

The Suppression of Truth – What Happens Next?

Romans • COC • Oct. 20, 2020 • Pastor Hutchins

I. **CULTURAL DELIMMA** ———

A. **Daniel J. Boorstin** once wrote in his work:

The Image: A Guide to Pseudo-Events in America —
"We risk being the first people in history to have been able to make our illusions (lies) so vivid, so persuasive, so 'realistic' that we can live in them."

B. We could spend week's discussing how our nation's current post-truth culture came about -

1. I'm certain that we could fill our auditorium with people who could talk for days about **America's love affair** with what isn't true —

2. When did America become completely unhinged from *reality*? —

C. **When did the idea of Intellectual Freedom,** *(the idea in which an individual believes they are free to believe anything they wish),* **metastasize out of control?** ———

- D. Today, we witness our nation's dark descent into the chaotic caverns of lawless anarchy —
1. As a culture, we've imploded in our lust to let our sense of "subjective truth" entirely overrule "absolute Truth" —
 2. We've been guilty of Acting & Thinking as if our opinions & feelings are just as True as Facts —
 3. Until now, generations of Americans believe their ultra-individualism is their "right" to some epic dream or fantasy —
 - a. Today, we see people (even God's people) believing that they are entitled to construct their own custom-made utopia —
 - i. A utopia in which they are free to reinvent themselves by whim of imagination & self-determined will —
 - b. Nowadays, the idea that it is better to believe a made-up-lie is far more exciting than believing in the sober reality of Objective, Absolute Truth —

- c. Sadly, many of our fellow Americans have given themselves over to all kinds of magical thinking, anything-goes relativism, & belief in fanciful explanation
- i. small & large fantasies that console or thrill or terrify them.
- d. Until now, it seems that most people can no longer discern how far our people have traveled into a strange new normal — an alternate reality of promiscuous devotion to the Untrue —
4. Institutions once considered to be bastions of truth are now flagrantly indulging in peddling the Untrue & Absurd —
- a. from Media to Academia, from Govt. to Corporate America, from Sports to Social Media — the Collective are Enabling & Encouraging every species of Fantasy & Lie —

II. THE RESULTS OF LIVING A LIFE UNTETHERED TO *TRUTH* ARE IN —

- A. Americans are hardened — as a Nation we've become jaded & skeptical of anyone or anything that claims to tell us the Truth —
- B. You see, it doesn't really matter what happens socially, morally, or politically —
1. For the average person, it's almost impossible to figure out what is TRUE because the Media & Social Media have premeditatedly determined to skew & suppress the Truth!
- C. Certainly, in this climate of upheaval, chaos, calamity, distress, distortion, & lust for lies — there must be one among us, who like Pontius Pilate, asked: "What is Truth?"
- John 18:38**
- D. Pontius Pilate was cynical —
1. he too thought that all truth was relative.
 2. In fact, most of the Roman world believed that truth was whatever the majority agreed

with or whatever helped advance their own personal power & political goals —

3. When there is no standard or acknowledgment of **truth**, there is **no basis** for ***moral right*** or ***wrong***.

4. **Jesus** answered **Pilate** saying, **"For this reason I was born & have come into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to My voice."**

John 18:37

5. Notice **Jesus'** words in the Passion Trans.:

"Everyone who loves the truth will receive My words."

John 18:37b PT

E. In the psychology of **Human Behavior**, **Denialism** commonly refers to the **irrational action** of a person's choice to deny reality as a way to avoid an **uncomfortable truth** —

1. **Denialism** is when a person refuses to accept a verifiable reality —

- F. In *De Interpretatione*, **Aristotle** postulates
"The Correspondence Theory of Truth" —
1. which, simply put suggests that **truth** is that which corresponds to reality **as the truth exists** to bring us to **reality**.
 - a. Thus, those who deny **the truth** are not dealing with reality.
 2. For ex: I am an older American male ——— that is **the truth** & it corresponds with reality.
 - b. So, if I were to tell you that I **feel** that I am a young Turkish woman, that would **not** be **true** because it does not correspond with reality —
 - c. Even if I **felt** that **God** made me the **wrong age, ethnicity, & gender**, the **truth** is the **truth** & **reality** is **reality** — no matter what the **college professor** with a degree in **altered-reality** or **astral-inanity** says —
- G. So the **Apostle Paul**, with the intelligence of an eloquent penman begins to clearly &

concisely articulate the **Truth** of the *Gospel of Jesus Christ* to the believers in Rome —

1. To his brothers & sisters in **Rome**, to whom he had not yet seen, he writes with pleadings of love & longing of heart for them he desperately desires to see —
2. **Paul**, like the skilled lawyer he is, begins to present the case for **Truth** —
 - a. As **Paul** begins his message to the *Romans* by vividly portraying the sinfulness of all people & explaining how **forgiveness** is available **through faith** in **Jesus Christ**, he does something extraordinary —
 - b. He sets **Truth** forward to be illuminated by the context of their common objections to **Truth** & their refusal to commit to **Truth** —
 - c. **Paul** states that **while God has plainly revealed Himself in creation to all people**, the people are choosing not to regard it, to not live up to it —

3. **Paul** pens this remarkable truth : "18 **But God shows His anger from heaven against all sinful, wicked people who suppress the truth by their wickedness.** 19 **They know the truth about God because He made it obvious to them.** 20 **For ever since the world was created, people have seen the earth & sky. Through everything God made, they can clearly see His invisible qualities — His eternal power & divine nature. So they have no excuse for not knowing God.** 21 **Yes, they knew God, but would not worship Him as God or even give Him thanks. And they begin to think up foolish ideas about what God was like. As a result, their minds became dark & confused.** 22 **Claiming to be wise, they instead became utter fools.** 23 **And instead of worshipping the glorious, ever-living God, they worshipped idols made to look like mere people & birds & animals & reptiles."**

Rom. 1:18-23

H. Watch this — After *Paul* has his conversion experiences *Jesus Christ* on the road to **Damascus** (**Acts 9**), his whole life is consumed with telling others about *Jesus* & sharing the ***Good News of Salvation*** —

1. He assumes his obligation to reach people throughout the entire world — across all cultural, social, racial, & economic lines — both *Jews & Gentiles* —
2. *Paul* demonstrates to us what love, loyalty, & gratitude looks like when sharing the gospel with others — it's the ***work of love***.

I. So, within this framework of sex, gender, marriage, & sexuality — *Paul* writes, ***“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.”*** **Rom. 1:18**

1. The ***suppression of the truth*** means that a person's problem with the Bible is not mental, but moral.

2. It is not that we don't **understand** what **God** says, but that we don't like what **God** says.

3. **In our age of promiscuous devotion to the Untrue** — when we're all about finding those who are in power, criticizing those who wield the power, & destroying the person who holds the power in an effort to dismantle the system they built only to transfer their power to someone else, the **original Greek word for suppression** defines it as **“to prevent someone from exercising power.”**

J. For a moment, consider the reality of our hour - if **Lie** were a person, you'd see this person in a fight with **Truth** to the death - holding **Truth** down in a fight until the **Lie** drowns the **Truth** until it dies —

K. This is what **suppression** looks like – actively holding the **truth** down until succumbs to death by drowning —

1. Today, this happens with **everything** from **hashtags to riots, protests, misinformation,**

personal attacks, educational curriculum, movements, networks, fake news, & social media throttling.

L. This is **how** we exchange **God's truth** about reality for **the lie we prefer**.

1. The world is unaware of what the church should **know all too well** — this is **demonic**

a. **Jesus** told us that the **devil** is the **"Father of Lies"** ——— "44 *For you are the children of your father the devil, & you love to do the evil things he does. He was a murderer from the beginning. He has always hated the truth, because there is **no truth** in him. When he lies, it is consistent with his character; for he is a liar & the father of lies. 45 So when I tell you the **truth**, you just naturally don't believe Me." **Jn 8:44-45***

M. So, when we **choose lies** (either to speak them or believe them & receive them into ourselves), we engage in a **spiritual war** against **God Himself** —

N. How? —

1. Because when we choose to *believe a lie*, we at once position ourselves *adversarially* against **God** in *spiritual warfare* because we're trying to change "*reality*" by *suppressing the truth*.

2. Most of the time, when people do this, it is so that they can deny the *truth* of **God's Word** & **His** grace, for their own *lie-based* lifestyle, which is the entire point of **Romans 1:18-32**

O. So, in this critical hour in which the *devil*, *diablos*, "*the father of lies*" is warring against the tender ear of the precious soul who seeks *truth* —

1. **Satan** wishes to assault & assail the genteel hearts of **God's** tender people with the bluster of his pride & the howling winds of his deceit

2. **Satan** strategizes & wishes for nothing more than "to speak against the **Most High** & *oppress His holy people* (to wear out the *saints of the Most High God*) —

- a. The effect of all of this would be, that the *ardor of feeling* of many Christians would be lessened —
- b. The word "**wax**" means to "**become.**"
- c. So, the *fear of death*, the *deluding influence of false teachers*, & the *betrayal of brothers & sisters by the timid & weak confessors among them* ——— all of it was leaving many depleted because their *love had become cold*
- d. **Jesus** said, "**He that shall endure** (it all) **unto the end, the same shall be saved.**"
Matt. 24:13
- e. Those who do not shrink back from the afflictions & persecutions, but **remain faithful to the end... shall be saved.**

——— **Additional Scriptural References** ———

2 Thess. 2:9-10 — "*The coming of the lawless one will be accompanied by the working of Satan, with every kind of power, sign, & false wonder, 10 and with every wicked deception directed against*

those who are perishing, because they refused the love of the truth that would have saved them. 11 For this reason God will send them a powerful delusion so that they believe the lie, 12 In order that judgment may come upon all who have disbelieved the truth and delighted in wickedness."

——— **O. T. Commentary** [Love of Truth] ———

Amos 2:4-5

Unlike the judgments of the Gentiles (**Amos 1:3-15; 2:1-3**), *Amos* indicts *Judah* for breaking His commandments, specifically lying.

Judah's despising of God's law & Israel's commanding the prophets to stop preaching His Word (**Amos 2:12**) reflect exactly the same moral condition: Both refused the voice of God as spoken through His prophets. **What God intended to be their privilege through revelation of Himself and His law had turned out to be their central**

peril. It is another way of saying, **"To whom much is given, from him much will be required"**

Luke 12:48

Despising **truth** is an inward attitude that outwardly reveals itself in immorality, & this is the condition **God** found in ancient Israel. The people had become complacent about His revelation to them. They zealously sought after knowledge — even religious knowledge — but they did not really love the **truth** (**Romans 10:2-3**). This was reflected in their immorality; if they had loved **God's truth**, they would have been living it, & **God** would have had no cause for judgment.

They did not love **God's truth** enough to change. This was Israel's problem & it could be ours if we are not careful.

Because **God** has revealed **His truth** to us, each individual Christian has a responsibility to conform to it & grow. We must make sure that God, His Word, and His way are always first in our lives.