

2

The Problem of Absolute Truth

In general, a statement and its contradiction, whether a contradiction that is comprehensive or partial, cannot be simultaneously true. Therefore, there are some absolute truths.

Different persons may experience different personal realities because each experiences a personal sub-set of the comprehensive totality of reality. But, there is only one objective reality.

Truth is that which is in agreement with reality. It is objective truth because it corresponds with objective reality. It is absolute truth because there is only one objective reality.

Thus there is absolute truth, the collective body of absolute truths.

Not all statements are absolute truths. Aside from error, which by definition is not true, there is opinion. For example:

- Some people state their liking for candy; some their dislike. It is a matter of opinion.
- But, the statement "Some candy has properties that appeal to some people" is an absolute truth.

The point of view that the questions, "What is truth?" and "What is real?" are meaningless questions without answers is not only incorrect but quite negative and harmful in that it suppresses inquiry and progress that could otherwise take place.

Truth is that which conforms to and describes reality. Reality is that which is, not only matter and energy in their various forms but also: feelings and emotions, ideas and cultures, languages and arts, and so forth. **Whether we can know, sense, measure, or understand some aspect of reality or not it still, nevertheless, is.** Its being does not depend on our consent, nor our observation, nor our understanding of it, nor even our own being. We are not gods.

The problem is not whether there is absolute truth or not -- there is. The problem is finding out, coming to know, what the absolute truth is, what is true and what is not. Just what is the "real" reality.

This problem, the difficulty in determining the truth about reality, has beset mankind since the earliest stages of the development of our reasoning. That difficulty -- many have deemed it an impossibility and still do -- has resulted in a more or less collective decision to grant equal validity to a number of different versions of the truth in spite of their being mutually contradictory.

Not that individuals, organizations (e.g. religions, businesses, academia) and governments hold the opinion that their own version of the truth is not correct. Rather, they ardently believe in the correctness of their own views. But, their inability to prove their views and their inability to defeat differing or

opposing views necessitates their getting along in some fashion with those other views and the multiplicity of contradictory views of reality.

That state of affairs has existed for so many human lifetimes that it has essentially implanted in our collective and individual thinking the incorrect belief that there is no absolute truth, that truth is what we say it is -- especially that truth is what we can enforce it to be.

We have gone from inability to determine the truth to non-belief in its existence and then to belief that truth, and reality, are whatever we believe them to be and can force our fellow (or organization or government) to accept. The most significant characteristic of the 20th Century, other than its explosion of technology, has been its adoption of the attitude that truth is different for each person and each case, that it is what each individual perceives it to be -- that there is no objective reality, only the subjective reality as perceived by each individual -- that all is relative.

The great damage that such thinking does is the license that it gives. It gives license to create, choose, decide upon one's own "reality" and then act accordingly. Such thinking ultimately gives us war, rapine, holocausts.

But, if there is an objective reality, objective truth, then, even if we are not able to completely know and understand it, we are subject to it. We are measured and judged by it; we experience the effects and consequences of it whether we agree and approve or not, and we are compelled to behave accordingly.

*Thus objective reality and objective truth,
which indeed exist,
also are desirable and beneficial.*

They are, in fact, essential to civilized society.