

## Truth Project: Summary & Key Points

### Lesson 1: Veritology: What is Truth?

The Truth Project was designed for the “body of Christ” so that we may learn to view the world biblically using God’s truth of reality, instead of a modern worldview which says that truth can change and become what we see as reality.

It can be shown in the Bible where God has spoken in all directions of our lives: science, philosophy, ethics, church, God & man, community, family, state, law, arts & media, labor, and history.

John 18:37 explains why Jesus came into the world: “... for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me.” This defines the cosmic battle between truth/reality and lie/illusion that has existed ever since Adam & Eve and the fall.

We are captives of sin. John 8:32, “Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” – setting the captives free. Every sin can be traced back to a lie or the belief in a lie, and lies take us captive.

Although this isn’t an end times study, 2 Timothy 4:3-4 says, “... the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths.” And 2 Thessalonians 2:9-10, “The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs, and wonders, and in every sort of evil that deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved...”

The 1828 Noah Webster dictionary is not cluttered with the political correctness as today’s dictionaries are, and mentions scriptures and God where it is appropriate in the definition of words, such as “truth”.

When you believe something is real, you act on that “reality”, regardless of whether it is God’s truth, or a lie. Truth is reality from God’s point of view. Lies are powerful and can lead us to the most insane things. Insanity is losing touch with reality.

The focal point for this first hour of discussion is the concept of Truth itself. What is truth? Why is it important? What role does it play in the biblical view of the world, God’s purpose for the cosmos, His will for mankind, His plan of salvation, and the way we live our personal lives?

We will also see how popular notions of truth (represented by man on the street interviews) contrast sharply with the biblical concept (as articulated by Ravi Zacharias, Os Guinness, and R. C. Sproul).

Dr. Tackett concludes that, in almost every case, the perspective of contemporary culture stands in direct opposition to the Truth-centered worldview presented in the Bible. In the process of making this case, he advances the bold claim that our culture is not only filled with lies but is actually heading in the direction of social insanity.

### Lesson 2 - Philosophy and Ethics: Says Who?

Colossians 2:8 is a warning to Christians to not be taken captive to lies. (e.g. Oprah Winfrey’s teachings, Scientology, etc.) “See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world instead of Christ.”

The “Cosmic Cube” is introduced, which can be defined by a statement which Carl Sagan said in his “Cosmos” series in 1980: “The cosmos (stars, planets, galaxies; the universe) is all that is, ever was, or ever will be.” In other words, everything fits into a “cosmic box” without God. This “assumptive language” that Sagan used is dangerous. Assumptions are the most dangerous form of knowledge. They are accepted without even knowing it. They enable you to buy a lie without even knowing it, by buying all the assumptions. Sagan has stated that we are made of “star stuff”; that is, there is no God. He states all the above without directly stating that “there is no God”. If he would have presented his Cosmos series by first stating that there is no God, many probably would have rejected his philosophy.

In 1828 Noah Webster’s dictionary, regarding philosophy: “True religion and true philosophy must ultimately arrive at the same principle.” “The objects of philosophy are to ascertain facts or truth, and the causes of things or their phenomena; to enlarge our views of God and his works...” God has revealed himself to us in the heavens and in his word.

Both Plato and Aristotle searched for the universal truths of life within the cosmic box; without God. God has given us the universals, the answers to the big questions. The world looks for the universal answers from the particulars (details) (Aristotle). We are led to a post-modernism world view where there is no absolute truth. Your truth and my truth can both be “true”. Today, we survey something to determine if it is right or wrong. If 51% agree with a particular survey, then it becomes right.

The church needs to see Christianity as a life system, or worldview, that governs every area of existence. According to a Barna study, 4% of the general American population and only 9% of “born-again” Christians have a biblical worldview.

In essence, the message of this lesson parallels the precept of Proverbs 23:7 – “As a man thinks in his heart, so is he.” The heart of the discussion lies in the thought that there is a formal and vital connection between our ideas about the nature of the world (philosophy) and our understanding of right and wrong behavior (ethics).

The problem is that with God excluded, philosophy is deprived of a universal reference point and thus crippled in its “scientific quest for ultimate reality.” As a result, it cannot answer the most basic questions about right and wrong behavior.

On the other side of the coin, he suggests that many contemporary Christians have been unwittingly taken captive by the assumptions of our age (“conformed to this world”). He concludes the lesson by challenging students to think more aggressively about what it means to be “transformed by the renewing of the mind” (Romans 12:2).

### **Lesson 3 - Anthropology: Who is Man?**

“Of all kinds of knowledge that we can ever obtain, the knowledge of God, and the knowledge of ourselves, are the most important.” Jonathan Edwards, 1808. Man has a moral conscience, but is capable of terrible evil. The cosmic battle between good and evil within us is summed up in Galatians 5:16-17: “So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want.”

This truth/reality vs lie/illusion cosmic battle rages within us. The lie/illusion is referred to as the pernicious lie by Dr. Tackett. Looking up pernicious in the dictionary gives us the definition: “to kill, having the quality of injuring or killing; syn: destructive, ruinous, deadly, mischievous.” This sounds a lot like the characteristics of Satan.

Christians still carry their sinful nature in their redeemed state. Paul had the same problem, which he mentioned in Romans 7:15, 18-20.

In general today, society believes that man is basically good, and the evil is caused by outside factors.

The “naturalistic philosophy implications” include Man does not have free will, is basically good, does not have a purpose beyond himself, and there isn’t anything beyond the grave. Most people who hold to this philosophy also believe Darwin’s evolution theory as well. It is a perfect fit, if we evolved from cosmic goo, then we wouldn’t have any purpose and nothing would be beyond the grave.

This lesson includes an examination of biblical and contemporary ideas about the nature of the human race. The focus of the discussion is anthropology: Who is man? Where did he come from? What is the meaning and purpose of his existence? Why is there evil in the world?

Christianity represents evil as the product of the Cosmic Battle that rages within man – the conflict between humanity as it was meant to be and what it has actually become as a result of sin. Godless philosophy and psychology, on the other hand, can suggest only one possible solution to the problem of evil in the world: man must throw off the restraints of superimposed social conventions and institutions (i.e., any kind of moral standard) and pursue “self-fulfillment” to the fullest possible extent. This is what Dr. Tackett calls “the pernicious lie.”

#### **Lesson 4 - Theology: Who is God?**

Knowing God is absolutely central to the meaning of human life, for it is only in the context of intimate, personal relationship with Him that we experience eternal life. At the same time, there is no assignment more daunting, no task more demanding, no challenge more overwhelming, than that of seeking to understand the being, nature, character, and attributes of the eternal Creator, who is Himself the ultimate source of all truth (Colossians 2:3).

Man, says Dr. Tackett, has a tendency “play fast and loose” with God’s Word, not because he is seriously interested in ascertaining the facts about biblical history, but because he is unwilling to face up to the convicting power of divine revelation as it applies to his personal life. In the final analysis, God’s Word is the main thing standing in the way of “self-actualization” as it is promoted by the gurus of contemporary culture.

#### **Lesson 5 - Science: What is True?**

We will discover that whereas “the heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament shows His handiwork” (Psalm 19:1) so that the Creator’s “invisible attributes are plainly seen” (Romans 1:20), mankind has nevertheless chosen to ignore the obvious truth, twisting scientific investigation into a vehicle for propagating a godless philosophy of human independence and self-determination.

Our natural reaction to this experience should be like that of a child: wonder, marvel, and praise for the Creator. But because of the effects of the fall and the polarizing influence of the Cosmic Battle, man shows a tendency to deny what is plain to the senses and to “exchange the truth of God for a lie” (Romans 1:25). The result is the propagation of a worldview that “scientifically” excludes the Creator, thus “freeing” mankind from accountability to a higher authority. Central to this philosophy are the assertions of Darwinian evolutionary theory.

#### **Lesson 6 - History: Whose Story?**

We will see that a proper appreciation of historical context – in other words, our place in God’s “larger story” – is fundamental to an accurate understanding of almost every aspect of our lives. History provides us with indispensable insights into the meaning of existence, God’s plan and purpose for the ages, man’s responsibility toward the Creator, and his duty toward his fellow creatures.

Isaiah 46:9-11: “Remember the former things of old, for I am God, and there is no other; I am God and there is none like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done ... Indeed, I have spoken it; I will also bring it to pass ... ” Here too we come face to face with the implications of man’s fallen nature and encounter yet another manifestation of the Cosmic Battle. Man resists the idea of a sovereign God. He wants to control his own destiny, live inside his own “little story,” and free himself from all connections with or references to an all-inclusive divine plan.

Historical revisionism, or the agenda-driven re-writing of history, operates on the basis of the premise, “If I can change your historical context, I can determine the way you view the present.” This strategy is consistent with George Orwell’s observation that “He who controls the past controls the future” and Karl Marx’s dictum, “A people without a heritage are easily persuaded.”

Postmodernism – the contemporary philosophical perspective that rejects both revelation and reason – takes this process to an extreme conclusion by denying the validity of all comprehensive truth systems, or what it calls metanarratives (including Christianity). Stated simply, the postmodern perspective maintains that there is no “larger story.” Instead, everyone must tell his or her own story and invent (if possible) his or her own concept of meaning and significance. In other words, history does not exist at all except as it exists in our own minds, where it can be edited and tailored to further our own goals in the present.

### **Lesson 7 - Sociology: The Divine Imprint**

The same element of order present in the physical universe is apparent in the social systems God has instituted. Dr. Tackett lays out six that he see in Scripture: family, labor, church, state, community, and the relationship between man and his Maker. But the order we detect in this area is not simply an expression of the Lord’s creative design. Instead, it flows out of His very nature. It is a reflection of who He is.

The principles of order and relationship will be examined specifically as we find them manifested in three of the social systems designed by God: the family, the church, and the union between God and man (“The Intimate Three”). Dr. Tackett and his students fearlessly broach the often troublesome topic of authority and submission within the context of marriage, the church, and other aspects of God’s social design.

### **Lesson 8 - Unio Mystica: Am I Alone?**

Here, in the most intimate and profoundly mysterious sphere of the “Intimate Three” (family, church, and the God-man relationship), we have the privilege of pondering exactly what it is that Christ has purchased for us at the price of His precious blood shed on the cross for our sins: not simply salvation from hell, but an invitation into the Godhead itself, where we may experience the incomprehensible wonder of oneness with the Creator of the universe.

We proceed to examine an even deeper and more mysterious aspect of this bond: namely, that it is experienced not only within marriage and the corporate context of the body of Christ, but also on an intimate, personal level by the individual believer. This, says Dr. Tackett, is the greatest of all the

wonders we will contemplate during the course of our study: that the God of the universe has come to make His dwelling both with us and in us.

We as believers are to confine our quest for significance to the covenant relationship with the Creator. For it is this powerful human hunger for significance, says Dr. Tackett, when directed outside of God's covenant relationships, that constitutes the single most formidable barrier to intimacy, communion, and oneness. All too often, we forsake the Lord and cut ourselves off from others in attempt to puff up our own sense of self-importance.

### **Lesson 9 - The State: Whose Law?**

Special attention will be given to the design, structure, and role of the state, its place in God's plan for human society, and the rightful extent and limits of its power. The state, as we will see, has the capacity to exert a tremendous power for good in the affairs of mankind as long as it operates within its proper boundaries; but it also has the potential to become the most horrendously pathological and abusive of all the social spheres if not kept in check.

God's perspective on the state, as we will discover through a careful examination of the relevant scriptural passages, is that it is strictly subordinate to His sovereign dominion and control. Just as the Son is subject to the Father, the wife to the husband, and the elders of the church to the headship of Christ, so the authority of the state, within the economy of the divine design for the political sphere, is subject to and dependent upon the authority of God Himself.

Bible and history demonstrate, when human rulers overstep their bounds, deny the sovereignty of the various social spheres, and seek to establish state control over every other area of human life, tyranny, oppression, and violence are sure to follow.

Many people in our day have been taken captive by the lie that the state, and not God, is to "go before us" as our savior and sustainer and the source of all good things.

### **Lesson 10 – The American Experiment: Stepping Stones**

The American Experiment has the potential to prove unusually conducive to a deeper understanding of God's design for the state precisely because it is unique in the history of the world. Here on these shores, and here alone, people with a strong Christian worldview have been afforded an unparalleled opportunity to create from scratch what they considered an ideal system of government – a system designed in careful conformity with the principles outlined in Lesson 9.

The New England Primer, the second best-selling book (after the Bible) of the colonial era, provides an intriguing window into the attitudes of early Americans. In particular, it reveals an outlook and a way of life powerfully shaped by the teachings of Scripture. The pervasiveness of this outlook is further demonstrated in statements made by America's early political leaders, legal and social architects, and educational pioneers – people like Benjamin Rush, George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, Samuel Adams, Charles Carroll, Noah Webster, and the founders of Harvard, Princeton, and Columbia Universities.

Tragically, however, America is quickly turning away from these principles. It is hard to put a finger on the exact reasons, but one clear element came as Darwinian evolutionary theory made its influence felt in the field of law. In 1869, Harvard Law School Dean Christopher Langdell advanced the view that law is not based upon the transcendent standard of "Nature's God," but is rather a fluid and constantly mutating body of "doctrine," a set of purely human ideas that inevitably change "by slow degrees."

Today, America has largely forgotten God and denied the validity of her biblically based Christian roots. As a result, we see the power of the state expanding in our time. This, too, is a manifestation of the perennial Cosmic Battle, which is always fought most fiercely in the social realm.

### **Lesson 11 - Labor: Created to Create**

We will begin to see that the importance of work is closely related to our divinely given responsibility to care for the poor. This lesson, like that of the family, the church, and the state, is founded upon relationships. These relationships, which are ordered according to scriptural principles (see, e.g., Ephesians 6:5-9), fit the general triune pattern we have observed in other areas. God has granted the stewardship of His material goods to owners; and these owners are in turn accountable to Him for the use of His “stuff” and responsible for the welfare and productivity of the workers who operate under their direction and authority.

### **Lesson 12 - Community & Involvement: God Cares, Do I?**

The sphere of community outreach, practical service, and active love expressed in Christian charity – has been the distinguishing hallmark of the Church for many centuries. For a number of reasons, says Dr. Tackett, it has fallen into neglect in our day. Not only that, but the general call for involvement in culture at large, in all of the spheres, has actually become a matter of debate in some contemporary Christian circles. And yet a careful examination of Scripture will reveal that believers have a mandate to reclaim their place in this important arena. We dare not, like Jonah, try to escape God’s call to be involved. Over and over again, the Scripture clearly presents the perplexing reality that God entrusts us with carrying out His mission and purpose with the world.

We must realize that this is why Jesus sums up the entire law in two “Great Commandments”: “Love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength; and love your neighbor as yourself” (Matthew 22:36-40).