

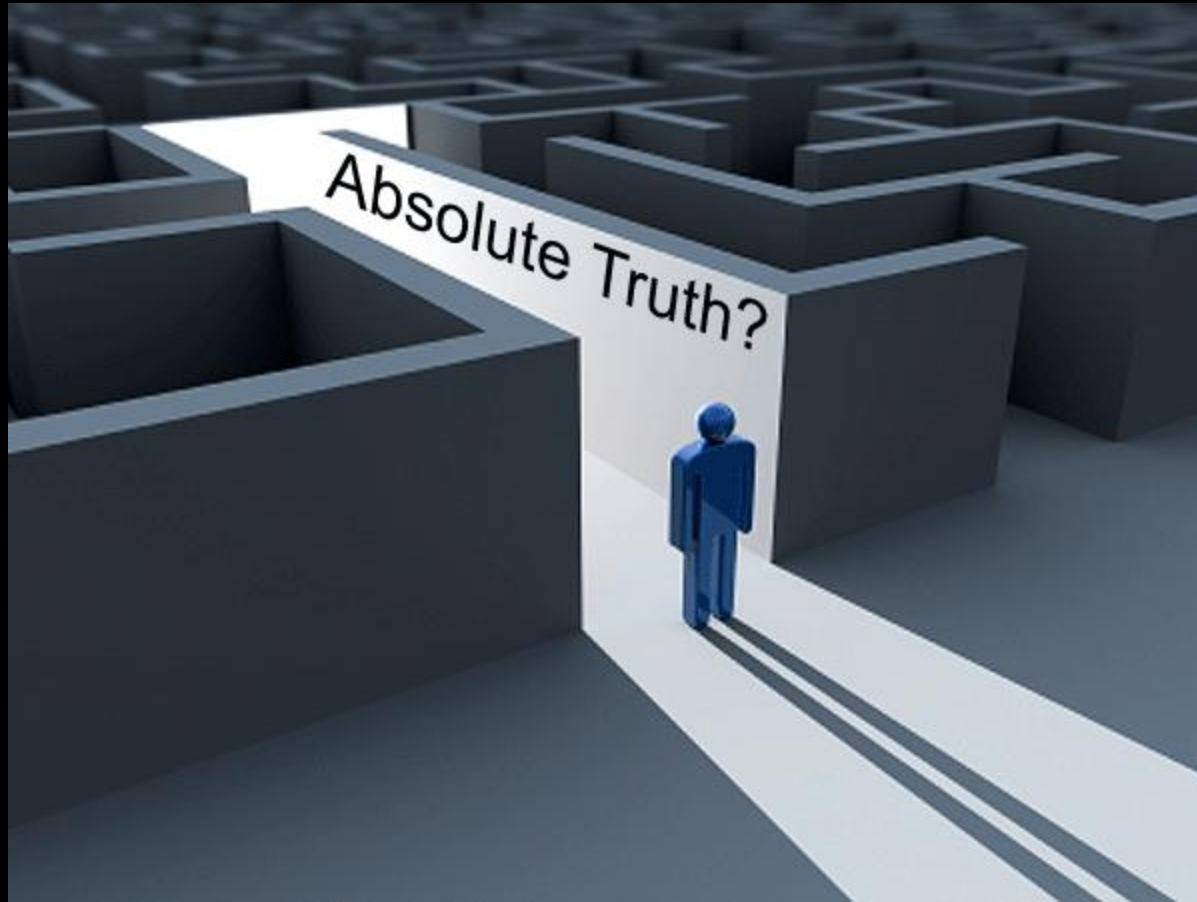
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Absolute

Truth

Exist?

Or is Everything Just Relative?



DOES

**Absolute
Truth
Exist?**



Truth?

Is there such a thing as Absolute Truth?

DOES

**Absolute
Truth
Exist?**



Let's work backwards and talk about what truth is *not*...

- 1. Truth is not what works (pragmatism). Lies can “work”.**
- 2. Truth is not what makes us feel good. Bad news can be true.**
- 3. Truth is not what the majority says. 51% can be wrong.**

DOES

**Absolute
Truth
Exist?**



Let's work backwards and talk about what truth is *not*...

4. Truth is not what is coherent/understandable. **A conspiracy can agree on a set of lies.**
5. Truth is not what was intended. **A good intention can be wrong.**
6. Truth is not what is comprehensive. **A long/detailed presentation can arrive at a wrong conclusion.**

DOES

**Absolute
Truth
Exist?**



Let's work backwards and talk about what truth is *not*...

7. Truth is not how we know. **Truth is what we know.**
8. Truth is not what is believed. **A lie believed is still a lie.**
9. Truth is not what is publicly proved. **A truth can be privately known (like buried treasure).**

DOES

**Absolute
Truth
Exist?**

TRUTH

Knowing what truth is *not*, let's now define what it is:

1. Truth is that which corresponds to reality.
2. Truth is that which matches/corresponds to its object.
3. Truth is simply telling is like it is – what is really real.

DOES

**Absolute
Truth
Exist?**

TRUTH

Greek word for “truth” - *alētheia*

Literally means to “un-hide”; “hiding nothing”. It indicates that truth is always there, but must be revealed or discovered.

Hebrew word for “truth” - *emeth*

Literally to have a “firmness”, “constancy” and “duration”. It implies an everlasting substance.

DOES

**Absolute
Truth
Exist?**

TRUTH

What are the key attributes of truth?

Truth naturally excludes and is narrow

$$2 + 2 = 4$$

...not 5 or 100 or...

DOES

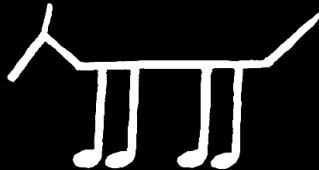
**Absolute
Truth
Exist?**

TRUTH

What are the key attributes of truth?

Truth is known by/corresponds to its referent

Person 1



Person 2



The dog is on person 1's left but on person 2's right...

DOES

**Absolute
Truth
Exist?**

TRUTH

What are the key attributes of truth?

Truth is discovered and does not change over time

- More exact truth may be discovered, but is always existed.
- For example, we now know the earth revolves around the sun.

We may grow in our knowledge of the truth, but it was always there.

DOES

**Absolute
Truth
Exist?**

MUST-HAVE

Absolute truth is demanded and critical in life.

- Health. “We accidentally gave him **too much** of the medicine...”
- Finances. “I’m sorry sir/ma’am – there’s **no money** in your account...”
- Transportation. “I thought **red** meant **go**...”
- Advertising. “This is **false** advertising...”
- The Witness Stand. “I swear to tell the **relative** truth...”
- Relationships. “You **lied** to me...”

If consequences exist for ignoring truth in the physical world, what about ignoring truth in the spiritual world?

DOES

Absolute Truth Exist?



Absolute Truth is immune to:

1. Sincerity.
2. Belief.
3. Desire.

If these facts about absolute truth apply to the natural world, why think they won't apply in the spiritual world?

DOES

**Absolute
Truth
Exist?**

absolute

What is Absolute Truth?

Truth that is true...

- **For all people**
- **In all places**
- **For all time**

Isn't this impossible? For example...

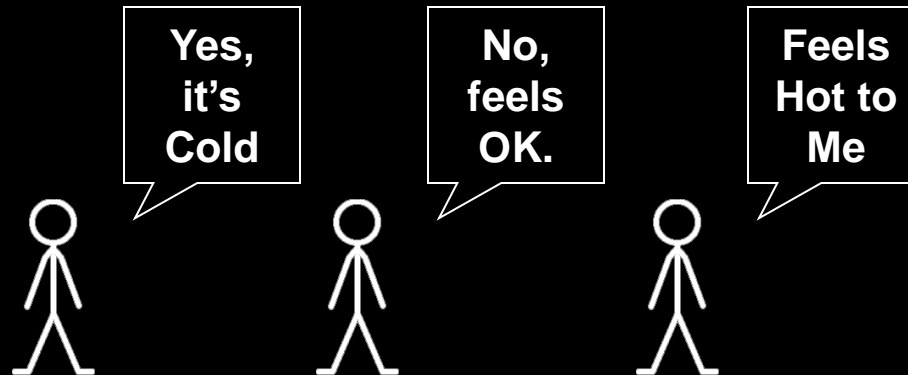
DOES

**Absolute
Truth
Exist?**

absolute

Challenging the concept of Absolute Truth...

A person walks into a room and asks three people “Is it cold in here?”



Proof that truth is relative to the individual...?

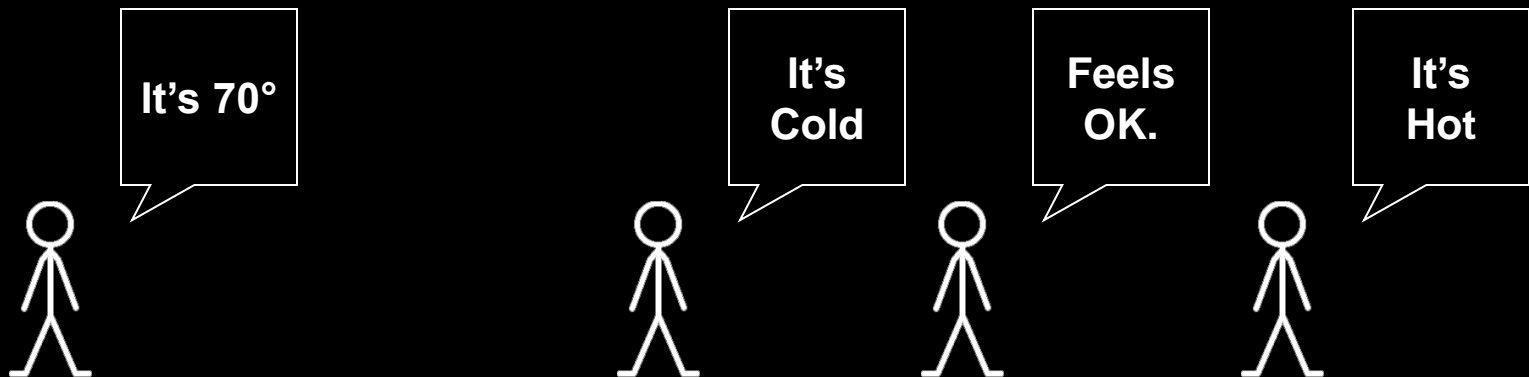
DOES

**Absolute
Truth
Exist?**

absolute

Challenging the concept of Absolute Truth...

The right question: “What’s the temperature of the room?”



It's absolutely true that it's 70°. Truth may affect different people different ways, but it doesn't mean 3 different temperatures exist.

DOES

**Absolute
Truth
Exist?**



Does Truth matter? A simple example:

- “Want to go ice skating tonight?”
- “Is the ice thick enough?”
- “Who cares?” (the postmodern response)

You could die...

DOES

**Absolute
Truth
Exist?**



In the absence of absolute truth, power rules.

Without a source of absolute truth, Nazism, Racism, or any movement could be imposed, and labeled true and acceptable.

In World War II – every Nazi soldier had a belt buckle that said “Gott Mit Uns” – “God is with us”. Was that true?

DOES

**Absolute
Truth
Exist?**

What's Your
Ideology?



Challenging the concept of Absolute Truth...

The most common anti-absolute truth ideologies:

- **Relativism – denies absolute truth.**
- **Skepticism – doubts all truth.**
- **Post-modernism – affirms no truth.**
- **Pluralism – states all claims are true, even opposites.**
- **Agnosticism – says you can't know the truth.**

All the above views are simply agnosticism in the end – a belief of unbelief.

DOES

**Absolute
Truth
Exist?**



Challenging the concept of Absolute Truth...

Relativism - "All truth is relative."

A question: Does that include the above statement?

- **If so, then the statement is meaningless**
- **If not, then absolute truth exists (at least for one claim).**

Ultimately, relativism is self-defeating – it cannot stand up to its own truth claim.

DOES

**Absolute
Truth
Exist?**



More reasons why relativism doesn't work...

- You just can't deny some things – it's absolutely true you exist (you have to exist to deny your existence).
- No one would ever be wrong about anything.
- The world would be drowning in contradictions.
- The relativist believes the absolutist's claims are false.
- Relativism is an “all sail and no anchor” philosophy.

When the relativist says “There is no truth” they are asking you not to believe them. So don't...

DOES

**Absolute
Truth
Exist?**

SKEPTIC TANK



Challenging the concept of Absolute Truth...

Skepticism - "I doubt all truth."

A question: Should we be skeptical of skepticism?

- **If so, then why even consider it?**
- **If not, then we can at least be sure of one thing – skepticism**
- **Descartes reasoned to God via the understanding that he couldn't doubt the fact that he was doubting**

Ultimately, skepticism is self-defeating – it cannot stand up to its own truth claim.

DOES

**Absolute
Truth
Exist?**

“La precisión no es la verdad”

Henri Matisse

Challenging the concept of Absolute Truth...

Post-Modernism - “I affirm no truth.”

A question: Do we affirm the truth that there is no truth?

- **If so, then at least one truth exists.**
- **If not, then the original statement is meaningless.**
- **Postmodernism is an epistemology that holds to the limitless uncertainty of words, with meaning having no point of reference.**

Ultimately, post-modernism is self-defeating – it cannot stand up to its own truth claim.

DOES

**Absolute
Truth
Exist?**

la Tolérance,

Challenging the concept of Absolute Truth...

Pluralism - "Everything is true."

**A question: Is this woman
both pregnant and not
pregnant? Does the
pluralist believe the
exclusivist's claims are true?**



Ultimately, pluralism's claims are not logical.

DOES

**Absolute
Truth
Exist?**

la Tolérance,

Challenging the concept of Absolute Truth...

Pluralism “tolerates” everything. But is this good?

tol-er-ance: Leeway for variation from a standard. Physiological resistance to a poison. (*American Heritage Dictionary*)

Tolerance is actually an engineering term and is a measure of how far something (a bridge, engine, etc.) can be skewed from what is good/the standard/true before it breaks.

Pluralism is actually exclusive – it says it’s true and all else is false

DOES

**Absolute
Truth
Exist?**

Militant Agnostic
I don't know & you don't either

Challenging the concept of Absolute Truth...

Agnosticism - “You can’t know truth.”

A question: Do you know if that’s true?

- **If so, then at least one truth exists.**
- **If not, then why believe in agnosticism?**

Ultimately, agnosticism is self-defeating – it cannot stand up to its own truth claim.

DOES

**Absolute
Truth
Exist?**

objection!

More objections to absolute truth...

It's arrogant to claim you have absolute truth...

- **Is it arrogant for a math teacher to insist $2+2=4$?**
- **Is it arrogant to claim only one key will fit a locked door?**
- **Is it arrogant to truly be right about something?**
- **Truth does not depend upon the attitude of the one dispensing it**

Relativism is just another synonym for disbelief or agnosticism.

DOES

**Absolute
Truth
Exist?**

objection!

More objections to absolute truth...

You're narrow minded ...

- **Truth, by definition, excludes all opposites**
- **Truth, by definition, is narrow (2+2 only equals 4)**
- **The logical law of non-contradiction says that something cannot be both "A" and "Non-A" at the same time and in the same sense.**

Real truth is black and white. All people may be equal, but not all truth claims are.

DOES

**Absolute
Truth
Exist?**

objection!

More objections to absolute truth...

Science is the only source of objective truth

The following cannot be proven scientifically:

- **Mathematics**
- **Logic**
- **Metaphysical truths**
- **Ethics**
- **Aesthetics**

Or... The statement 'Science is the only source of objective truth'

DOES

**Absolute
Truth
Exist?**

objection!

More objections to absolute truth...

David Hume/A.J. Ayer – Truth statements must either be (1) Tautologies (e.g. all bachelors are unmarried men) or empirically verifiable (i.e. testable via science). Therefore, all talk about God is “meaningless”.

Since Hume and Ayer’s definition is neither a tautology or empirically verifiable, it is **meaningless and does not meet its own test of truth.**

DOES

**Absolute
Truth
Exist?**

objection!

More objections to absolute truth...

Absolute Truth doesn't apply to morals (right/wrong) ...

A question: If you are married (or plan to get married one day), do you want your spouse to be **relatively** faithful to you, or **absolutely** faithful to you?

Absolutes apply in the area of morals too. Find one person who believes that torturing babies is morally OK.

DOES

**Absolute
Truth**

Exist?

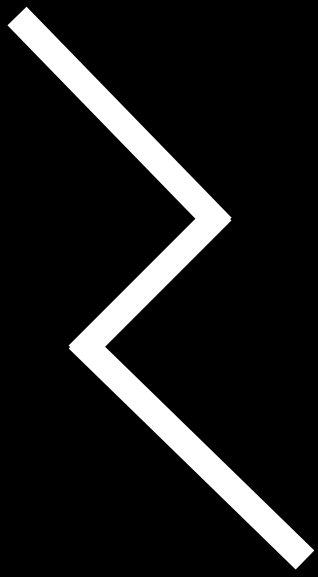
divide

How most approach truth/knowledge in religion

Mind



Heart



Objective Proof Facts
Science Binding **Truth**

Opinion Faith Values
Subjective Freedom **Religion**

DOES

**Absolute
Truth
Exist?**



How most *should* approach knowledge in religion



- Objective
- Verifiable
- Proof
- Truth
- Facts
- Faith



“Facts have nothing to do with religion” – Immanuel Kant, Prussian Agnostic

DOES

**Absolute
Truth
Exist?**

FAITH

How can “faith” be objective?

“Faith means not wanting to know what is true.” – Frederick Nietzsche, Atheist

Many people believe that faith is something you have in the absence of truth and evidence. “Faith” does not mean believing in something that just makes you feel good. The Greek word is “*pistos*”, which literally means “trust” – something/one in whom confidence can be placed; *reliability*; that which evokes trust; state of believing on the basis of the reliability of the one trusted; pertaining to being worthy of belief or trust; conviction of the truth; the character of one who can be relied on.

There is a difference between Faith *That* and Faith *In*.

DOES

**Absolute
Truth
Exist?**



Augustine's Proof for God from Absolute Truth

- 1. There are timeless and unchanging truths**
 - Absolute doubt is impossible (Descartes – we know we are doubting)**
 - I exist (I must exist to deny my existence)**
- 2. Unchanging truth cannot be caused by:**
 - Sensible things because the unchanging and independent cannot be caused by the changing and dependent (can't give what you don't have)**
 - Finite minds (for truth is independent of our minds and thus our minds are ruled by it)**
- 3. Therefore, there must be a timeless and unchanging Mind causing these unchanging truths**

DOES

**Absolute
Truth
Exist?**

CONCLUSION

The End Results of Concluding Absolute Truth Exists

- **Hard Agnosticism is ruled out as a belief system.**
- **Relativism is ruled out as a position.**
- **Postmodernism is ruled out as a belief system.**
- **We agree that we can know things truly as they are.**

“The great curse of modern philosophy is the almost universal prevailing rebellion against intellectual self-discipline. Where loose thinking obtains, truth cannot possibly be grasped, whence the conclusion naturally follows that there is no truth.” – Etienne Gilson

DOES

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Truth
Exist?**

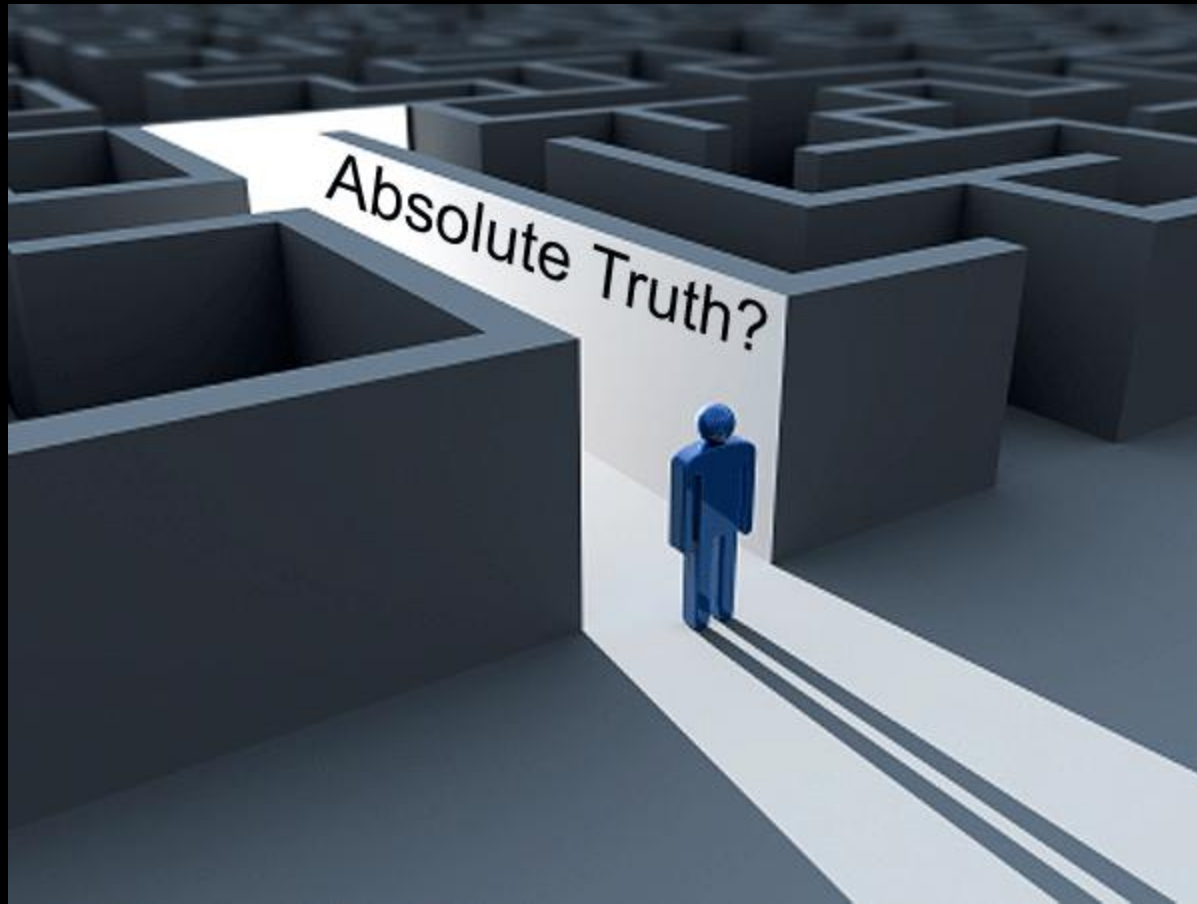
CONCLUSION

Absolute Truth does indeed exist

- Absolute Truth is correspondent in nature.
- Absolute Truth is exclusive by nature.
- Absolute Truth is narrow by nature.
- Absolute Truth is a powerful and life-changing thing.



**“The Contrary of a Truth can Never be Demonstrated.”
- Thomas Aquinas**



“Any commitment, it seems, depends on two distinct elements. It presupposes certain beliefs [to be true] and it also involves a personal dedication to the actions implied by them.” – Roger Trigg, philosopher

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**Absolute
Truth**

Exist?

It Does!