

CIVILized – Week One An Introduction to Absolute Truth

01. INTRODUCTION

Hello there, My name is _____ and I want to welcome. I am so excited to kick off our Civilized series where together we are going to dig deeper into the Ten Commandments, specifically their role in civilization and deeper in our lives personally.

Transition:

Definition: **Civilized** – At an advanced stage of social and cultural development.

Opposite: “Of a place or people, not considered to be socially, culturally or morally advanced.”

This is a great definition and allows us to look at history and put civilizations on a scale AND evaluate critically which has worked better.

And we should because it isn't just The Bible or the Church coming under attack today, it is the foundation of our entire Civilization.

Think about these ideas:

- Inalienable Rights
- Freedom of Speech
- Religious Liberty
- All Men (and Women) Created Equal
- Individual Responsibility
- Innocent Until Proven Guilty
- Sanctity of Life

Where do you think these ideas came from? The United States of America? The West? Europe? No, they came from the Bible. From Jewish and Christian men and women inspired by YHWH.

Illustration: at the end of 2017 a Forbes survey asked “All things considered, do you think the world is getting better or worse?” the results were predictably bleak. In Sweden only 10% thought things are getting better, and in the U.S., it was only 6%. **Hardly anyone thinks the world is getting better.**

And yet the facts show otherwise. In a powerful study entitled “[The short history of global living conditions and why it matters that we know it](#)” by [Max Roser](#), an economist at the University of Oxford and the founder of *Our World in Data*, we learn that on virtually all of the key dimensions of human material well-being—poverty, literacy, health, freedom, and education—the world is an extraordinarily better place than it was just a couple of centuries ago.

Poverty...

Even the Bible tells us that “**The poor you will always have with you.**” And it's customary to see poverty as so intractable, even insoluble, that organizations like the World Bank might as well try boiling the ocean. Statistics show otherwise. Massive gains have been made in reducing extreme poverty, particularly in the last 50 years. Some countries that are now rich were poor just a few decades ago.

Amid the flurry of bad news in the media, it's easy to miss how far and how fast we have come. As the media is obsessed with reporting events where things have gone wrong, it is easy to overlook this extraordinary fact: “**every single day since 1990, since, on average, there were 130,000 people fewer in extreme poverty every day.**”

Literacy...

The education story is equally encouraging. Data shows that the share of the world population that is literate over the last 2 centuries has gone from a tiny elite to a world where 8 out of 10 people can read and write. [The](#)

Guttenburg Press, Reformation and majority. of the greatest education institutes founded by Christians.

Health...

In 1800, more than 40% of the world's newborns died before the age of five. Now only a tiny fraction die before the age of five. How come? Modern medicine helped, particularly the discovery of germs, but even more important were improvements in housing, sanitation, and diet.

Hospitals founded by Christians.

Because of these Judeo/Christian ideals predicated on the 10 Commandments, we live in the most advanced and Civilized civilization the world has ever seen... **You simply cannot dispute that.**

Then The Covid Pandemic and social upheaval of 2020-present... has everything changed in just 2-3 years? **The Answer is yes and no.** The facts haven't changed but narratives have drastically changed.

All of this greatness and we tend to be one of the most ungrateful people on the planet. We wake up made at the world, confused about what to do next, but first I want to zero in on

Why Are We So Ungrateful?

1. **We are ignorant.** We just don't know what we don't know. **Naivety vs. Engagment.**
2. **We are willfully blind.** We refuse to look at what we know. **Honesty vs. Dishonesty.**
3. **We are resentful.** And as a result we want to tear the house down like a two year old. **Equity vs. Equality.**

Are there still problems? Yes. Do we need to care about and fix those problems Absolutely. We can certainly get better as history has shown however it won't happen by destroying the foundation from which everything has gotten better... The Ten Commandments and the underlying Judeo/Christian foundation from which it was built.

That's what we're going to talk about and specifically how the TEN COMMANDMENTS were given as a structure and framework for all of CIVILization

02. TRANSITION TO MESSAGE

Today, I want to set the stage for our conversation, it will be a longer one than your used to... maybe 12 weeks!.. by discussing it's entire underpinning "An Introduction To Absolute Truth".

What do you think of when you here truth?

Probably a lot of things. What do you mean when you say truth? It really is complicated. No other creation is as complex and complicated as human beings: here's why:

Genesis 1:26-27 NLT

²⁶Then God said, "Let us make human beings in our image, to be like us. They will reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, the livestock, all the wild animals on the earth, and the small animals that scurry along the ground."²⁷ So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

Our complexity and self awareness or consciousness is what makes us eternal like God. **The Truth is complicated and I'll show you why?** There are different levels or classifications of truth, even in the Bible...

Taxonomy of Truth (taxonomy a system of classification)

1. **Absolute Truth** – This is not invented or reinvented it is revealed or discovered. If you break it, it breaks you. Period. Rigid and unbending. Clear and self-evident to all. **TEN COMMANDMENTS.**

Romans 10:15

They demonstrate that God's law is written in their hearts, for their own conscience and thoughts either accuse them or tell them they are doing right.

2. **Principled Truth** – This is build on the foundation of absolute truth but is applied more broadly. This is the spirit of truth.

Example: It is wrong for a police officer to shoot an unarmed person, whether criminal or not. It is also wrong to murder a baby in the womb. Both are based in principled truth based on the spirit of thou shall not murder.

It is wrong to eat meat because animals are murdered. Nope. The commandment was given by people to people.

Big issue in early church: Circumcision and eating meat sacrificed to idols... – Peter and Paul went at it. This is what they decided:

Acts 15:19-20

¹⁹“And so my judgment is that we should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God. ²⁰Instead, we should write and tell them to abstain from eating food offered to idols, from sexual immorality, from eating the meat of strangled animals, and from consuming blood.

Based on principle – you idol worship when you eat the food offered to them. When you participate in sex outside of marriage. Circumcision is out. Thank you Jesus. More about that next week!

3. **Subjective Truth** – This is situational truth. **What should I do in this situation.** Many options that do not violate the absolute or the principle.

I can tell the truth in a number of ways. Wise or foolish. It is still the truth BUT context and intent matter. **Relationships are 99% grey.** In the situation we missed something.

Ephesians 4:31-32 NLT

³¹ Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, harsh words, and slander, as well as all types of evil behavior. ³² Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you.

4. **Personal Truth** – This is what is true for you and wrong for you. God loves you and knows what is right and wrong FOR YOU.

Romans 14:23

²³ But if you have doubts about whether or not you should eat something, you are sinning if you go ahead and do it. For you are not following your convictions. If you do anything you believe is not right, you are sinning.

What does this look like in our Current Religious and Political Ideologies?
(circle with two end points barely touching)

Insane Right – you add to the moral law. Pharisees burden on the people you can't bare scripture.

Today in the church: Fundamentalists. The people picketing gay funerals. Using truth as a club and adding their own traditions to it. This is what gave rise to the great rifts in Christian denominations.

Tradition OVER Theology. The guitar or organ, no music at all. Speak in tongues, don't speak in tongues. Etc. today it may be big church/small church, a cross on the building or not. Had a guy leave because he claimed an absolute truth that church should be on Saturday not Sunday and that easter bunny and santa were evil.

Titus 3:9 NIV

⁹ But avoid foolish controversies and genealogies and arguments and quarrels about the law, because these are unprofitable and useless.

Illustration: Story of the beer on the golf course – I asked, they said no. Then got mad and left... Not because of conscious – they didn't have a problem but because of self righteousness.

Today Politically: We see this politically in nationalism which in its extreme leads to fascism/nazism. Some nations are Christian some are barbaric. There is a great Aryan race.

A Christian nation vs. a nation of Christians. This idea that Jesus should be on the ballot. Culture haters. They also sadly are consumed with fear about everything. They tend to be fighters.

Romans 12:2

² Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.

Insane Left – you disregard the moral law. Sadducees departed from the books of Moses and in many ways departed from absolute truth.

Today in the church: Post Modern/Nihilist/WOKE. Entire denominations breaking over the truth to serve culture – allowing homosexual/transgender to serve in church leadership. Redefining Christian orthodoxy. Definition to love has been hijacked. Love is not just doing the nice thing but the right thing.

Church is Politics all the time or not at all. These churches are ALL in the decline.

Luke 6:26 NKJV

Woe to you when all men speak well of you,
For so did their fathers to the false prophets.

Today Politically: They were No better off. Worse actually. The term for far right politically is fascism and the term for far-left communism/socialism or Marxism. The insane left has killed more

people than the insane right. 60 million in socialist Russia and who knows how many 100 million in moist china. They erased the record.

Everyones rascist, every man is mysoginist – especially if he’s white. The entire system is corrupt.

2 Timothy 3:1-5

3 You should know this, Timothy, that in the last days there will be very difficult times. **2** For people will love only themselves and their money. They will be boastful and proud, scoffing at God, disobedient to their parents, and ungrateful. They will consider nothing sacred. **3** They will be unloving and unforgiving; they will slander others and have no self-control. They will be cruel and hate what is good. **4** They will betray their friends, be reckless, be puffed up with pride, and love pleasure rather than God. **5** They will act religious, but they will reject the power that could make them godly. Stay away from people like that!

How does this relate to Civilized and our conversation about the Ten Commandments? Glad you asked.

Ideology – you have a rigid way of thinking that is not anchored to absolute truth. This is either far right or left... you are God.

The dangers of IDEOLOGICAL POSSESSION:

1. Ideologies oversimplify complex issues. Biblically you may find yourself left or right on different issues.
2. Ideologies divide and conquer. Biblically you may find yourself causing division among brothers and sisters.
3. Ideologies become idols. Biblically you may find yourself breaking the moral law.
4. Ideologies always fail. Biblically yourself in a losing battle when the war has already been won.

04. CLOSING & PRAYER

As we close, this is important to understand...

Both extremes INSANE RIGHT and INSANE LEFT result in totalitarianism – Developing systems, religious or political that completely subjugate the individual and eliminates their autonomy.

We took a long way to the closing but this message and understanding what we are talking about is going to serve as the foundation of our conversation forward...

The Ten Commandments, as we will learn in this series, empower the individual to build a moral society.

Lets close with this passage...

James 1:25

But if you look carefully into the perfect law that sets you free, and if you do what it says and don't forget what you heard, then God will bless you for doing it.

And we ALL want that.

Let's pray