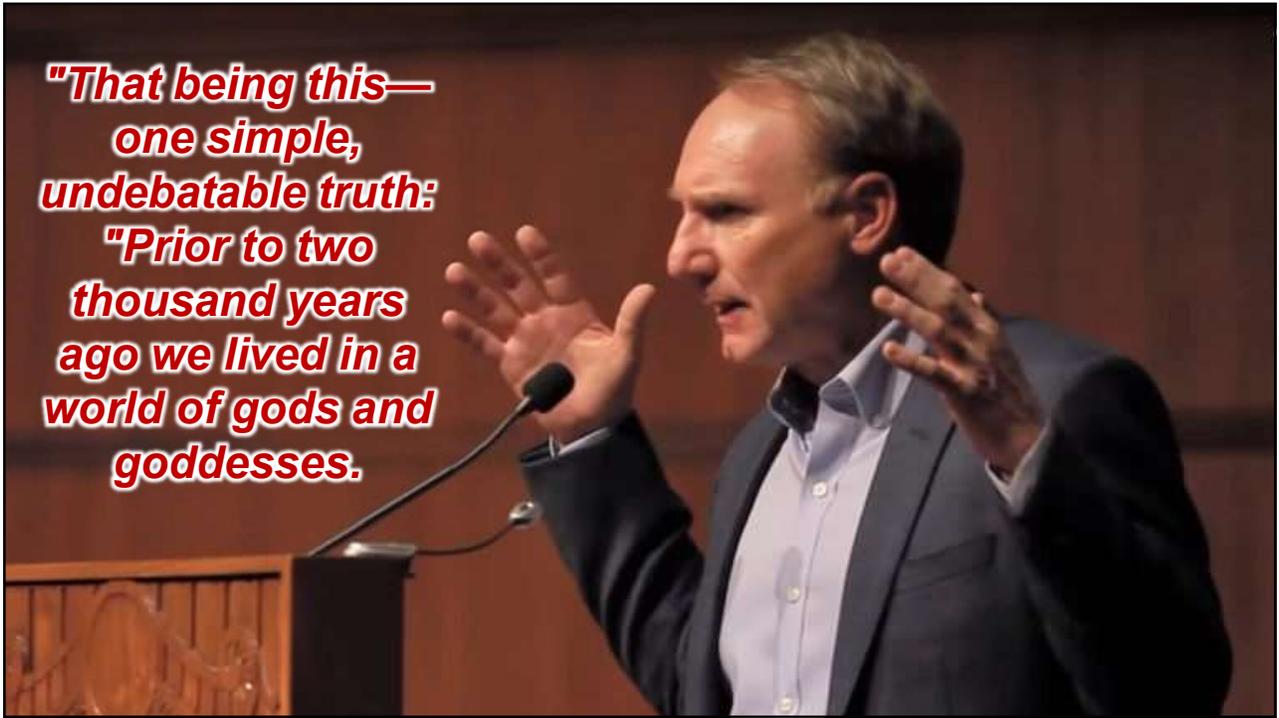


***No absolute truth ...  
until you need it!***

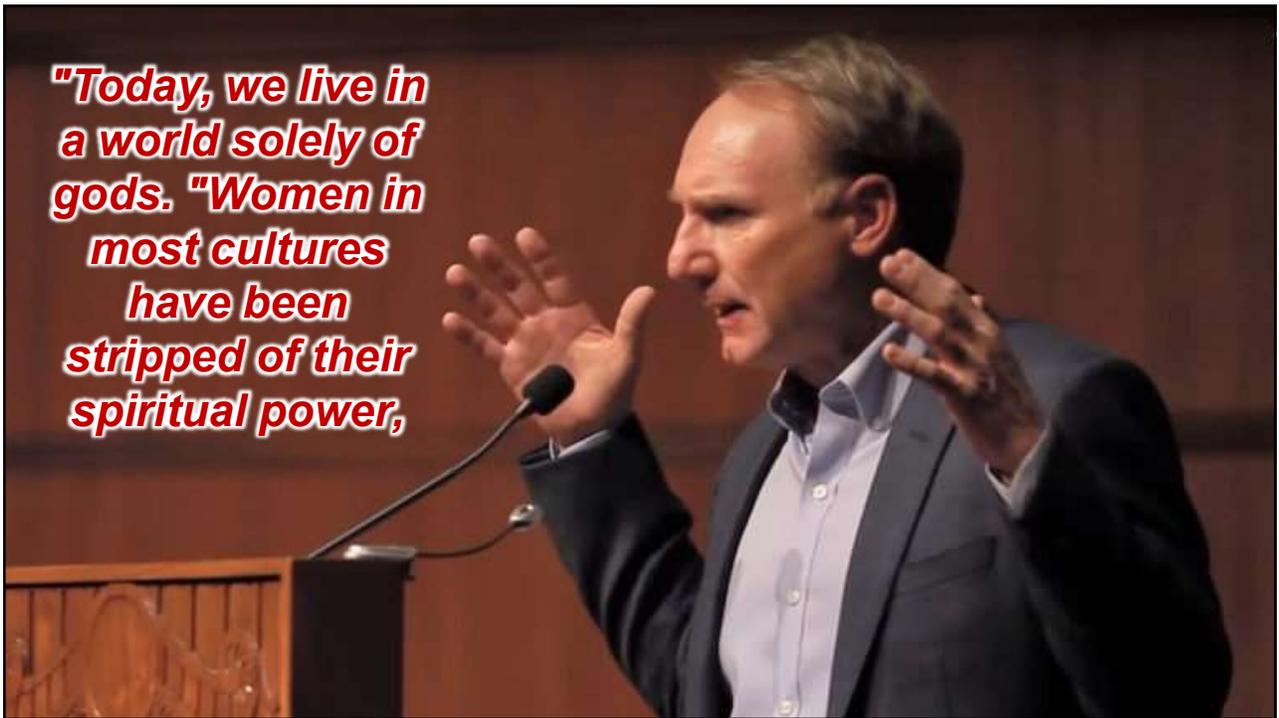


***"I'm aware there  
are those out  
there who  
disagree with me.  
Sadly, I think many  
of these critics  
seemed to have  
missed the entire  
point of the novel.***

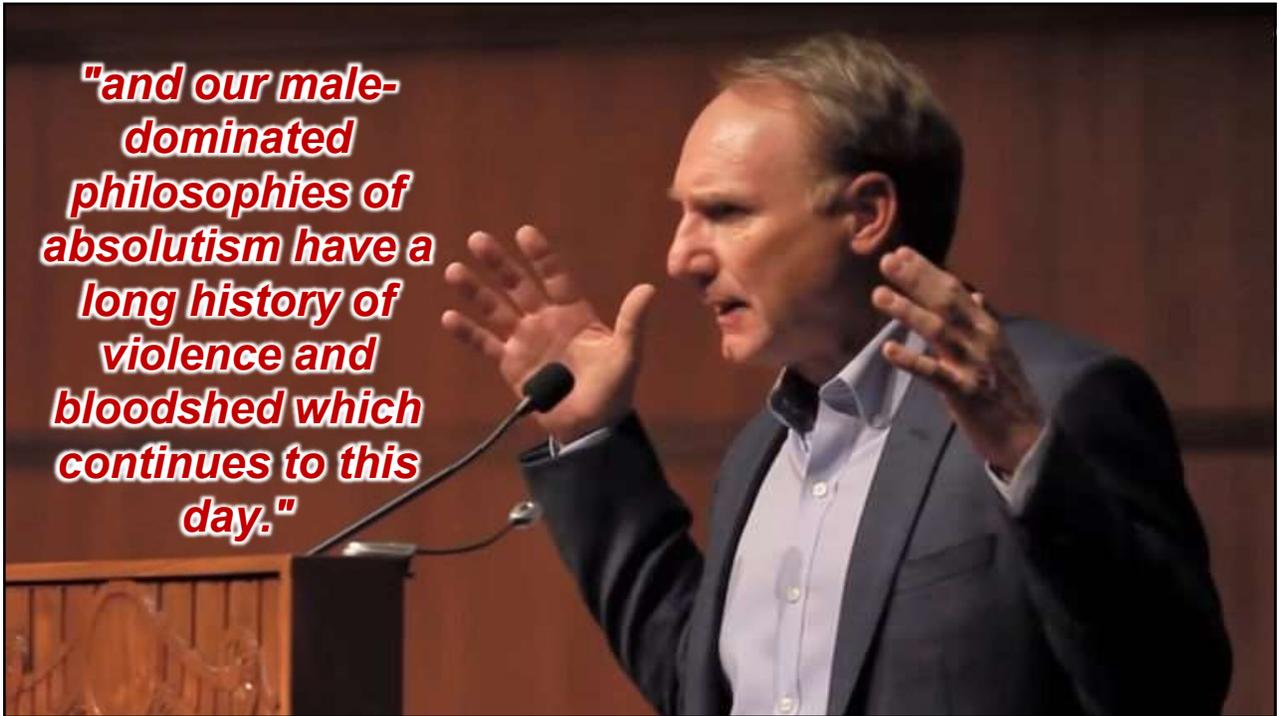
***"That being this—  
one simple,  
undebatable truth:  
"Prior to two  
thousand years  
ago we lived in a  
world of gods and  
goddesses.***



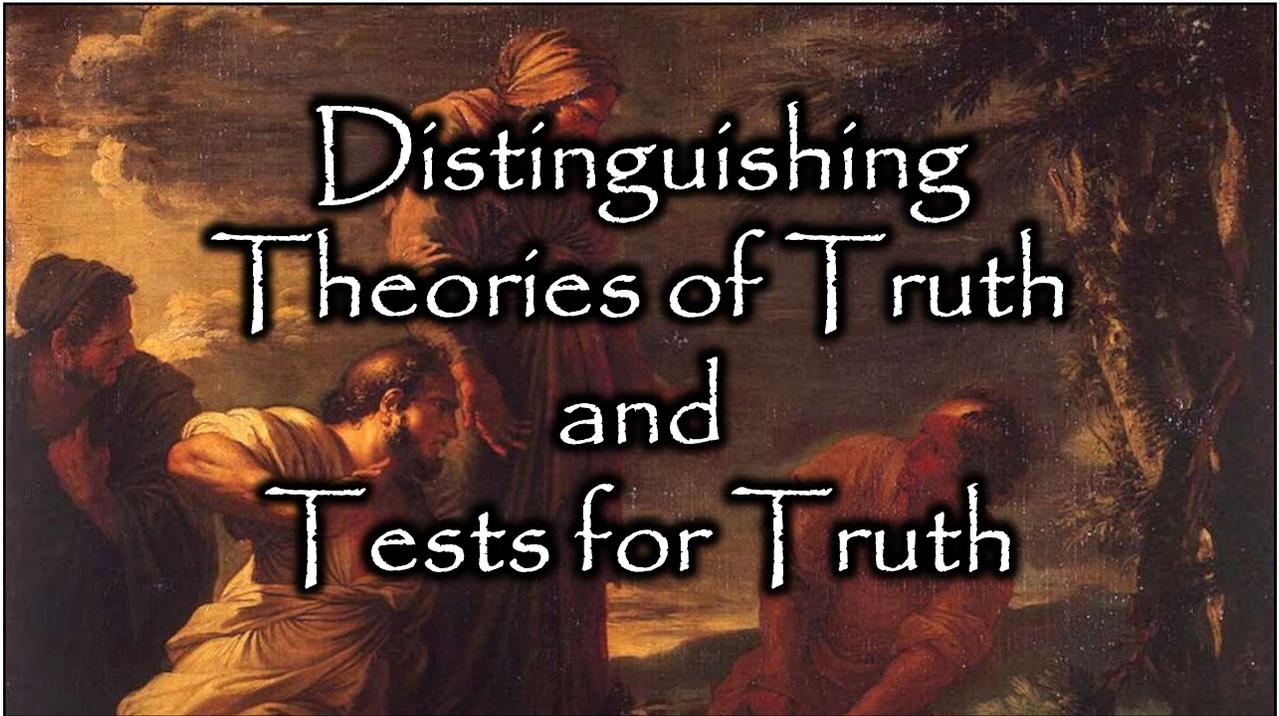
***"Today, we live in  
a world solely of  
gods. "Women in  
most cultures  
have been  
stripped of their  
spiritual power,***

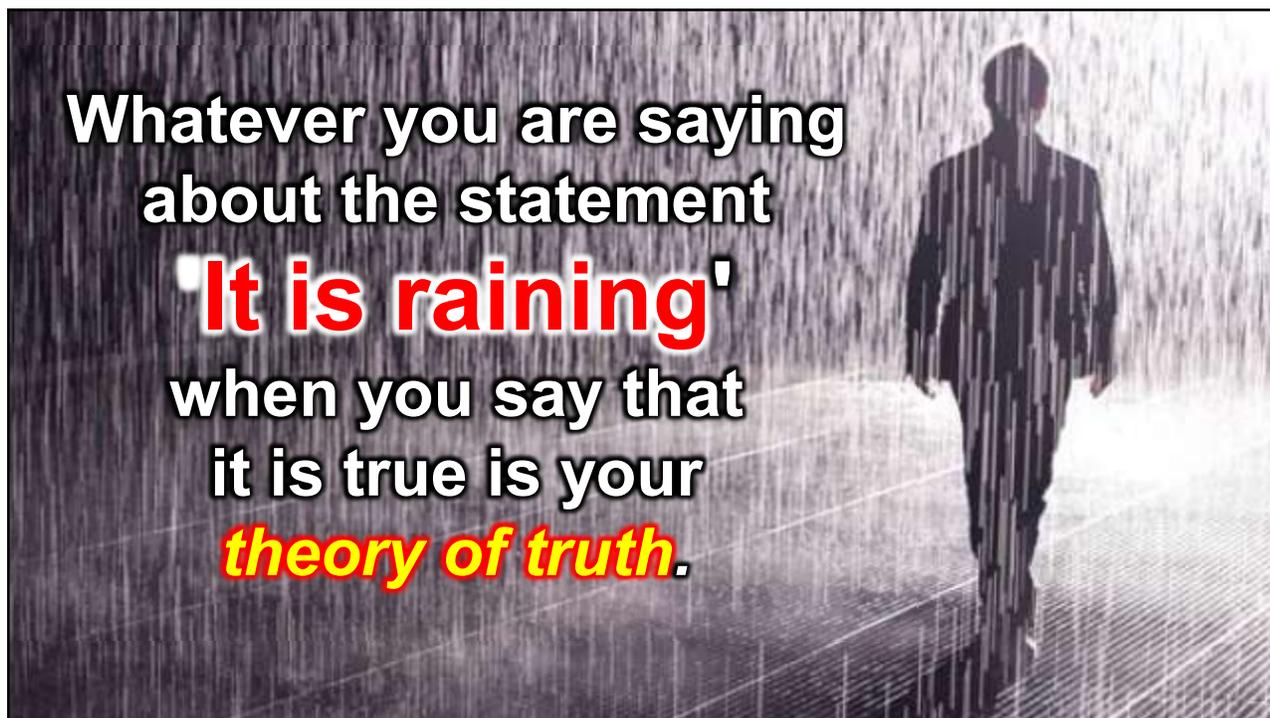
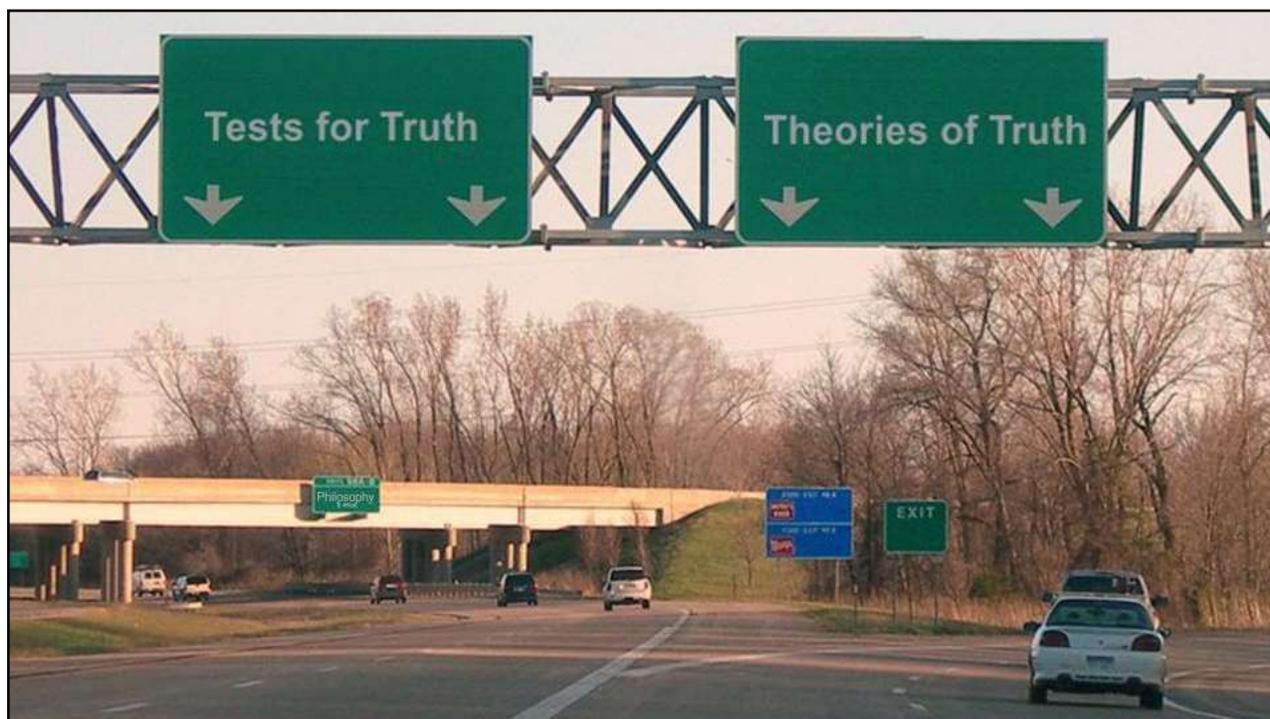


***"and our male-dominated philosophies of absolutism have a long history of violence and bloodshed which continues to this day."***



Distinguishing  
Theories of Truth  
and  
Tests for Truth





How you know whether it  
is raining is your  
**test for truth.**

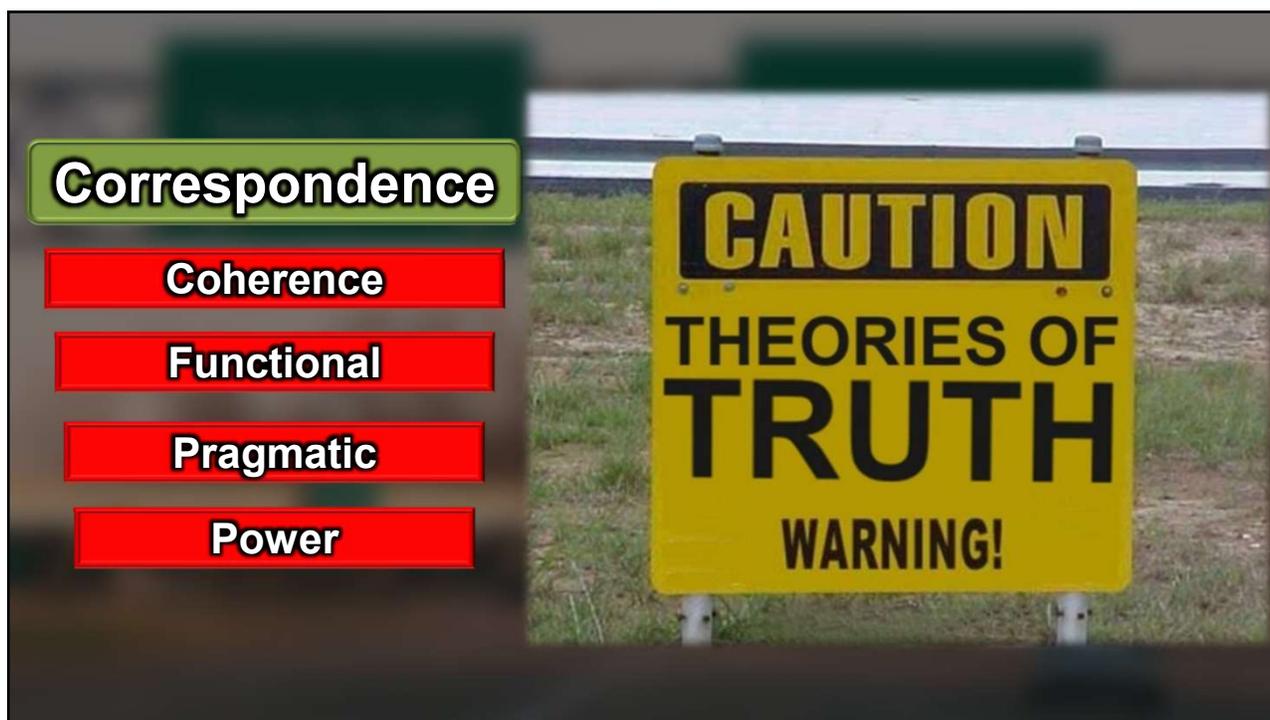
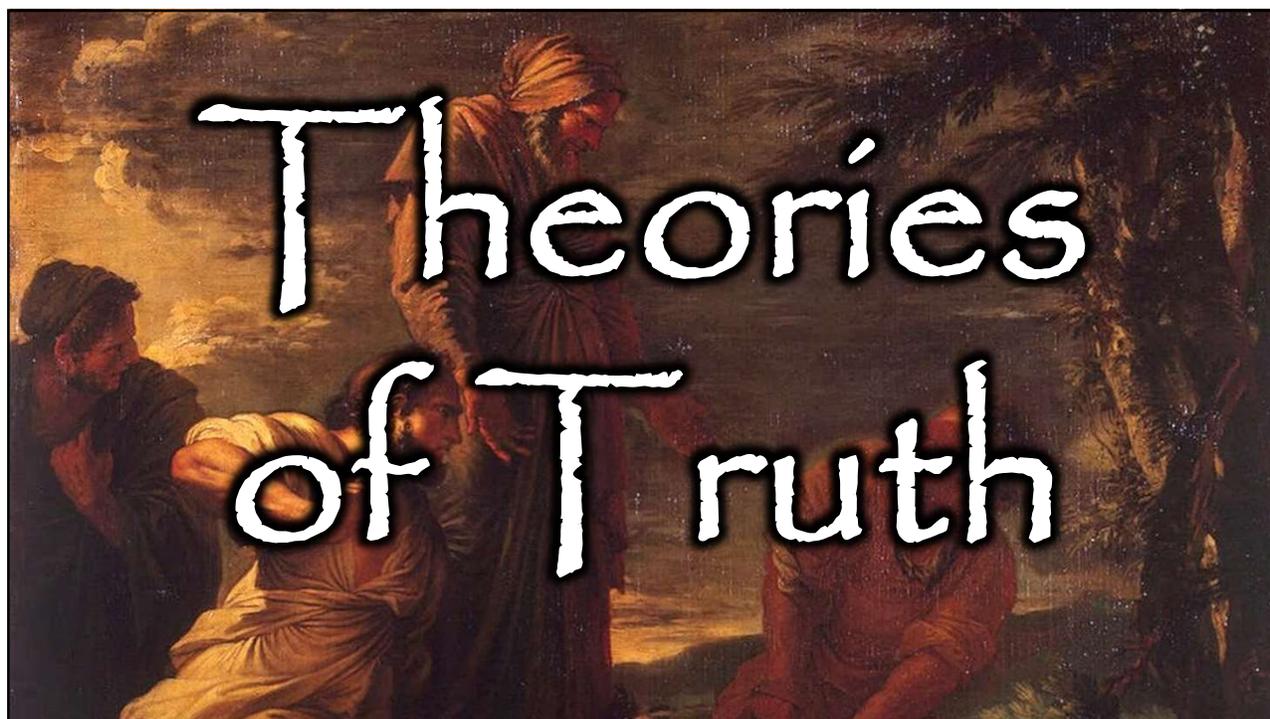


### ∞ Theory of Truth ∞

how one **defines** the  
terms 'true' and 'truth'  
when saying that a  
statement is true

### ∞ Test for Truth ∞

how one **discovers**  
whether a statement is  
true, regardless of  
one's theory of truth



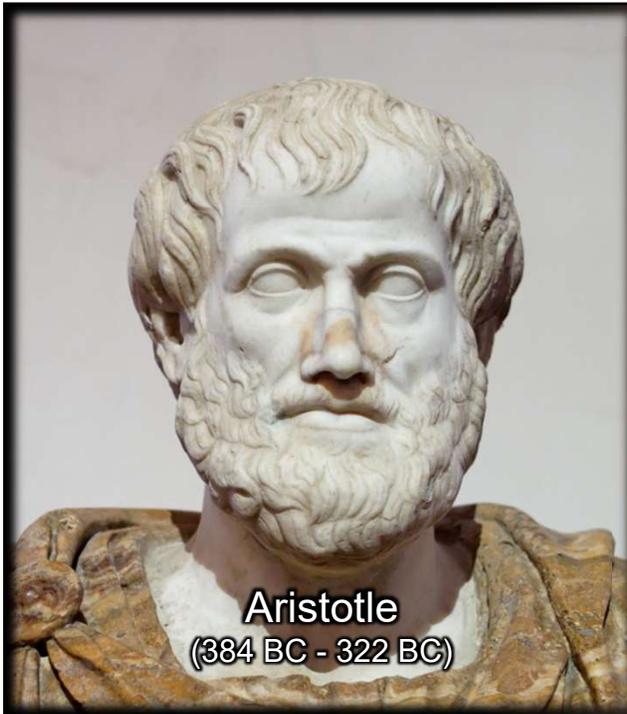
## Correspondence

A yellow rectangular sign with black text. The word "CAUTION" is in a bold, sans-serif font at the top. Below it, "THEORIES OF TRUTH" is written in a larger, bold, sans-serif font. At the bottom, "WARNING!" is written in a smaller, bold, sans-serif font. The sign is mounted on two metal posts and is set against a background of a grassy field and a white fence.

## Correspondence

**Truth is correspondence to reality.**

- This says that a statement is true in as much as it corresponds to reality.
- Thus, the statement 'It is raining.'
  - ✓ would be a true statement if it is in fact raining in reality.
  - ✓ would be a false statement if it is in fact not raining in reality.



**Aristotle**  
(384 BC - 322 BC)

**"To say of what is,  
that it is not, or of  
what is not, that it is,  
is false, while to say  
of what is, that it is  
and of what is not,  
that it is not, is true."**

Metaphysics, IV, 7, 1011<sup>b</sup>26-29 Translation by W. D. Ross in Richard McKeon, *The Basic Works of Aristotle* (New York: Random House, 1941).

**SOCRATES: But how about truth, then? You would acknowledge that there is in words a true and a false?**

**HERMOGENES: Certainly.**

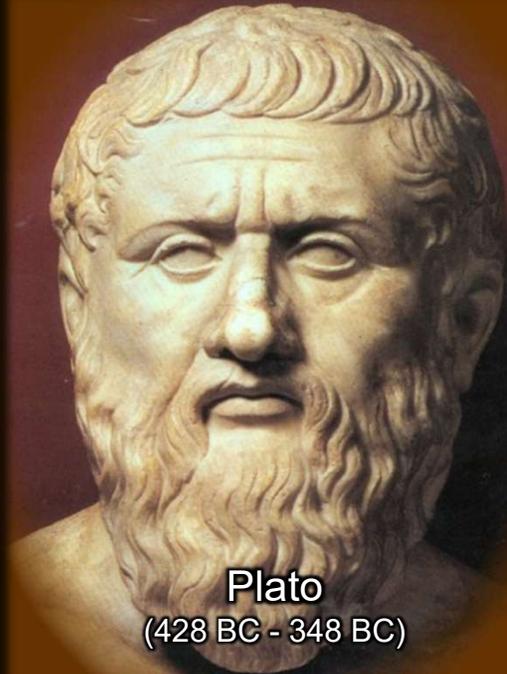
**SOCRATES: And there are true and false propositions?**

**HERMOGENES: To be sure.**

**SOCRATES: And a true proposition says that which is, and a false proposition says that which is not?**

**HERMOGENES: To be sure.**

[Cratylus, 385b, trans. Benjamin Jowett in Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns, eds. *Plato: The Collected Dialogues* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961, 423]



**Plato**  
(428 BC - 348 BC)

**STRANGER:** Then what sort of character can we assign to each of these [statements]?

**THEAETETUS:** One is false, the other true.

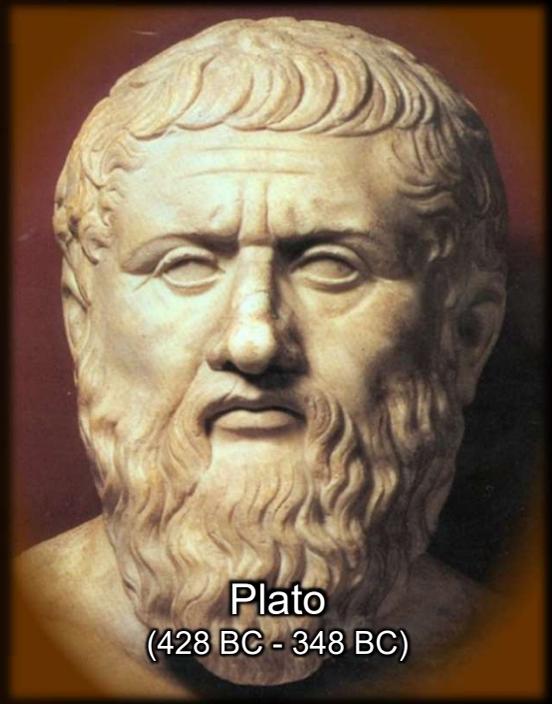
**STRANGER:** And the true one states about you the things that are as they are.

**THEAETETUS:** Certainly.

**STRANGER:** Whereas the false statement states about you things different from the things that are.

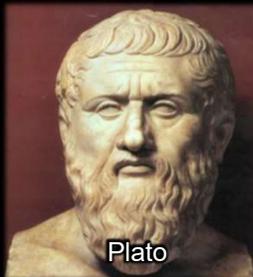
**THEAETETUS:** Yes.

[Sophist, 263b, trans. F. M. Cornford in Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns, eds. Plato: The Collected Dialogues Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961, 1010]



**Plato**  
(428 BC - 348 BC)

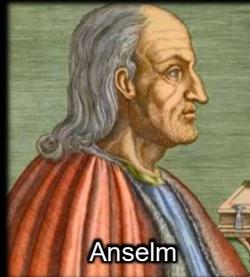
## *Other Philosophers Who Hold to the Correspondence Theory of Truth*



Plato



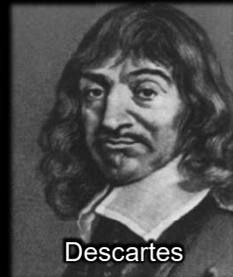
Augustine



Anselm



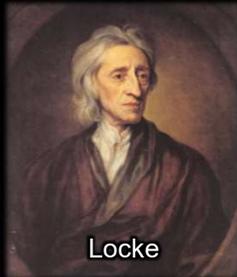
Aquinas



Descartes



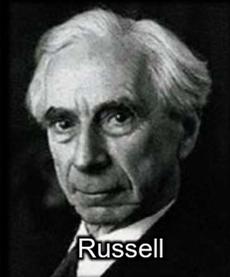
Hume



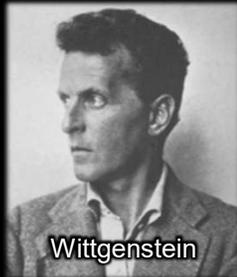
Locke



Kant



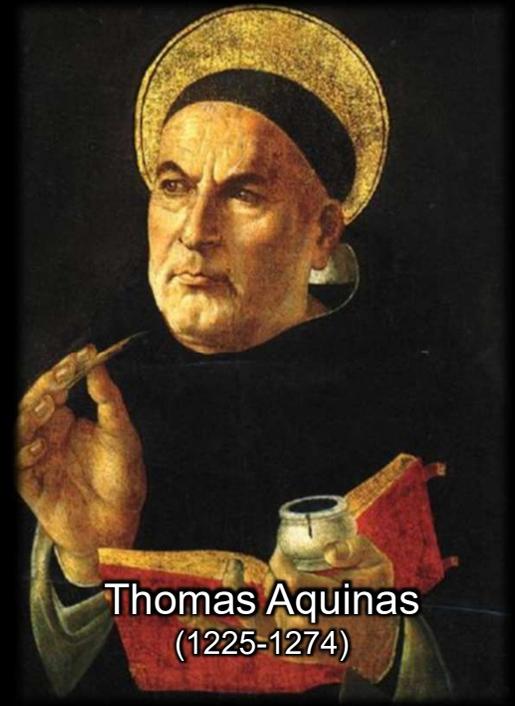
Russell



Wittgenstein

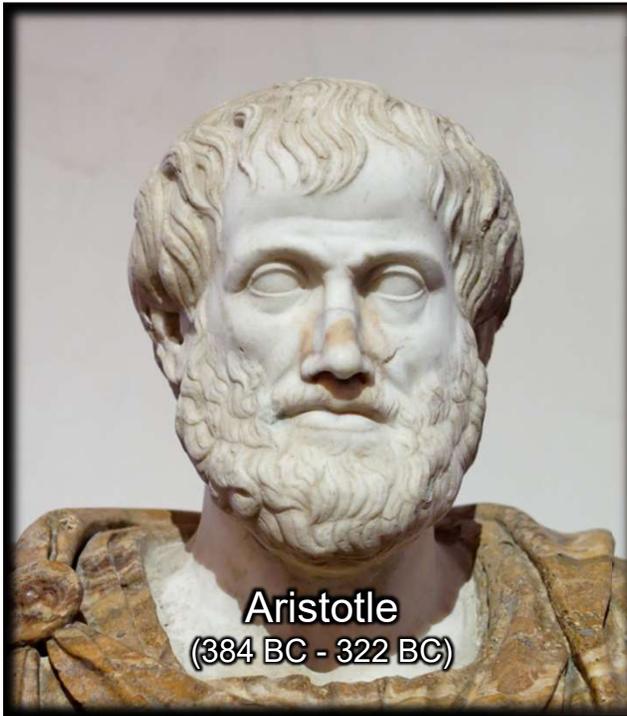
***"Truth is defined by the conformity of intellect and thing; and hence to know this conformity is to know truth."***

*Summa Theologiae* I, Q. 16, art. 2.



Thomas Aquinas  
(1225-1274)

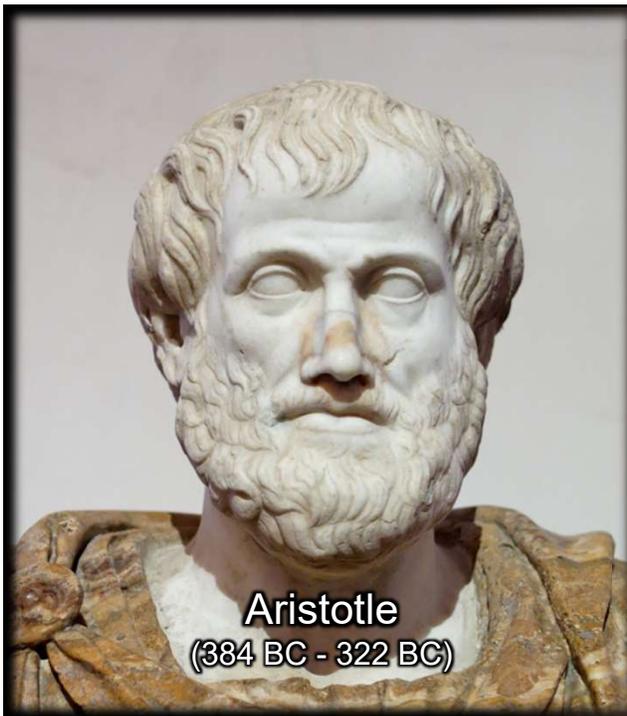
***What does it mean to correspond to reality?***



Aristotle  
(384 BC - 322 BC)

**"To say of **what is**,  
that it is not, or of  
what is not, that it is,  
is false, while to say  
of **what is**, that it is  
and of what is not,  
that it is not, is true."**

Metaphysics, IV, 7, 1011<sup>b</sup>26-29 Translation by W. D. Ross in Richard  
McKeon, *The Basic Works of Aristotle* (New York: Random House,  
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Metaphysics, IV, 7, 1011<sup>b</sup>26-29 Translation by W. D. Ross in Richard  
McKeon, *The Basic Works of Aristotle* (New York: Random House,  
1941).

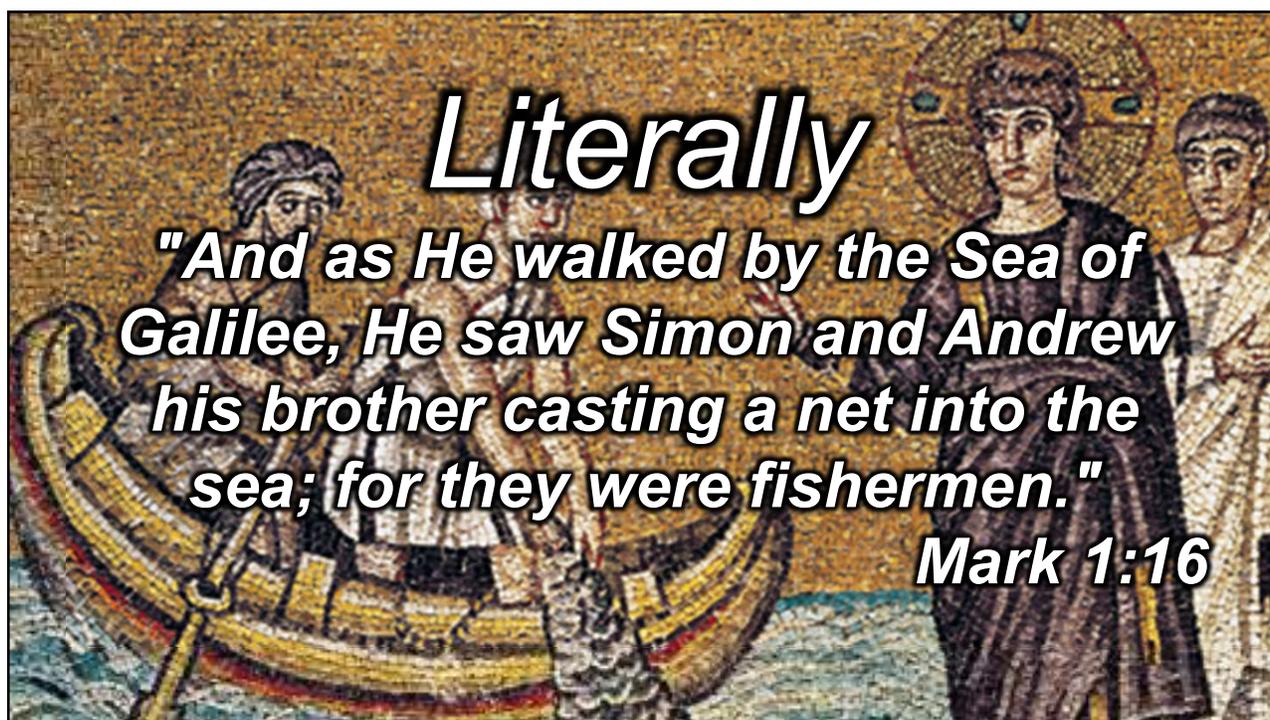
***Truth is when a proposition corresponds to reality.  
But there are a number of ways  
that a proposition can  
correspond to reality.***

## **Ways a Proposition Can Correspond to Reality**





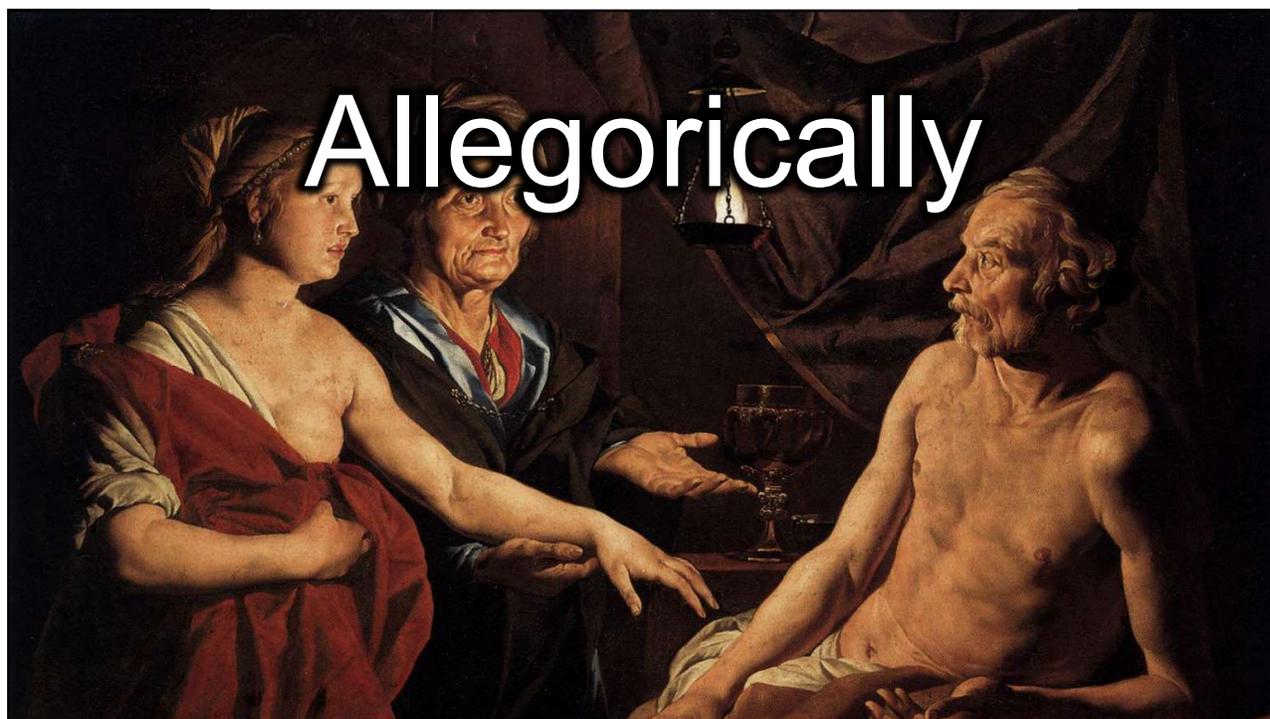
***Literally***



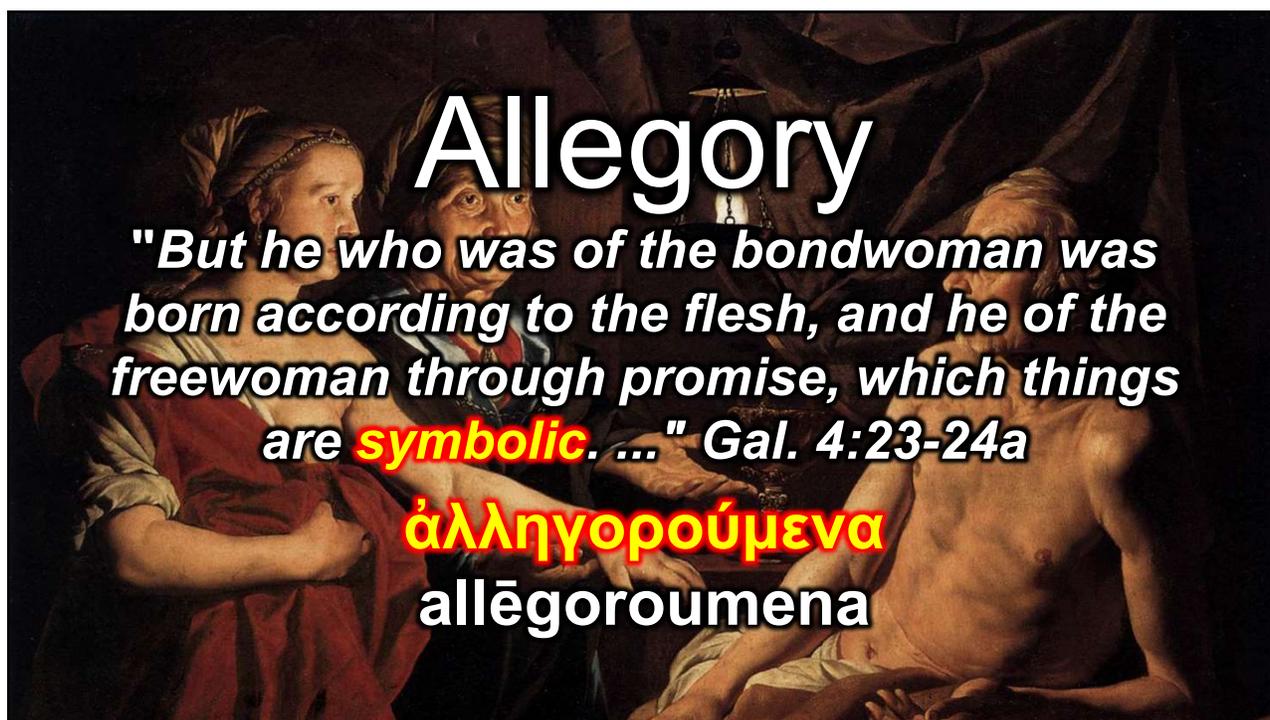
***Literally***

***"And as He walked by the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen."***

***Mark 1:16***



Allegorically



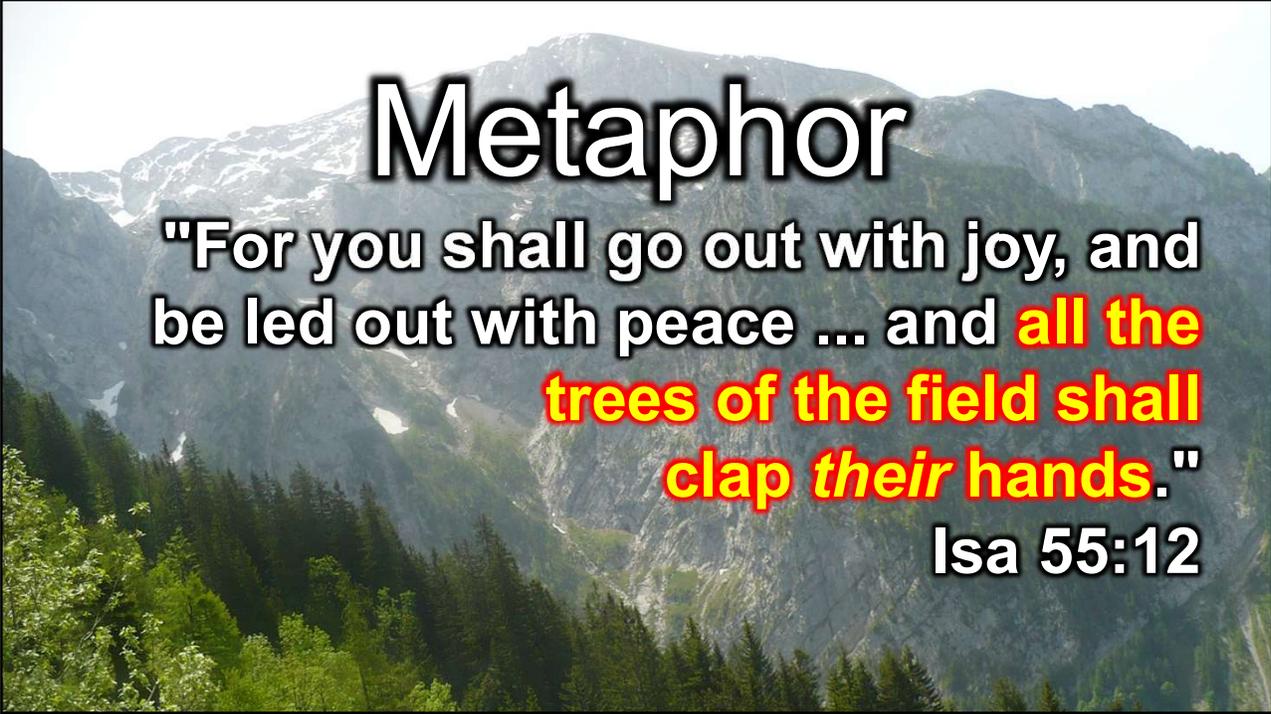
Allegory

*"But he who was of the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and he of the freewoman through promise, which things are **symbolic**. ..."* Gal. 4:23-24a

**ἀλληγορούμενα**  
allēgoroumena



# Metaphorically



# Metaphor

"For you shall go out with joy, and be led out with peace ... and **all the trees of the field shall clap *their* hands.**"

Isa 55:12



**Similarly**

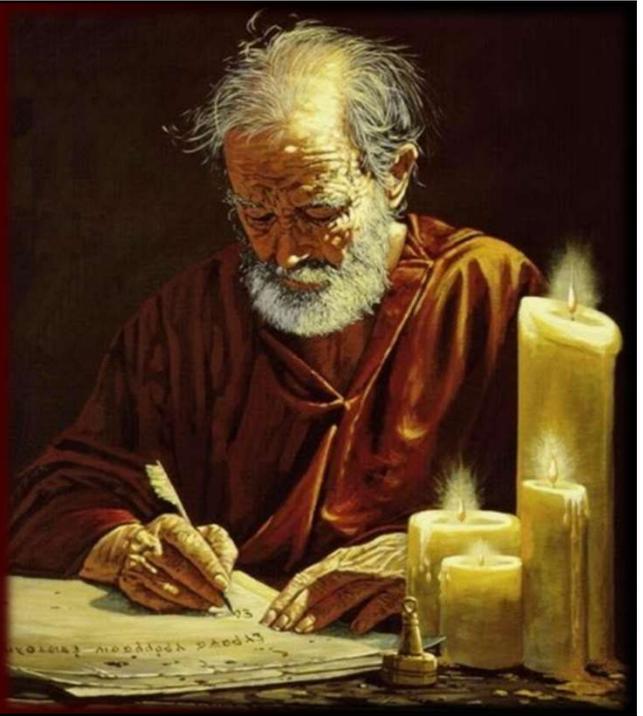


**Simile**

***"So his heart and the heart of  
his people were moved as  
the trees of the woods are  
moved with the wind."***

**Isa 7:2**

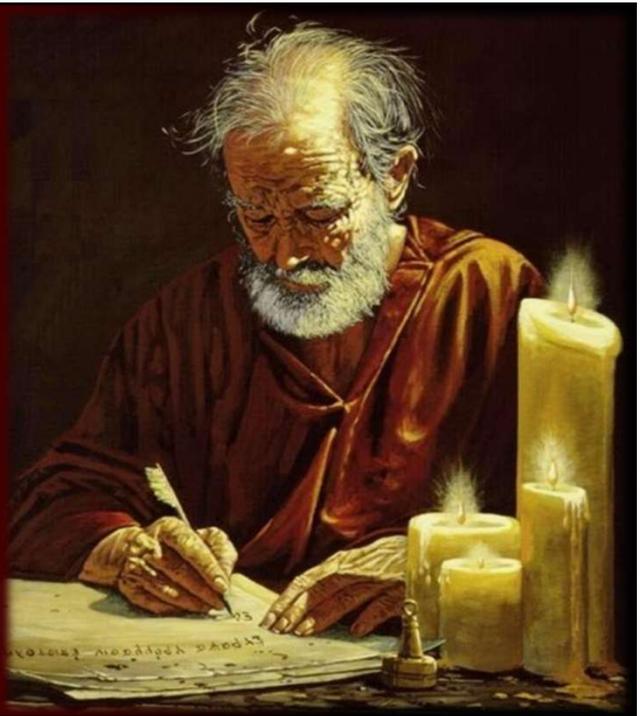
**Analogically**



**Analogy**

**"For we walk by  
faith, not by  
sight."**

**2 Cor. 5:7**



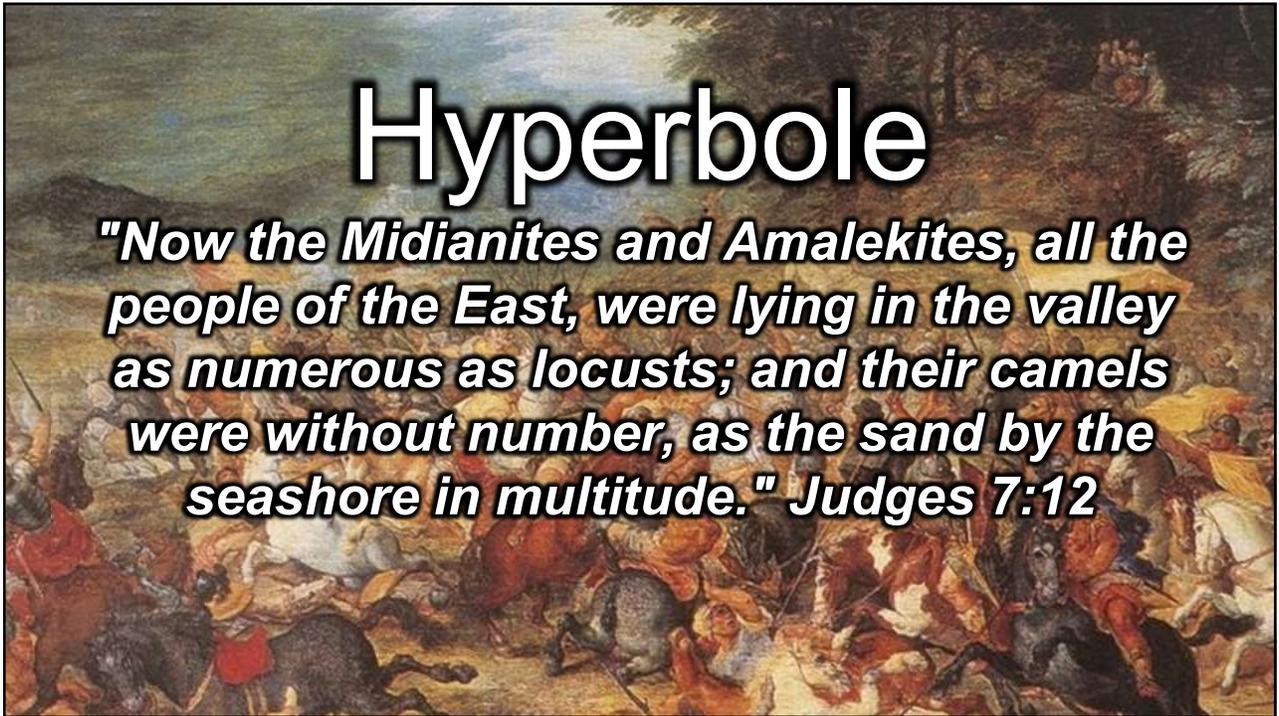


# Hyperbolically



# Hyperbole

***"Now the Midianites and Amalekites, all the people of the East, were lying in the valley as numerous as locusts; and their camels were without number, as the sand by the seashore in multitude." Judges 7:12***



# Phenomenologically

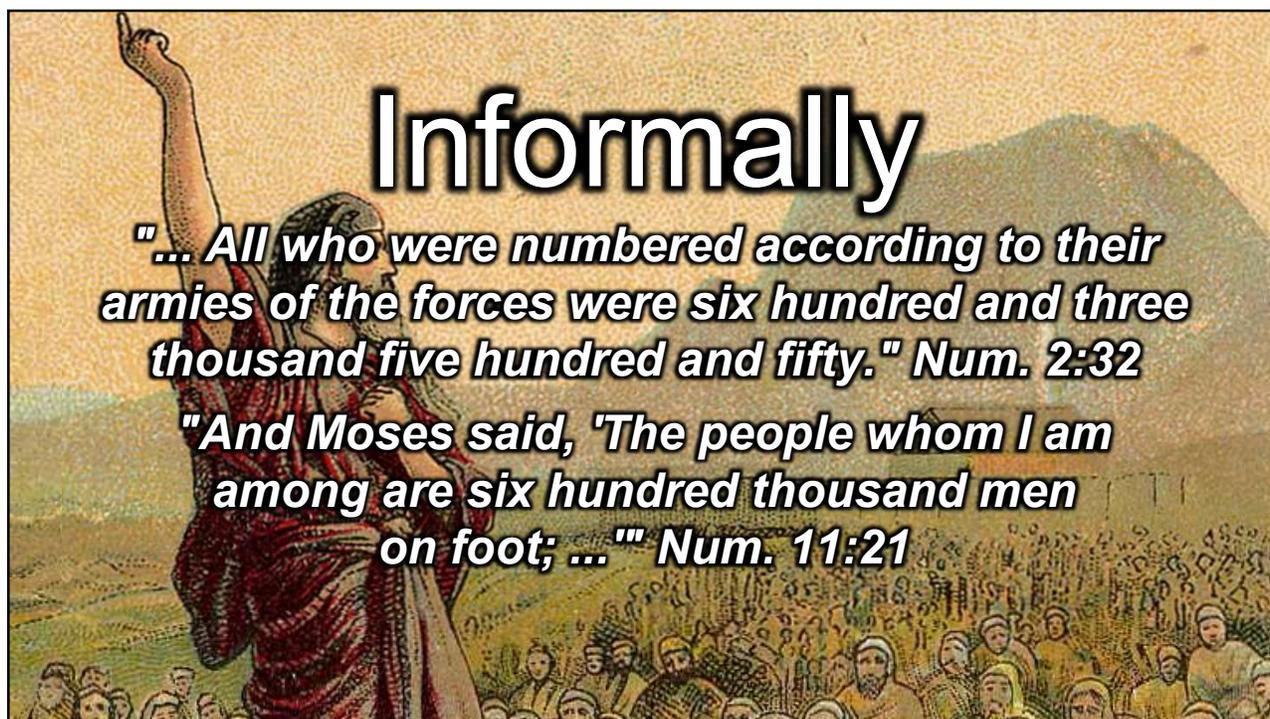


*" ... for He makes His sun  
rise on the evil and on the  
good, ..."Matt. 5:45*

# Phenomenologically



*"The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon  
into blood, Before the coming of the great and  
awesome day of the LORD." Joel 2:31*



# Informally

***"... All who were numbered according to their armies of the forces were six hundred and three thousand five hundred and fifty." Num. 2:32***

***"And Moses said, 'The people whom I am among are six hundred thousand men on foot; ...'" Num. 11:21***



# Synecdochically





# Metonymy

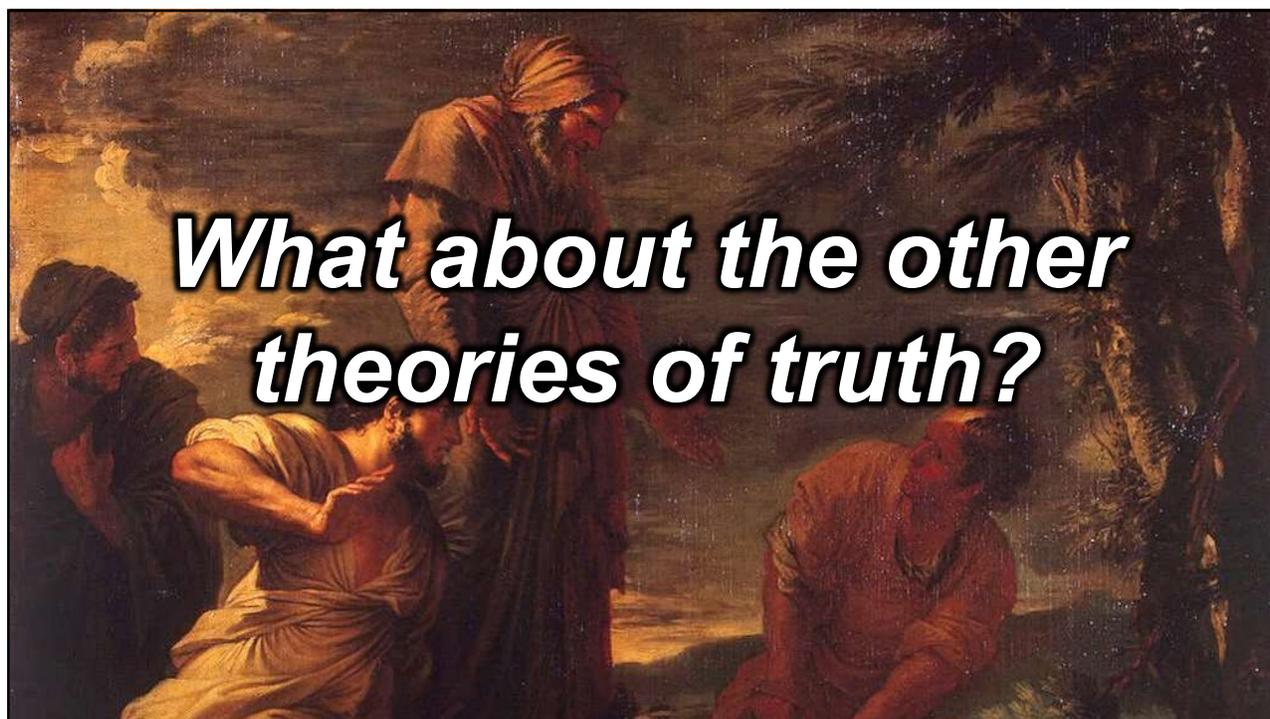
*"For it happened, when David was in Edom, and Joab the commander of the army had gone up to bury the slain, after **he had killed every male in Edom**" 1 Kings 11:15*



# Metonymy

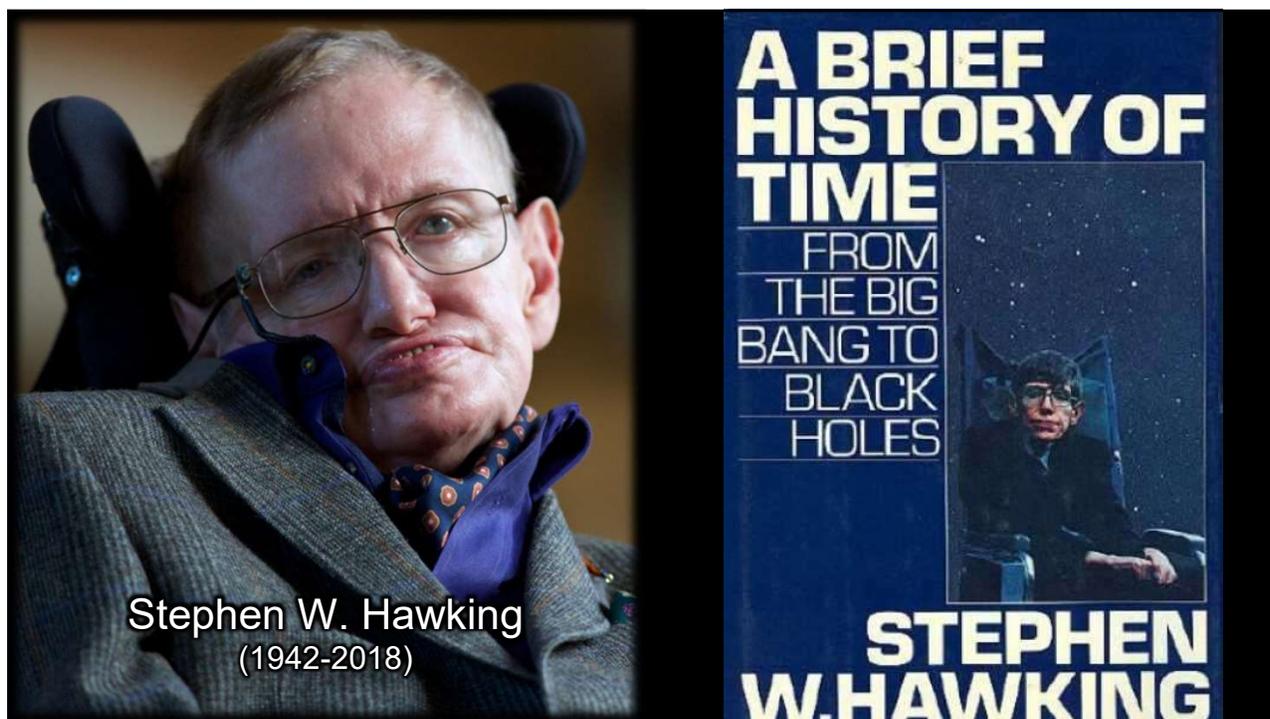
*"The centurion answered and said, 'Lord, **I am not worthy** that You should come under my roof. ...'"  
Matt. 8:8*

*"... the centurion sent friends to Him, saying to Him, 'Lord, do not trouble Yourself, for **I am not worthy** that You should enter under my roof.'"  
Luke 7:6*



**Coherence**

➤ **Definition:** A statement is true when it coheres with or is consistent with a body of other statements.



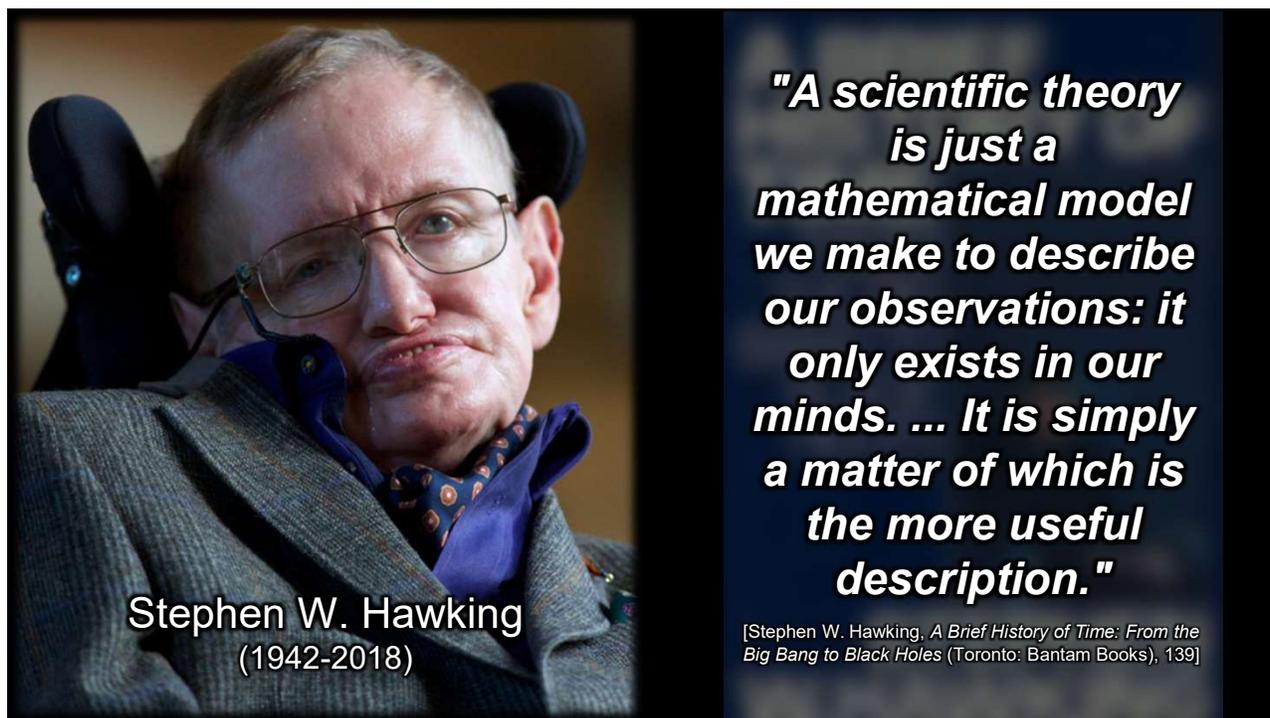
Stephen W. Hawking  
(1942-2018)

# A BRIEF HISTORY OF TIME

FROM THE BIG BANG TO BLACK HOLES



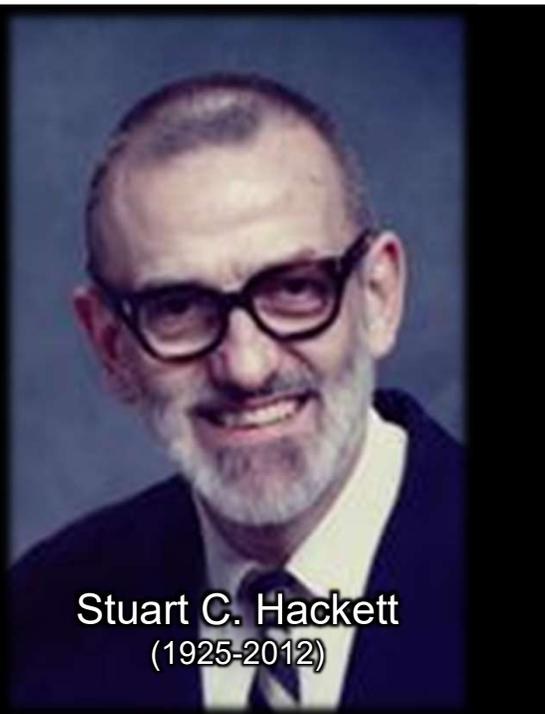
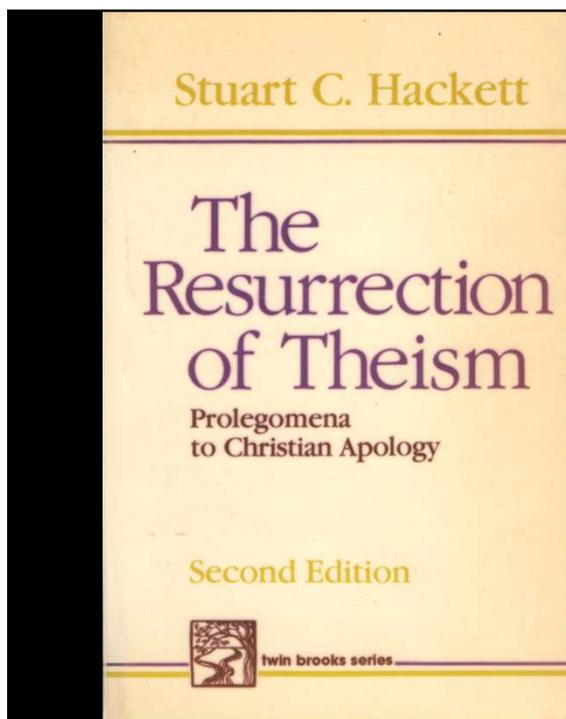
STEPHEN W. HAWKING



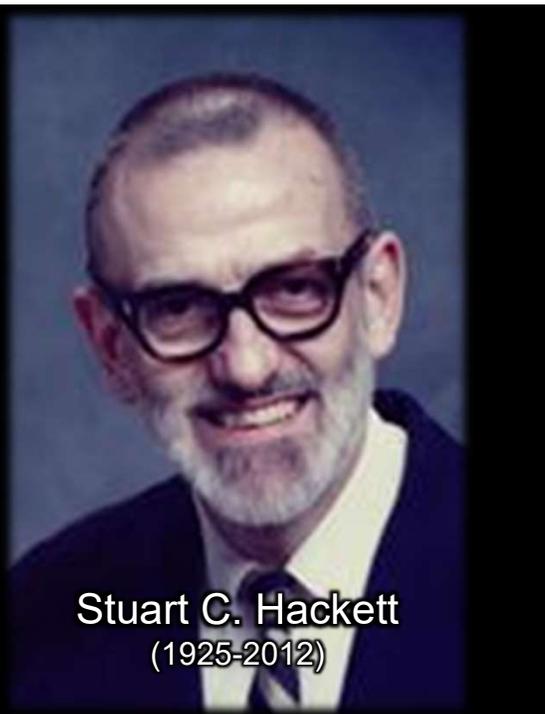
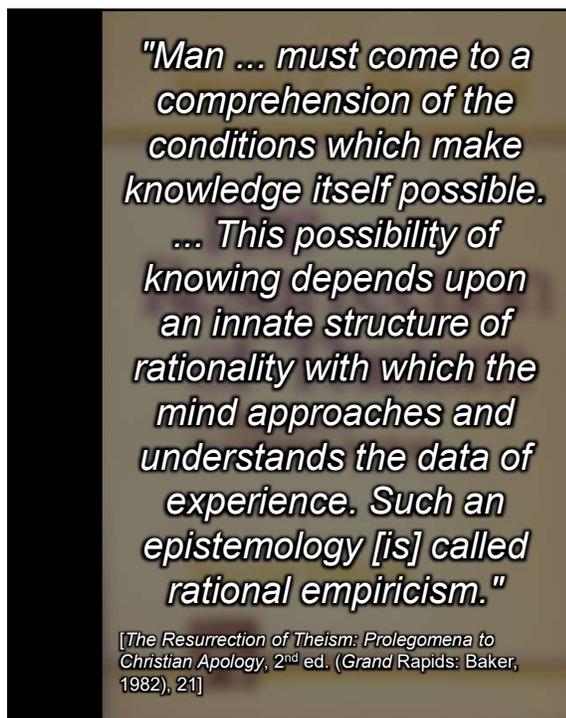
Stephen W. Hawking  
(1942-2018)

***"A scientific theory is just a mathematical model we make to describe our observations: it only exists in our minds. ... It is simply a matter of which is the more useful description."***

[Stephen W. Hawking, *A Brief History of Time: From the Big Bang to Black Holes* (Toronto: Bantam Books), 139]

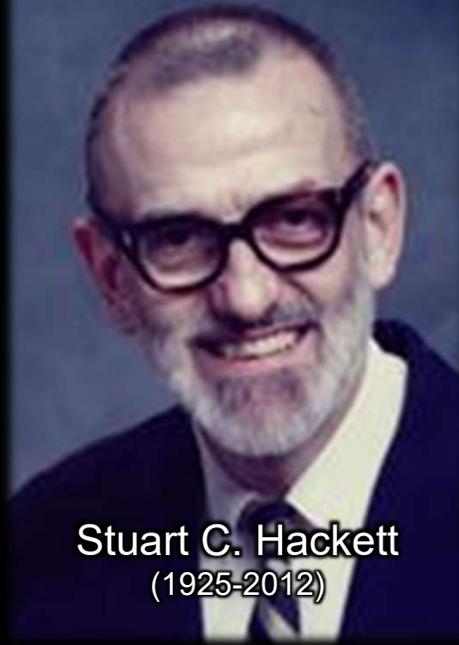


Stuart C. Hackett  
(1925-2012)



Stuart C. Hackett  
(1925-2012)

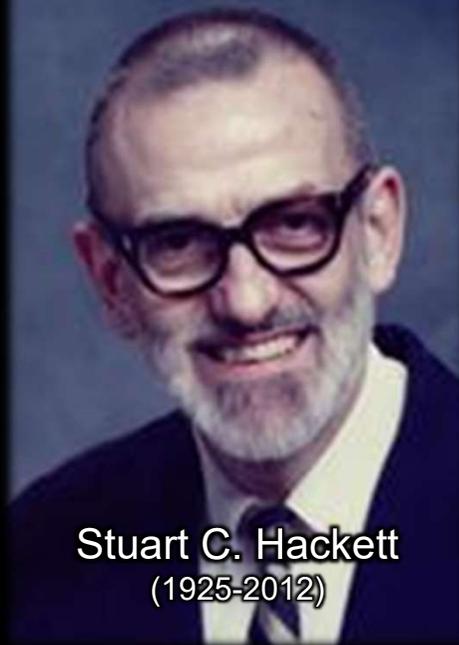
*"Either we must be skeptics about the knowledge of things as they exist independently, or we must maintain that true knowledge of such entities is possible by the systematic correlation of our various experiences into a self-consistent whole."*



Stuart C. Hackett  
(1925-2012)

*"Since ... skepticism is self-contradictory, the second alternative will necessarily be maintained. But the theory that the test of truth consists in such a systematic consistency of ideas is a logically coherent whole is precisely the coherence theory of truth."*

[The Resurrection of Theism: Prolegomena to Christian Apology, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1982), 38]

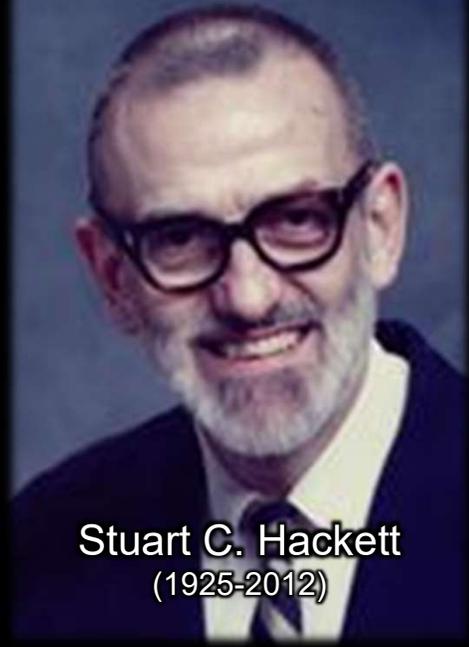


Stuart C. Hackett  
(1925-2012)

# The Reconstruction of the Christian Revelation Claim

A Philosophical and Critical Apologetic

Stuart C. Hackett



Stuart C. Hackett  
(1925-2012)

## Coherence

- **Definition:** A statement is true when it coheres with or is consistent with a body of other statements.
- Truth cannot merely be coherence because by this theory, even a fairy tale could be "true."

## Coherence

- **Definition:** A statement is true when it coheres with or is consistent with a body of other statements.
- Truth cannot merely be coherence because by this theory, even a fairy tale could be "true."
- Every theory of truth, including coherence, requires the correspondence theory of truth to define itself.

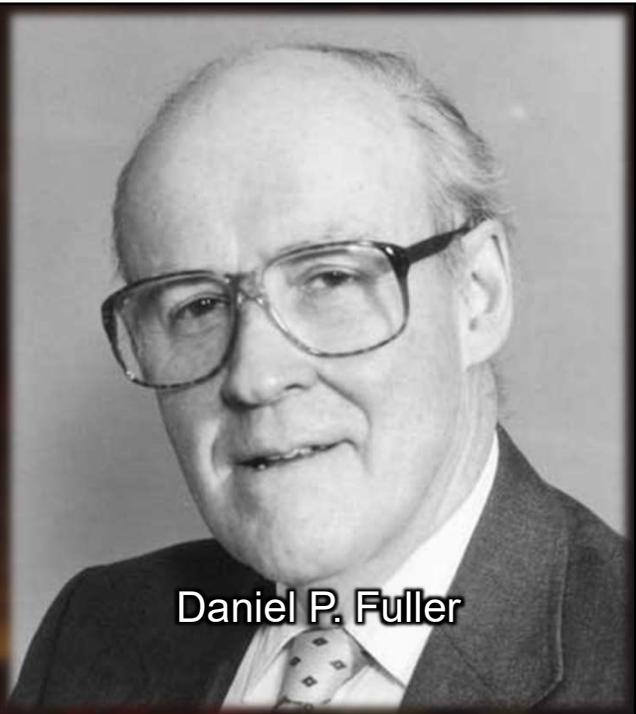
## Functional

- **Definition:** A statement is true in as much as it fulfills its intended purpose.

## Functional

- **Definition:** A statement is true in as much as it fulfills its intended purpose.
- It is sometimes known as the intentional theory of truth.

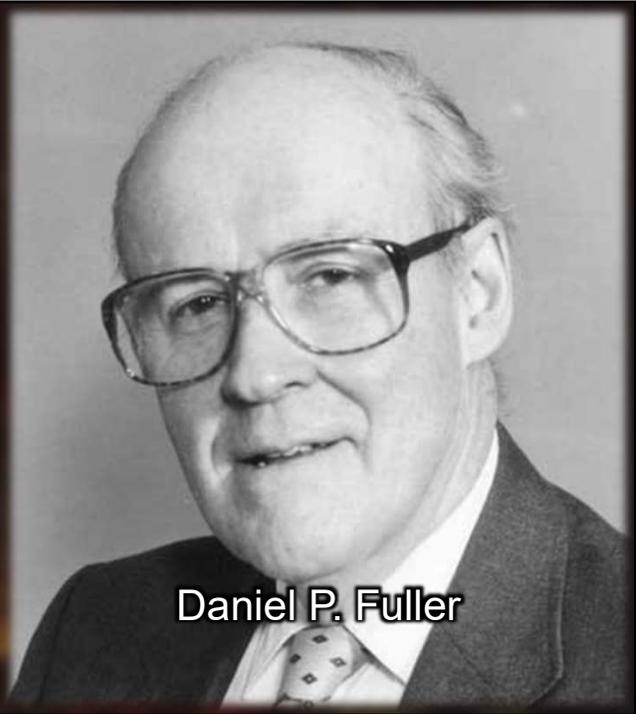
*"Although the mustard seed (see Matt. 13:32) is not the smallest of all seeds, yet Jesus referred to it as such" because . . .*



Daniel P. Fuller

***"to have gone contrary to their mind on what was the smallest seed would have so diverted their attention from the knowledge that would bring salvation to their souls that they might well have failed to hear these all-important revelational truths."***

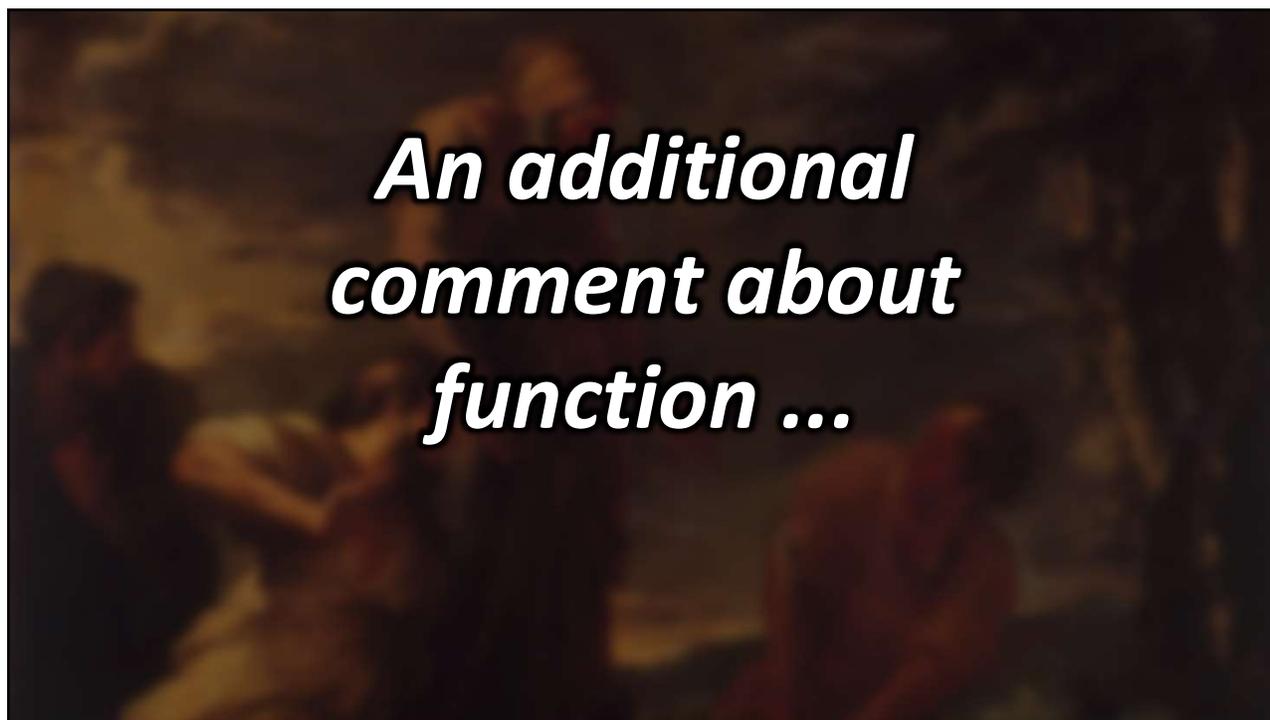
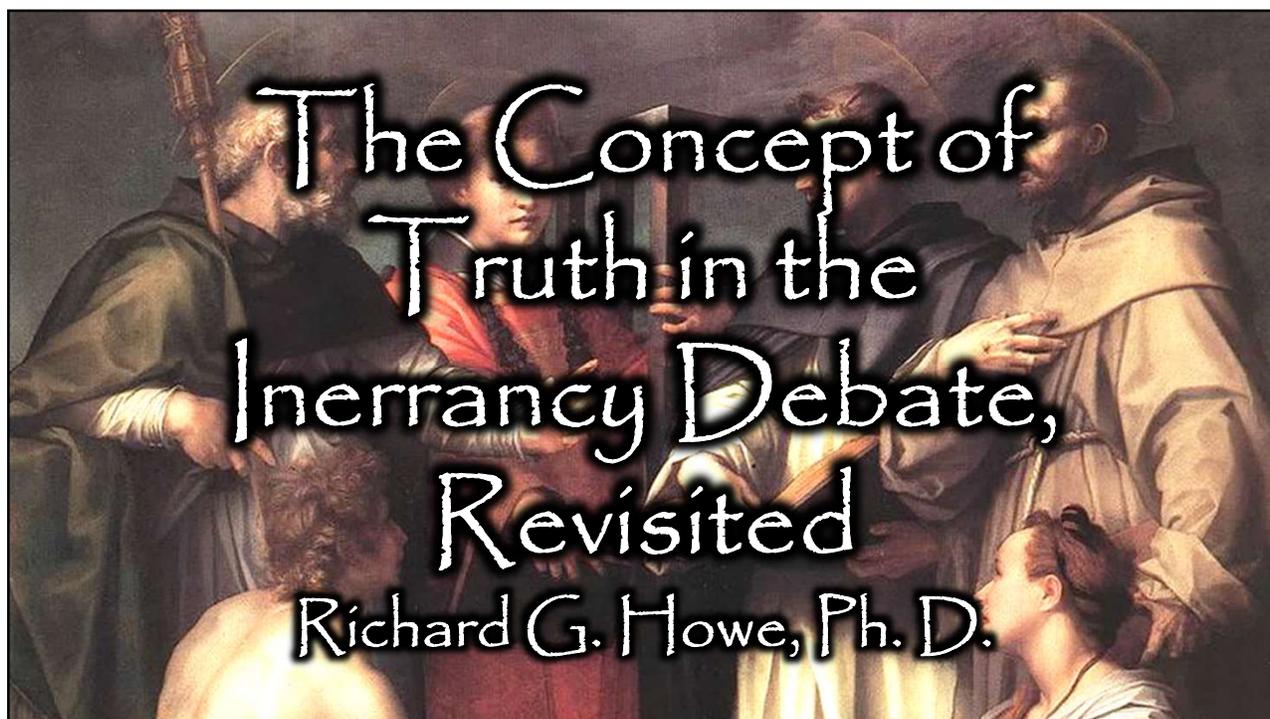
Daniel P. Fuller, "Benjamin B. Warfield's View of Faith and History," *Bulletin of the Evangelical Theological Society* 11 (Spring 1968): 81-82, quoted in Norman L. Geisler, "The Concept of Truth in the Inerrancy Debate," *Bibliotheca Sacra* (October-December 1980): 336-337.

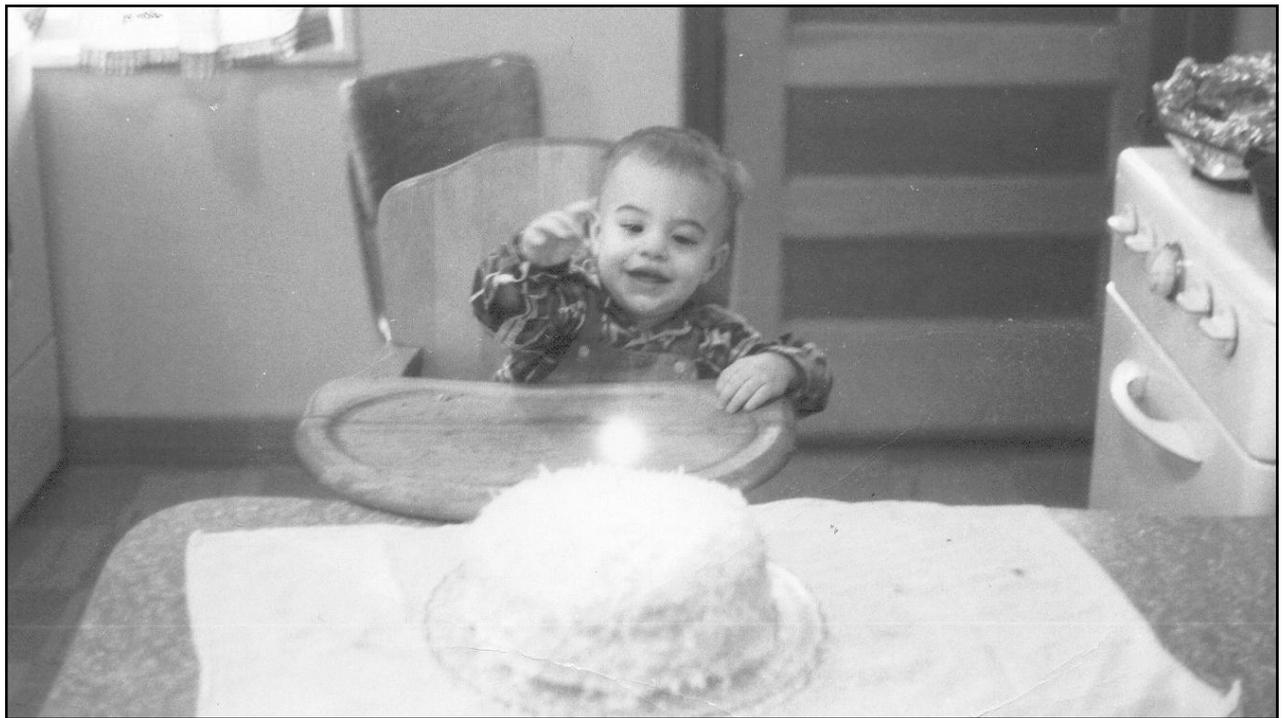


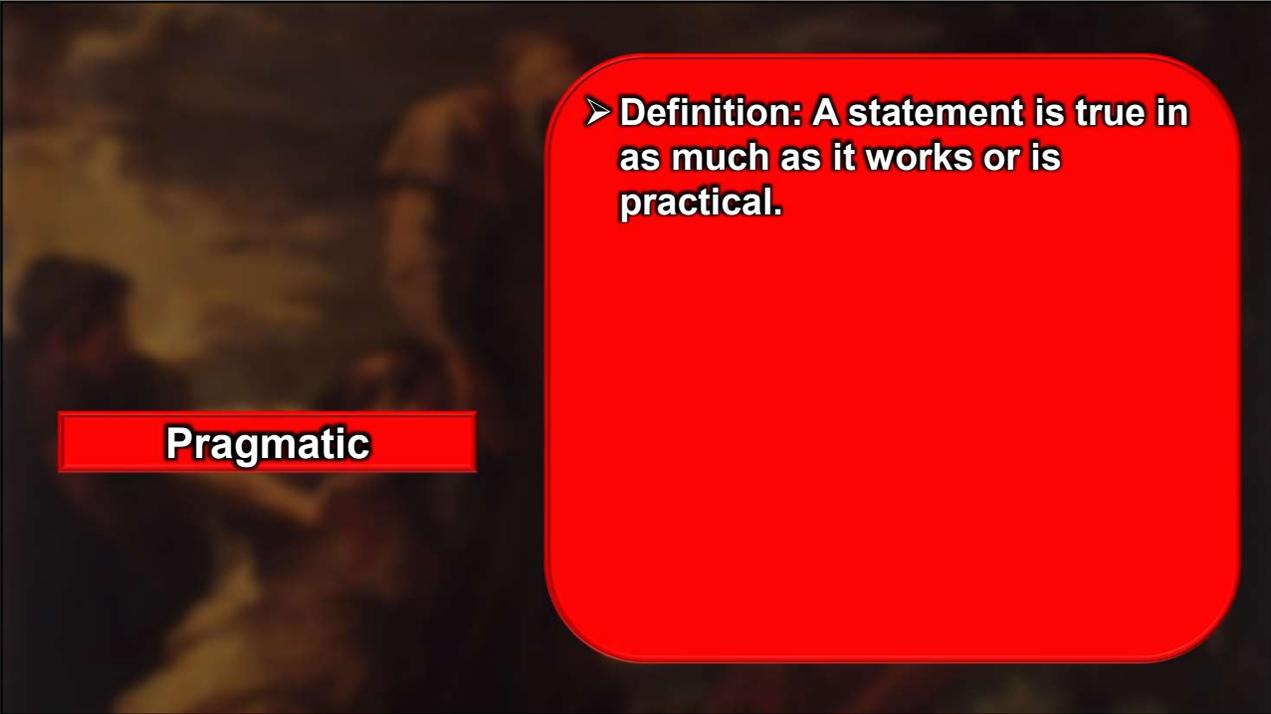
**Daniel P. Fuller**

## **Functional**

- **Definition: A statement is true in as much as it fulfills its intended purpose.**
- **It is sometimes known as the intentional theory of truth.**
- **Truth cannot be merely function because it needs the correspondence theory to define itself.**

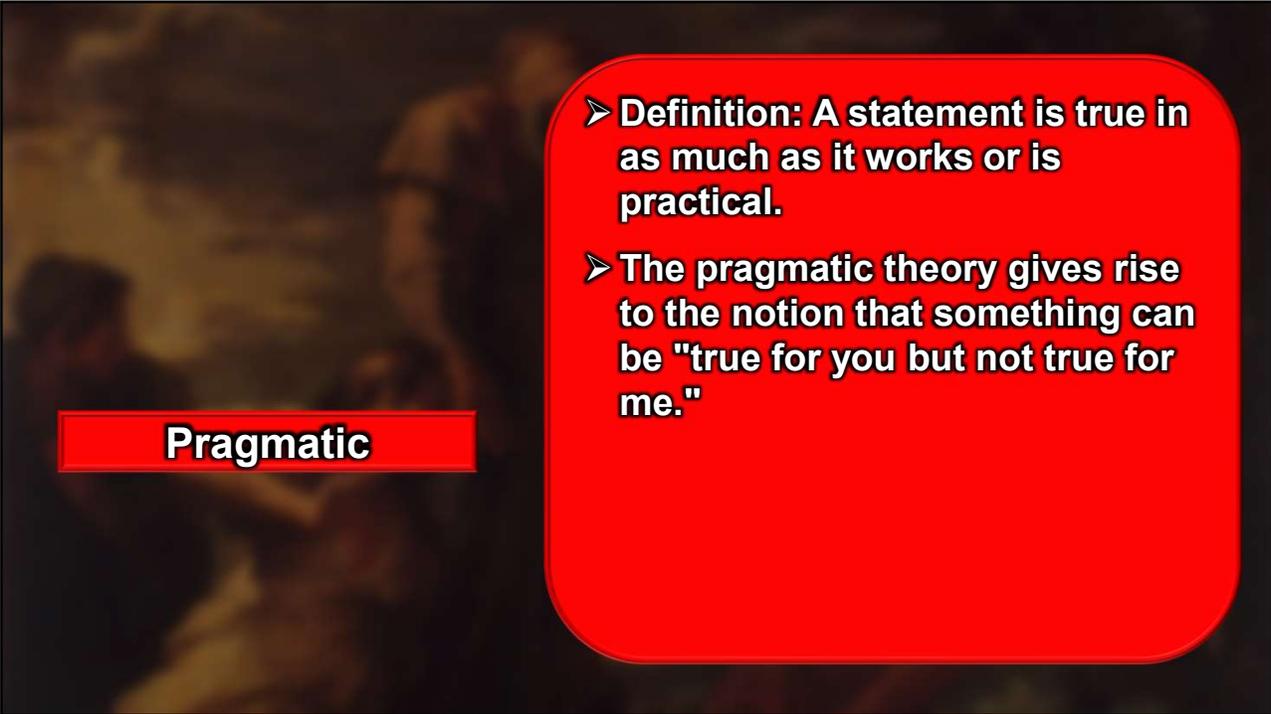






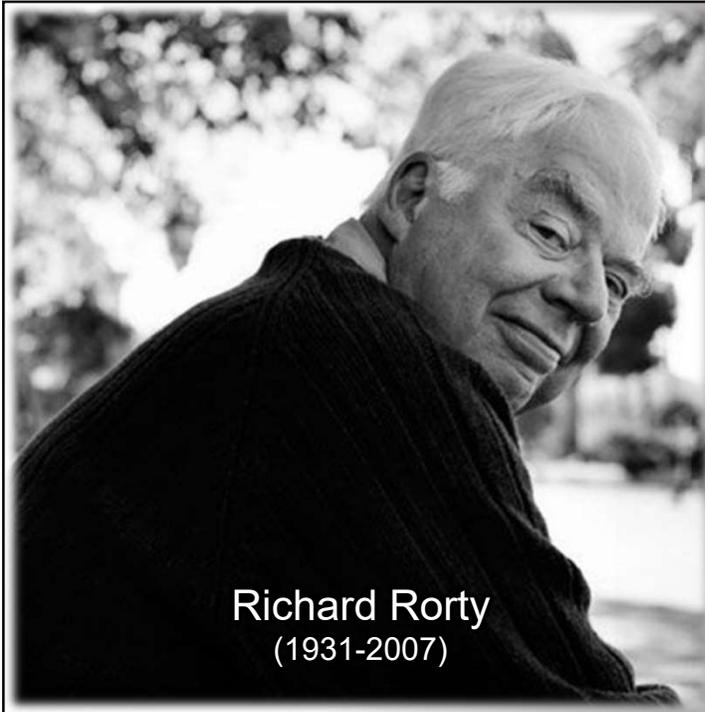
## Pragmatic

- **Definition: A statement is true in as much as it works or is practical.**



## Pragmatic

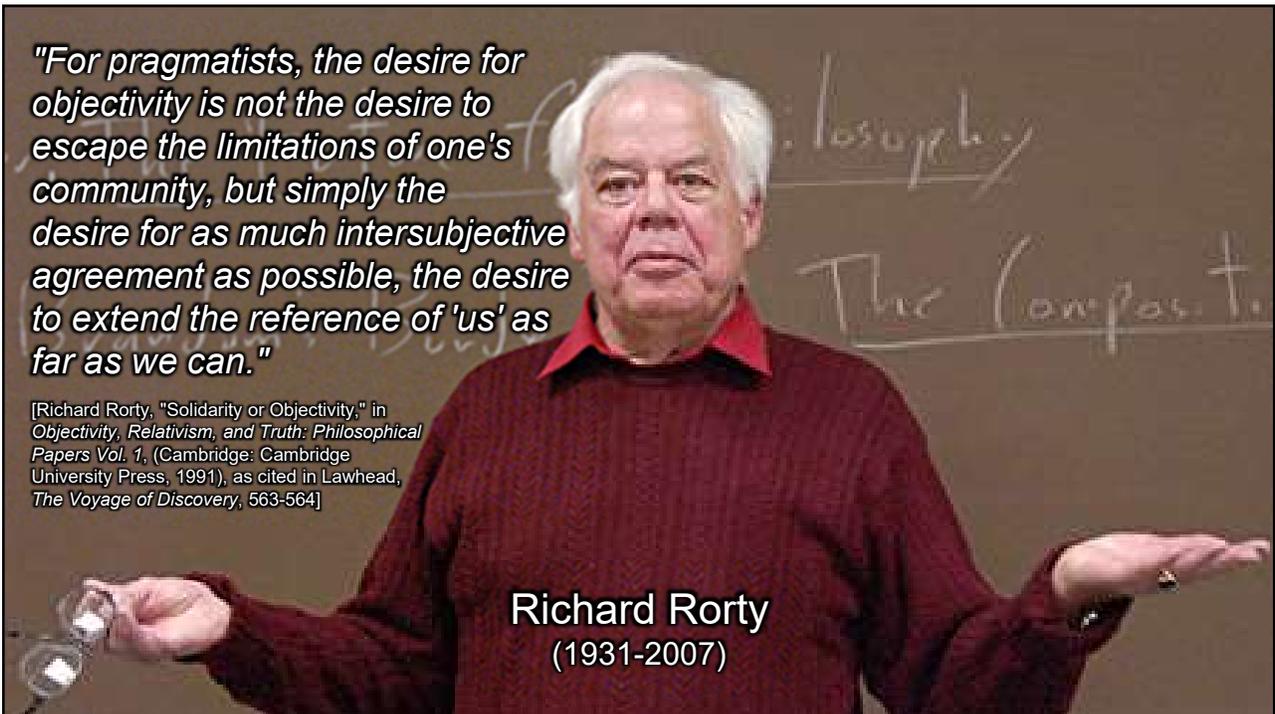
- **Definition: A statement is true in as much as it works or is practical.**
- **The pragmatic theory gives rise to the notion that something can be "true for you but not true for me."**



Richard Rorty  
(1931-2007)

*Philosophy is "edifying discourse" the purpose of which is "finding new, better, more interesting, more fruitful ways of speaking" and "to keep the conversation going rather than to find objective truth."*

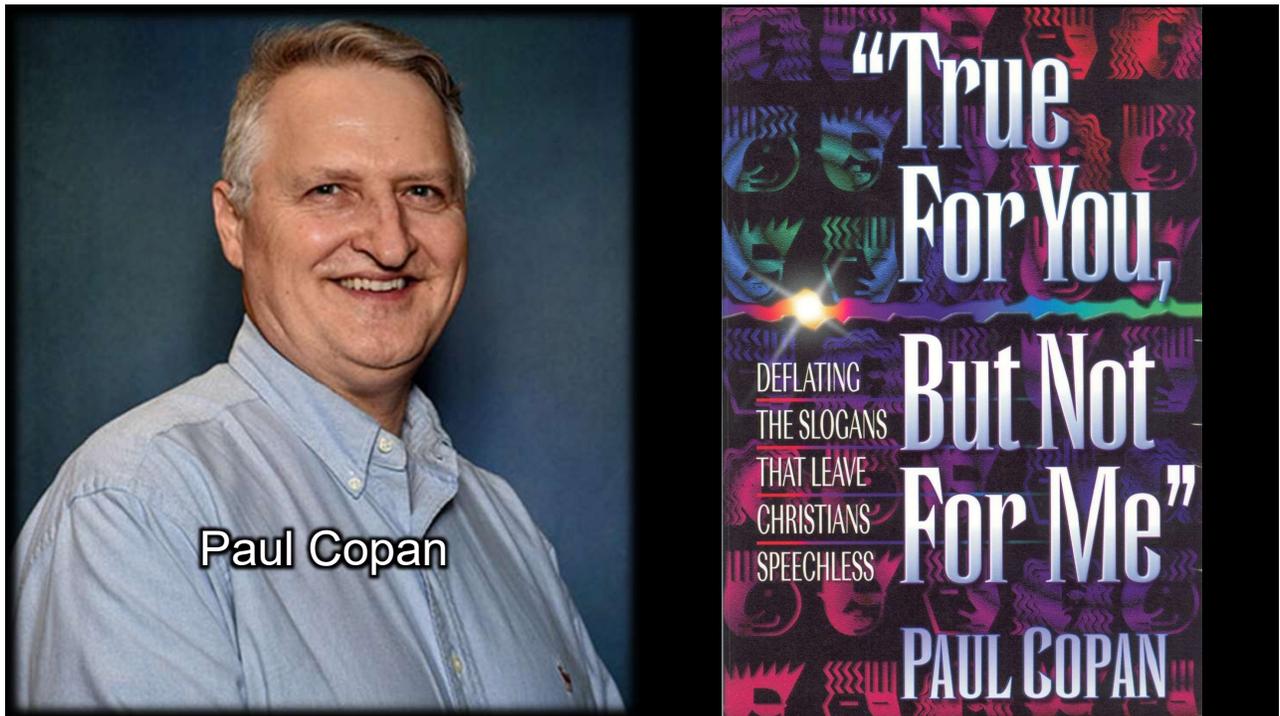
[Richard Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), 360, 377, as cited in William F. Lawhead, *The Voyage of Discovery: An Historical Introduction to Philosophy*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., (Belmont, Wadsworth/Thomson Learning, 2002), 563]



*"For pragmatists, the desire for objectivity is not the desire to escape the limitations of one's community, but simply the desire for as much intersubjective agreement as possible, the desire to extend the reference of 'us' as far as we can."*

[Richard Rorty, "Solidarity or Objectivity," in *Objectivity, Relativism, and Truth: Philosophical Papers Vol. 1*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), as cited in Lawhead, *The Voyage of Discovery*, 563-564]

Richard Rorty  
(1931-2007)





Disagree—Relativism *Must* Be True." "You're Just Using Western Logic." "Who Are You to Judge Others?" "We're Intolerant of Other Viewpoints!" "What Right Do We Have to Convert Others to Your Views?" "It's All Just a Matter of Perspective." "Reality Is Perception." "Why That?" "TRUE FOR YOU" "But" "NOT FOR ME" "Overcoming Objections to Christian Faith" "PAUL COPAN"

Paul Copan

**☞ Jeremiah 44:17-18 ☞**

***"But we will certainly do whatever has gone out of our own mouth, to burn incense to the queen of heaven and pour out drink offerings to her, as we have done, we and our fathers, our kings and our princes, in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem."***



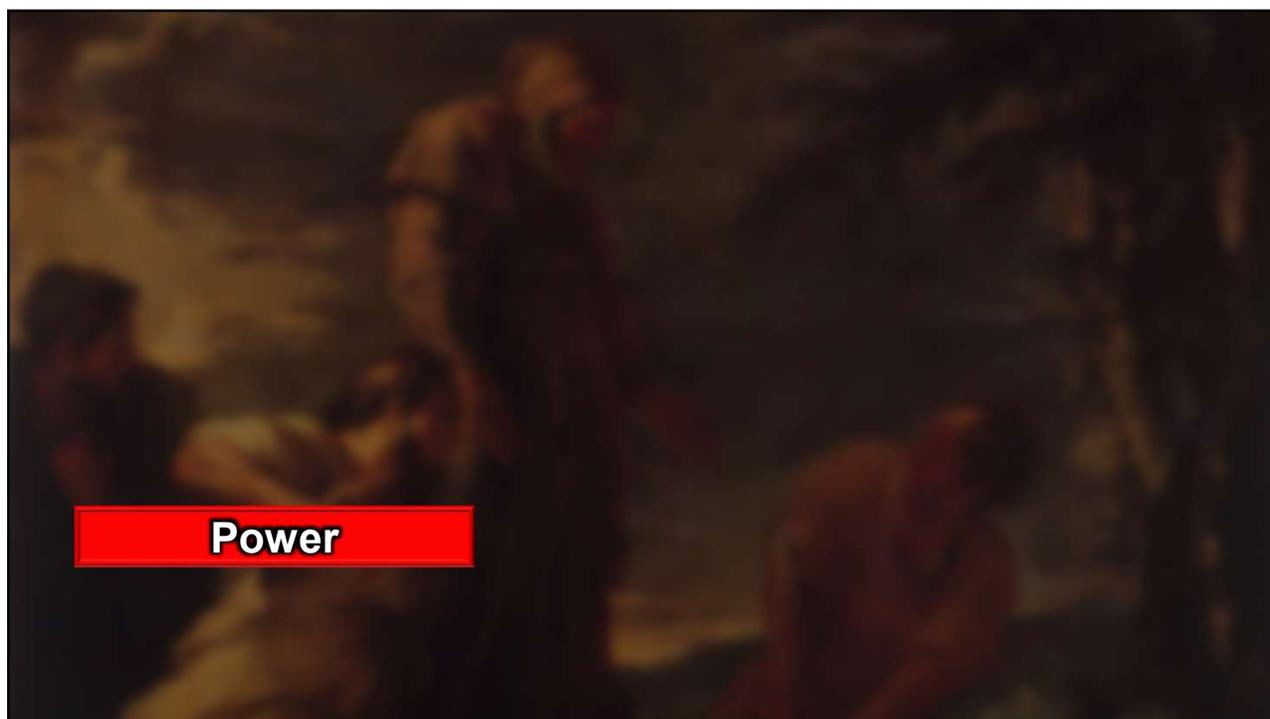
## ☞ Jeremiah 44:17-18 ☞

*"For then we had plenty of food, were well-off, and saw no trouble. But since we stopped burning incense to the queen of heaven and pouring out drink offerings to her, we have lacked everything and have been consumed by the sword and by famine."*

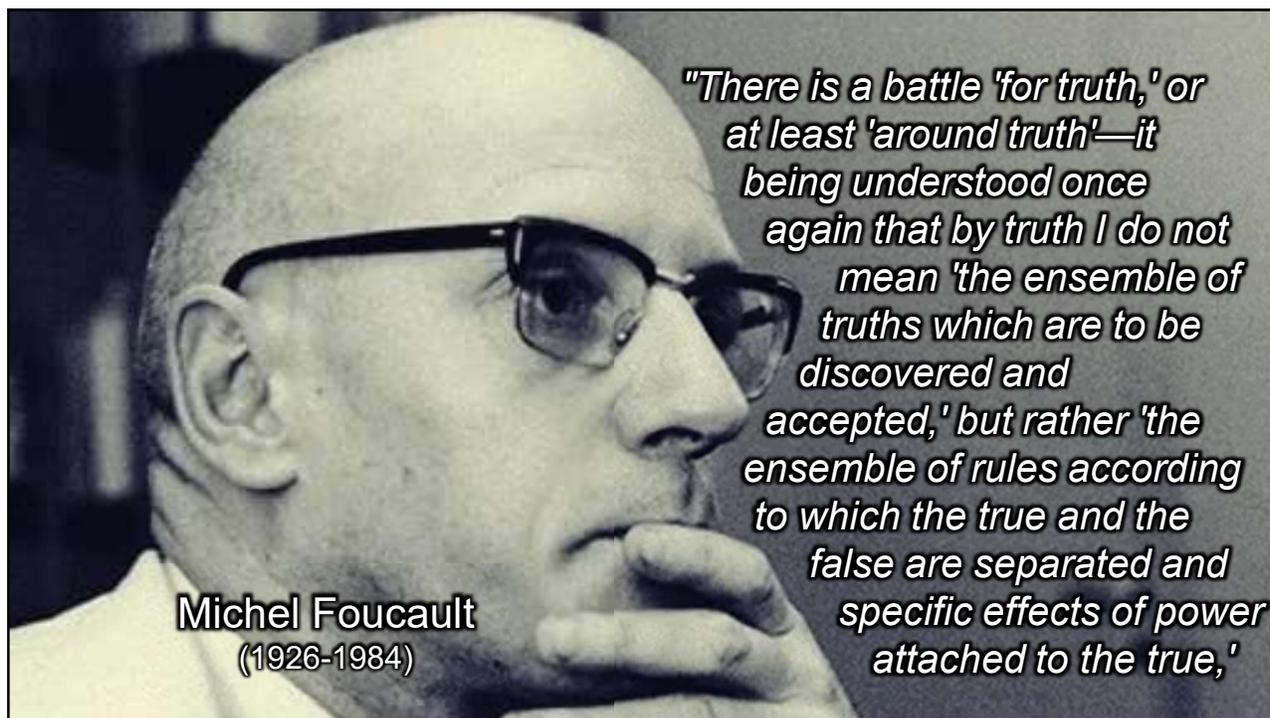


## Pragmatic

- **Definition:** A statement is true in as much as it works or is practical.
- The pragmatic theory gives rise to the notion that something can be "true for you but not true for me."
- Every theory of truth, including pragmatic, requires the correspondence theory of truth to define itself.

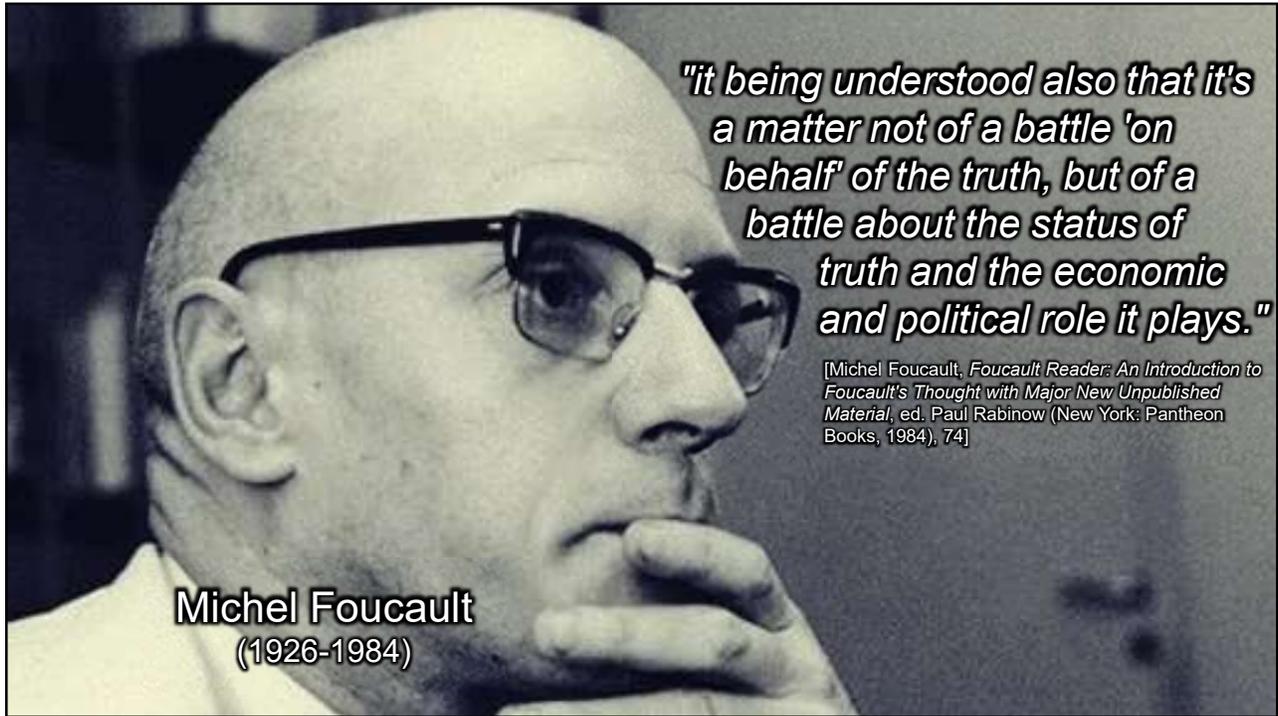


**Power**



**Michel Foucault**  
(1926-1984)

*"There is a battle 'for truth,' or at least 'around truth'—it being understood once again that by truth I do not mean 'the ensemble of truths which are to be discovered and accepted,' but rather 'the ensemble of rules according to which the true and the false are separated and specific effects of power attached to the true,'*

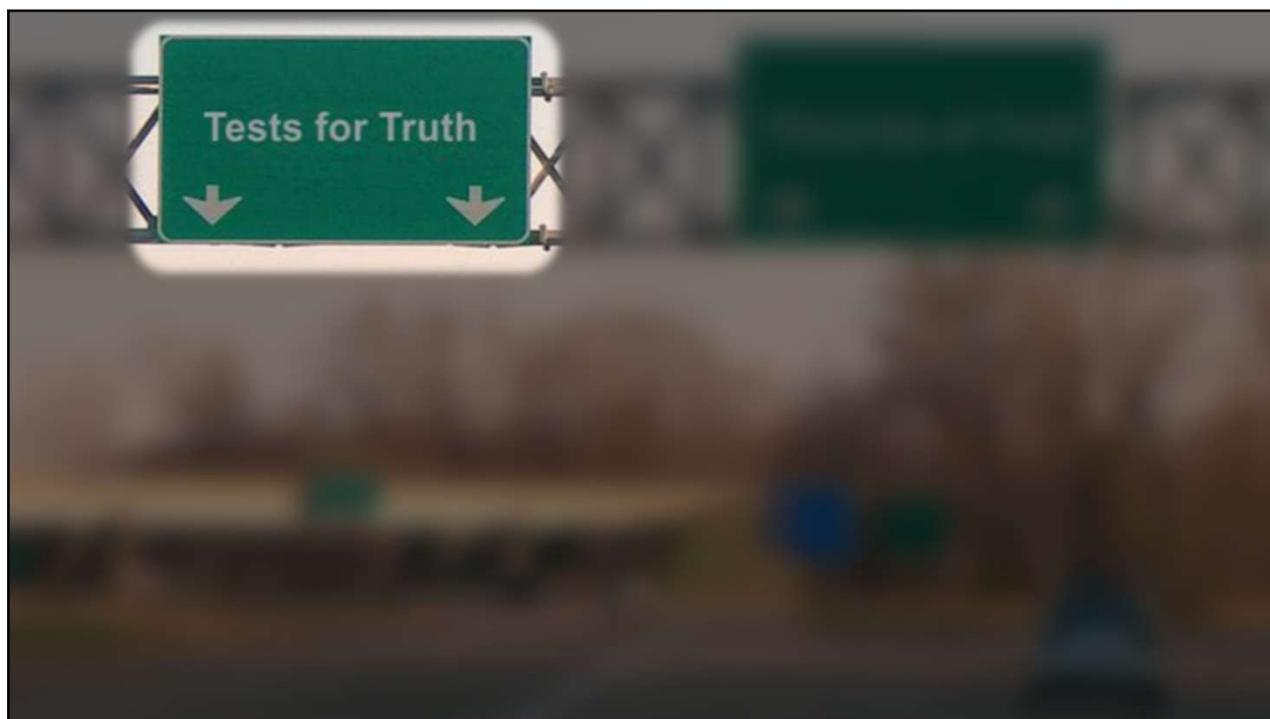


*"it being understood also that it's a matter not of a battle 'on behalf' of the truth, but of a battle about the status of truth and the economic and political role it plays."*

[Michel Foucault, *Foucault Reader: An Introduction to Foucault's Thought with Major New Unpublished Material*, ed. Paul Rabinow (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), 74]

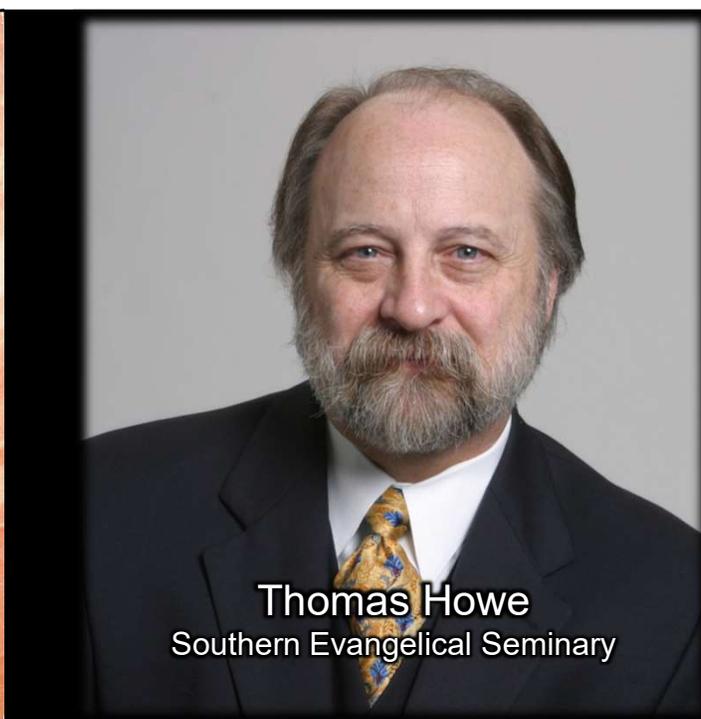
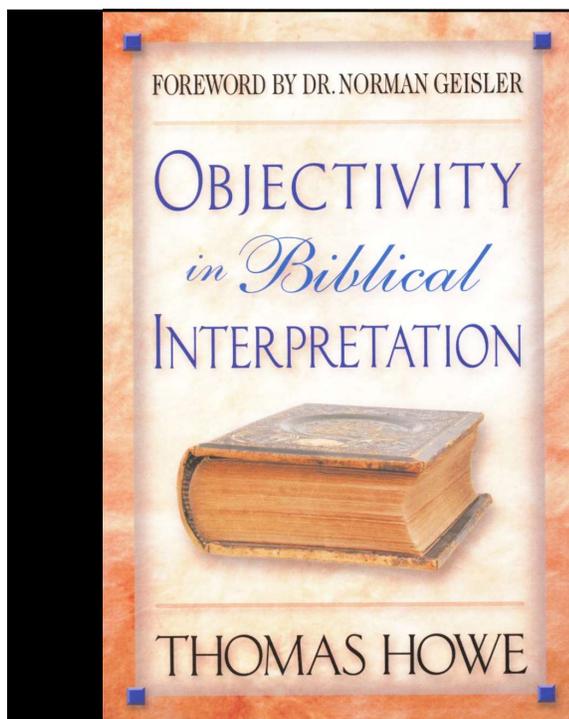
Michel Foucault  
(1926-1984)



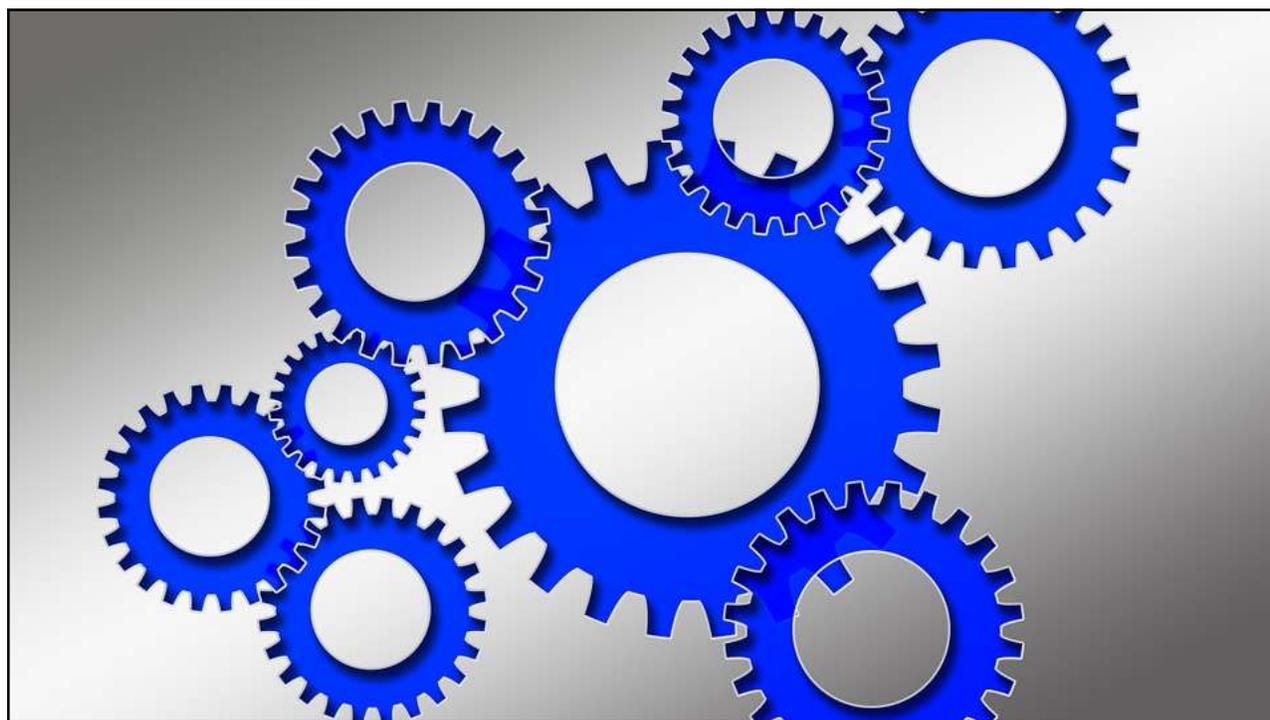


***Two things (at least) are  
common to all tests for truth.***





Thomas Howe  
Southern Evangelical Seminary





## ∞ The Laws of Logic ∞

- ✓ *The Law of Non-Contradiction*
- ✓ *The Law of Excluded Middle*
- ✓ *The Law of Identity*

## ∞ The Law of Non-Contradiction ∞

*essence* ➤ A thing cannot be both 'A' and 'non-A' at the same time and in the same sense.

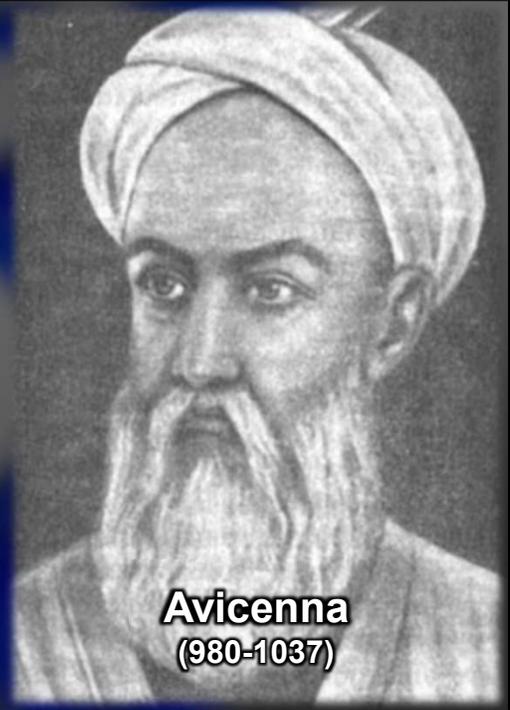
*existence* ➤ A thing cannot both exist and not exist at the same time and in the same sense.

*truth value* ➤ A statement cannot be both true and not true at the same time and in the same sense.



***"Those who deny a first principle should be beaten and burned until they admit that to be beaten is not the same as to not be beaten and to be burned is not the same as not to be burned."***

Metaphysics I



**Avicenna  
(980-1037)**

***Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden'?" And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.'" Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."***

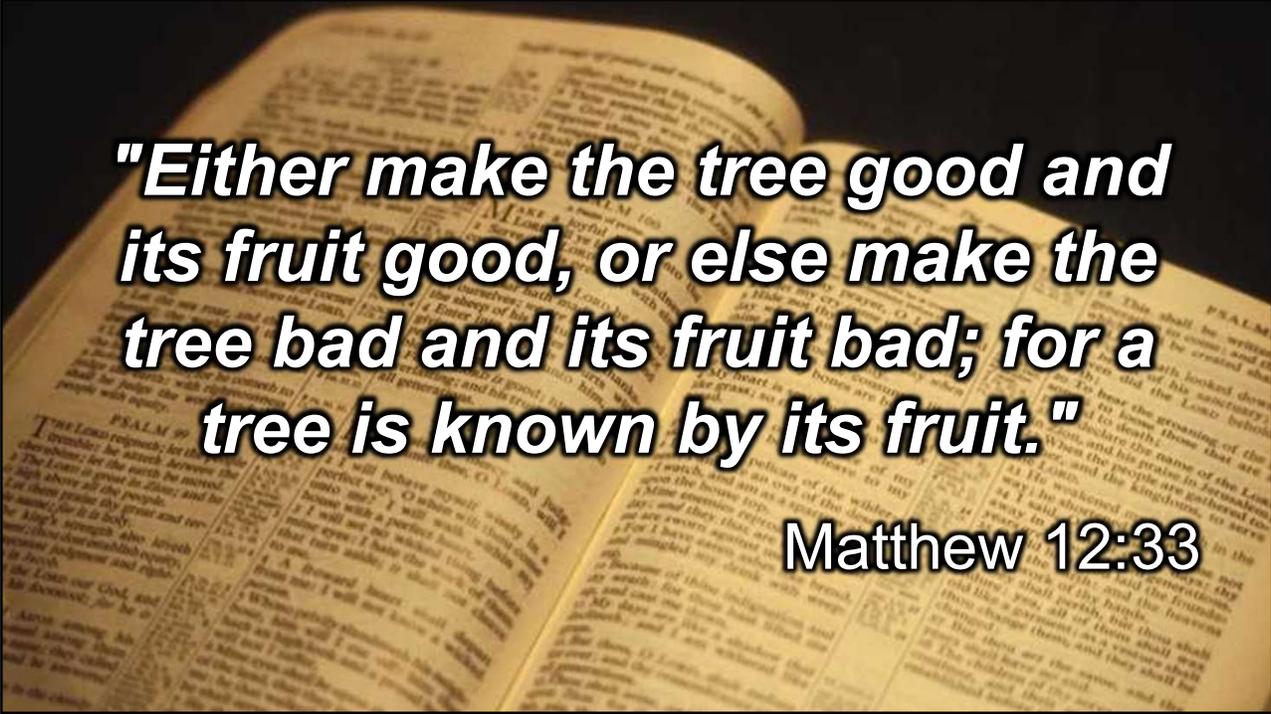
**Genesis 3:1-5**

## ∞ The Law of Excluded Middle ∞

essence ➤ A thing is either 'A' or 'non-A.'

existence ➤ A thing either exists or does not exist.

truth value ➤ A statement is either true or not true.

An open book with text overlaid. The text is in a bold, italicized font with a black outline. The background is a dark, slightly blurred image of an open book with yellowed pages.

***"Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or else make the tree bad and its fruit bad; for a tree is known by its fruit."***

**Matthew 12:33**

## ∞ The Law of Identity ∞

essence ➤ If a thing is 'A' then it is 'A.'

existence ➤ If a thing exists, then it exists.

truth value ➤ If a statement is true then it is true.

***Then Moses said to God, "Indeed, when I come to the children of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you.' and they say to me, 'What is His name?' what shall I say to them?" And God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And He said, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'"***

**Exodus 3:13-14**

## ∞ The relationship of logic and reality ∞

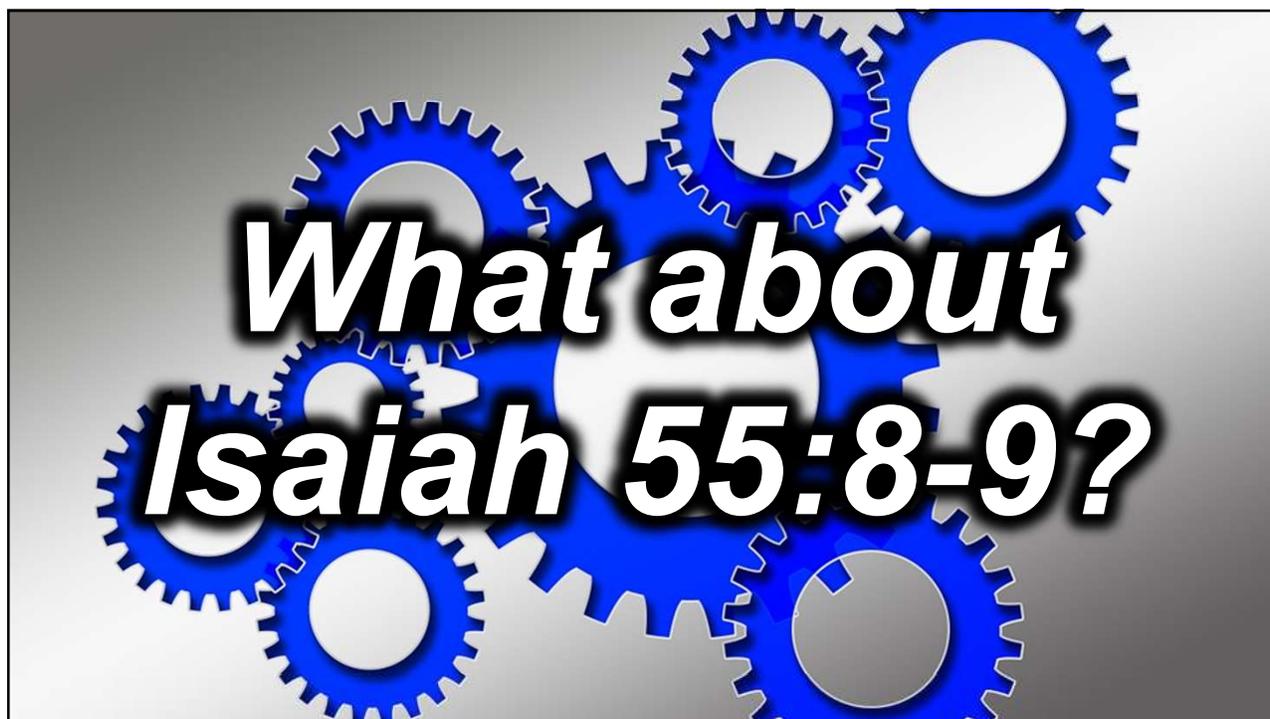
The laws of logic are undeniably true.

✓ *One has to use logic in order to deny logic.*

Reality is knowable.

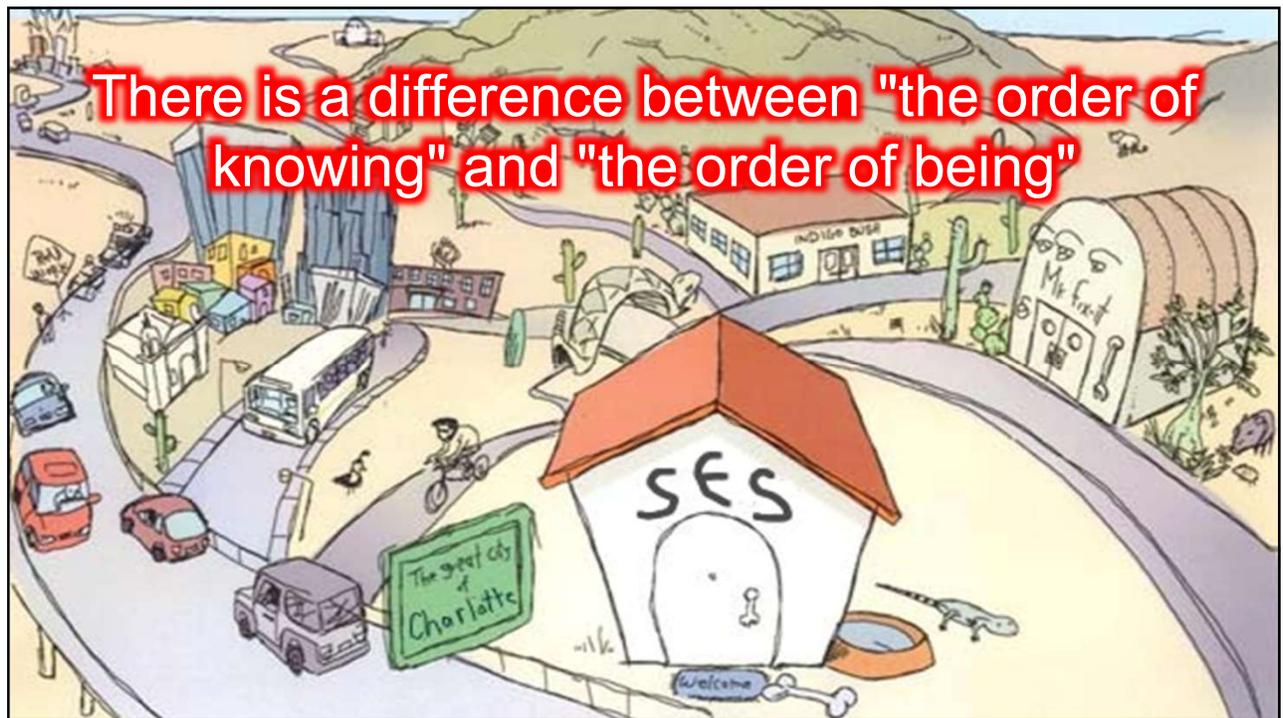
✓ *To claim that '**reality is unknowable**' is to claim to know something about reality.*





# What about Isaiah 55:8-9?

Isa 55:6-7 {6} Seek the LORD while He may be found,  
Call upon Him while He is near. {7} Let the **wicked**  
forsake **his way**, And the **unrighteous man**  
**his thoughts**; Let him return to the LORD, And He will  
have mercy on him; And to our God, For He will  
abundantly pardon. {8} "For **My thoughts** are not your  
thoughts, nor are your ways **My ways**," says **the**  
**LORD**. {9} "For as the heavens are higher than the  
earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My  
thoughts than your thoughts."



There is a difference between "the order of knowing" and "the order of being"

There is a difference between "the order of knowing" and "the order of being"

The map is first in the order of knowing.

SES is first in the order of being.



***Aren't we  
putting OUR  
logic before  
God?***

- response: It is not "our" logic.
- Logic is an expression of the nature of God Himself.



***Isn't this a  
form of  
Rationalism?***

- response: There is a difference between being rational and Rationalism.
- Rationalism is the view maintains that knowledge is primarily attainable by reason apart from the physical senses.
- However, the notions of self-evident truths or rationally inescapable truths do not constitute Rationalism. (e.g., Declaration of Independence)

***Isn't this limiting God?  
After all, can't God do  
the impossible? Is  
there anything God  
cannot do?***

- response: God cannot violate His own nature.
- Logic is an expression of the nature of being itself.
- God is infinite being.



***Can't God  
break the laws  
He creates?***

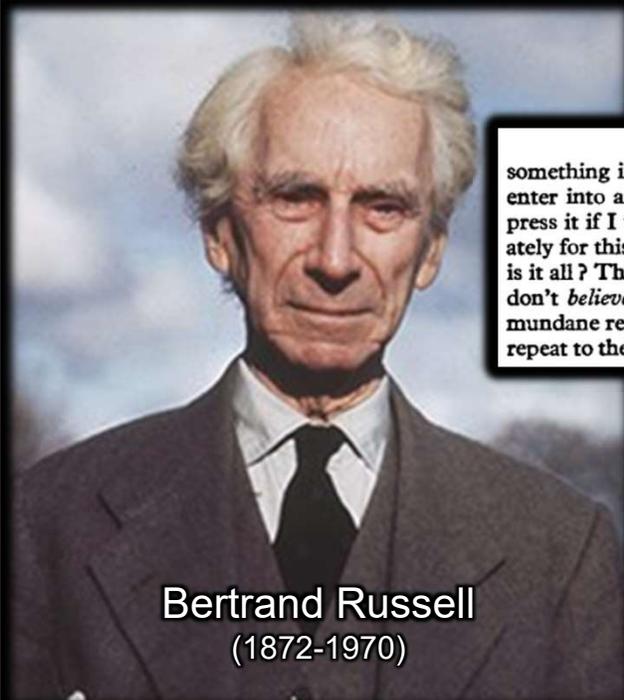
- response: Logic was not created by God. It is an expression of God. (like goodness)

***Don't some doctrines involve contradictions, like the Trinity?***

- response: There is nothing in the doctrine of the Trinity (or any other biblical doctrine) that is illogical.
- There is a difference between something being beyond reason and something being against reason.

***If logic is so helpful, how can such a great logician as the atheist philosopher Bertrand Russell be so far from the truth?***

- response: If you start a race facing the wrong direction, then the faster you can run, the quicker you will be in getting farther from the finish line.



Bertrand Russell  
(1872-1970)

11th August, 1918  
It is quite true what you say, that you have never expressed yourself – but who has, that has anything to express? The things one says are

Even when one feels nearest to other people, something in one seems obstinately to belong to God and to refuse to enter into any earthly communion – at least that is how I should express it if I thought there was a God. It is odd isn't it? I care passionately for this world, and many things and people in it, and yet . . . what is it all? There *must* be something more important, one feels, though I don't *believe* there is. I am haunted – some ghost, from some extramundane region, seems always trying to tell me something that I am to repeat to the world, but I cannot understand the message.

The outcome is that one is a ghost, floating through the world without any real contact. Even when one feels nearest to other people, something in one seems obstinately to belong to God and to refuse to enter into any earthly communion – at least that is how I should express it if I thought there was a God. It is odd isn't it? I care passionately for this world, and many things and people in it, and yet . . . what is it all? There *must* be something more important, one feels, though I don't *believe* there is. I am haunted – some ghost, from some extramundane region, seems always trying to tell me something that I am to repeat to the world, but I cannot understand the message. But it is from listening to the ghost that one comes to feel oneself a ghost. I feel I shall find the truth on my deathbed and be surrounded by people too stupid to understand – fussing about medicines instead of searching



***Our fuller exploration of tests  
for truth will be subsumed  
under an exploration of  
knowledge.***