

S T U D Y G U I D E

TRUTH AND CONSE QUEN CES

R. ALBERT MOHLER JR.



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Truth and Consequences

R. Albert Mohler Jr.



LIGONIER MINISTRIES

Renew your Mind.

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Introduction

Christians have an intellectual responsibility. Not only are we to know what we believe, but in order to effectively share what we believe, we must also know what others believe. Ideas have consequences, and the world that we live in needs truth. In *Truth and Consequences*, Dr. R. Albert Mohler Jr. connects the development of the secular mind to its modern-day inconsistencies so that Christians will be able to show others the consequences of what they believe and shine the light of truth in a dark world.

This study guide is a companion to the video teaching series. Whether you are using the DVDs, streaming the videos on Ligonier.org, or going through the course in Ligonier Connect, this resource is designed to help you make the most of the learning experience. For each message in the series, there is a corresponding lesson in this guide. Here is what you will find in each lesson:

INTRODUCTION	<p>The introduction is a brief paragraph that summarizes the content covered in the lecture and considered in the study guide lesson.</p> <p>How to use: Use the introduction to each lesson to get a sense of the big picture before watching the video. Refer to these statements as you work through the study guide to remind you of what you have already covered and where you are headed.</p>
LEARNING GOALS	<p>The learning goals are the knowledge and skills the study guide lesson will endeavor to equip you with as you work through the lecture content.</p> <p>How to use: Familiarize yourself with the goals of each lesson before engaging with its contents. Keeping the overall purpose in mind as you watch each video and reflect on or discuss the questions will help you get the most out of each lesson.</p>
KEY IDEAS	<p>The key ideas are the major points or takeaways from the lecture.</p> <p>How to use: Use these ideas to prepare yourself for each lesson and to review previous lessons. They describe specifically the knowledge each lecture is communicating.</p>

REFLECTION & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS	<p>The questions are the guided reflection and/or discussion component of the lesson that are intended to help you prepare for, process, and organize what you are learning.</p> <p>How to use: Reflect on individually or discuss in a group the questions in the order in which they appear in the lesson. The timestamps in the right margin indicate where the answers to questions during the video can be found.</p>
PRAYER	<p>The prayer section offers suggestions for how to close the lesson in prayer with respect to what was taught in the lecture.</p> <p>How to use: Consider using each lesson's prayer section as a guide to personal or group prayer. These sections follow the ACTS prayer model, which you can learn more about in R.C. Sproul's Crucial Questions booklet <i>Does Prayer Change Things?</i> This helpful guide is available as a free e-book at Ligonier.org.</p>
REVIEW QUIZ	<p>The review quiz is a set of six multiple-choice questions that appears at the end of each lesson.</p> <p>How to use: Use each quiz to check your comprehension and memory of the major points covered in each lecture. It will be most beneficial to your learning if you take a lesson's quiz either sometime between lessons or just before you begin the next lesson in the study guide.</p>
ANSWER KEY	<p>The answer key provides explanations for the reflection and discussion questions and answers to the multiple-choice questions in the review quiz.</p> <p>How to use: Use the answer key to check your own answers or when you do not know the answer. Note: Do not give in too quickly; struggling for a few moments to recall an answer reinforces it in your mind.</p>

Study Schedules

The following table suggests four plans for working through the *Truth and Consequences* video teaching series and this companion study guide. Whether you are going through this series on your own or with a group, these schedules should help you plan your study path.

	Extended 12-Week Plan	Standard 10-Week Plan	Abbreviated 6-Week Plan	Intensive 4-Week Plan
Week	Lesson			
1	*	1	1	1–2
2	1	2	2 & 3	3–5
3	2	3	4 & 5	6–8
4	3	4	6 & 7	9–10
5	4	5	8 & 9	
6	5	6	10	
7	6	7		
8	7	8		
9	8	9		
10	9	10		
11	10			
12	*			

* For these weeks, rather than completing lessons, spend your time discussing and praying about your learning goals for the study (the first week) and the most valuable takeaways from the study (the last week).

What Is Truth?

INTRODUCTION

Humans have the ability to think, reason, and distinguish between truth and falsehood. These abilities do not come without responsibilities, however. The Christian mind in particular has a responsibility to guard the truth. In this session, Dr. Albert Mohler explores how the Christian mind is renewed by truth and has a simultaneous responsibility to defend it.

LEARNING GOALS

When you have finished this lesson, you should be able to:

- Summarize the differences between the approach to truth from a secular standpoint and a Christian standpoint
- Understand the difference between subjective and objective truth
- Describe the influence that the Enlightenment had on modern thinking and how it continues to affect us today

KEY IDEAS

- There are no neutral minds—the mind is either devoted to God or opposed to Him.
- When Paul calls Christians to be transformed by the renewal of the mind in Romans 12:2, he understands that *truth* is the instrument by which the mind is renewed.
- God gave mankind the capacity to reason. Reason is not autonomous, but it serves to glorify God and reflects the image of God.
- Reason is a tool for the Christian to understand the revelation of God.

REFLECTION & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Before the Video

What Do You Think?

Take a moment to answer the following questions. They will prepare you for the lecture.

- Why are you undertaking this study?
- How do you think the idea of objective truth has been affected by the modern culture?

Scripture Reading

I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

—Romans 12:1–2

- What does this passage say about the result of a transformed mind?

During the Video

Answer the following questions while you watch the video. They will guide you through the lecture.

The Mind and Truth

0:00–8:55

- What does Dr. Mohler mean when he says that there are no “neutral minds”?
- What did Francis Schaeffer mean when he said that Christians are the people who believe in “true truth”?

The Power of the Enlightenment

8:55–23:30

- What significance does reason have in the Christian worldview that it doesn’t have in the Enlightenment worldview?

- How has the emergence of the modern university affected the modern culture's understanding of reason?

After the Video

Answer the following questions after you have finished the lecture. They will help you identify and summarize the major points.

- How did the modern age shift how people thought about industry?

If you are in a group, have the members discuss how they think rationalism has affected the way they carry out their day-to-day lives.

- What is the postmodern understanding of truth?

If you are in a group, have the members discuss how to talk about the truths of Scripture with people who do not believe in objective truth.

- What does the *New York Times* advertisement reveal about the importance of truth, even in a culture that devalues truth?

If you are in a group, have each member discuss the quote from Alan Bloom: "Every student knows, or thinks he knows, that all truth is relative." How is this mentality challenged by the gospel?

PRAYER

Commit what you have learned from God's Word in this lesson to prayer.

- Praise God for making us reasonable creatures.
- Confess how you do not use all of your mind to honor and glorify God.
- Thank God for the revelation of His Word that we might conform our minds to His will.
- Ask God to renew your mind in the power of the Spirit through His truth.

REVIEW QUIZ

Use these multiple-choice questions to measure what you learned from this lesson.

1. Which of the following does Dr. Mohler state as one of the most immediate distinctions between human beings and other creatures?
 - a. Human beings are communal creatures.
 - b. Human beings are emotional creatures.
 - c. Human beings are powerful creatures.
 - d. Human beings are thinking creatures.
2. Which group of people does Dr. Mohler say changed their view of truth during the Enlightenment?
 - a. Common workers
 - b. Religious clergy
 - c. Philosophers
 - d. Politicians
3. What is the basic principle of rationalism?
 - a. Reason is subservient to God.
 - b. Knowledge cannot be attained.
 - c. Reason is the only way to attain knowledge.
 - d. Knowledge is attained by emotional experience.
4. What does Dr. Mohler say is the function of the modern university?
 - a. To be an institution of disputation and conversation
 - b. To be an institution of self-discovery
 - c. To be a research institution
 - d. To be a trade institution
5. The Christian understanding of reason is informed by revelation.
 - a. True
 - b. False
6. What movement spawned as a revolt against rationalism?
 - a. Empiricism
 - b. Romanticism
 - c. Postmodernism
 - d. Post-rationalism

Answer Key—What is Truth?

REFLECTION & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Before the Video

What Do You Think?

These are personal questions. The answers should be based on your own knowledge and experience.

Scripture Reading

- What does this passage say about the result of a transformed mind?

A foundational Christian belief is that all truth is God's truth. As creatures, our minds are to be conformed to God's truth so that we may live as He intended us to live. However, as a result of the fall, we rebel against God with our minds and attempt to define truth by other standards. What we as sinners need most is a new heart and a new mind, and we know from passages such as this one that it is through renewing and transforming our minds that we are able to live according to God's will.

During the Video

The Mind and Truth

- What does Dr. Mohler mean when he says that there are no “neutral minds”?
Dr. Mohler means that, religiously and morally, there is no person in a state of indifference when it comes to God and Jesus Christ. The mind is either attracted in love and devotion to God, or it is opposed to God. This assertion can be offensive to many, because it means that those who are not devoted to God are actually opposed to Him.
- What did Francis Schaeffer mean when he said that Christians are the people who believe in “true truth”?
Schaeffer meant that, for the Christian, the category of truth is fundamentally objective and not subjective. Truth is unchanging and is dependent on an unchanging God. Many today claim that truth can vary from one person to another based on their personal experiences, which is incompatible with the biblical definition of truth.

The Power of the Enlightenment

- What significance does reason have in the Christian worldview that it doesn't have in the Enlightenment worldview?

Reason is something that Christians see as planted in our minds and consciences by our Creator. Part of what it means to be created in the image and likeness of God is that we have the capacity for reason. The Enlightenment sought to undermine the higher accountability of reason to God and direct our understanding of reason toward subjectivity and autonomy.

- How has the emergence of the modern university affected the modern culture's understanding of reason?

The university used to be an institution composed of a community of scholars who were dedicated to learning through disputation, conversation, writing, and memorization. The modern university is devoted to research and to the ideas of rationalism. This has led to a culture that seeks to apply human reason and the scientific method to almost all spheres of knowledge and learning.

After the Video

- How did the modern age shift how people thought about industry?

With the Enlightenment and the modern age came the Industrial Revolution—human reason applied to industry. This caused people to look at everything in a new light, even the individual worker. Workers would no longer engage in the entire process of producing a product from start to finish but would function as if they were cogs in a machine, doing one minute task in the overall process.

- What is the postmodern understanding of truth?

Postmodernism consists of more than just a denial of revelation and follows the logical progression of the modern age to the point of denying objective truth. Truth is seen in relative terms through this lens, which has a profound effect on one's understanding of reality and knowability. When the foundations of truth are shaken, reality itself is shaken with it.

- What does the New York Times advertisement reveal about the importance of truth, even in a culture that devalues the truth?

The advertisement "The truth is more important now than ever" reveals that even our secular culture cannot get away from the concept of objective truth. The statement does not speak of "a" truth but "the" truth. So, the battle for truth is clearly centered around the question "Who is the arbiter of truth?" The answer to that question is where the Christian worldview and the non-Christian worldview significantly differ.

REVIEW QUIZ

Lesson 1

1. **D.**

The Scriptures reveal to us that as a man thinks, so he is. To be a human being is to be a thinking creature. We are distinct from other creatures in that we can think and reason and are conscious of not only what is around us, but who we are and how we relate to the creation and the Creator.

2. **C.**

As is often the case, philosophical shifts eventually make their way down into the rest of the culture. The philosophers were those who primarily changed their view of truth, and their views spread to the common worker and even to the church.

3. **C.**

Rationalism argues that the only way to attain knowledge is through reason. This understanding is in conflict with the Christian faith, which emphasizes revelation as informing reason.

4. **C.**

The university is no longer an institution dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge through open intellectual disputation. Dr. Mohler says that we must concede that the modern university, as we know it, really began in Germany and functioned as a research institution, remaining so to this day.

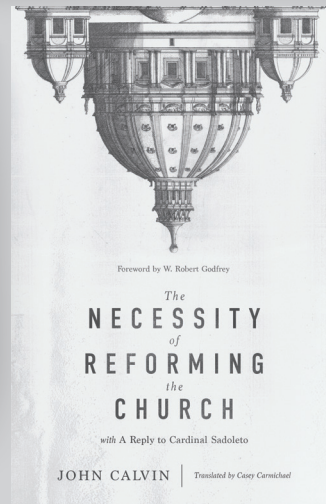
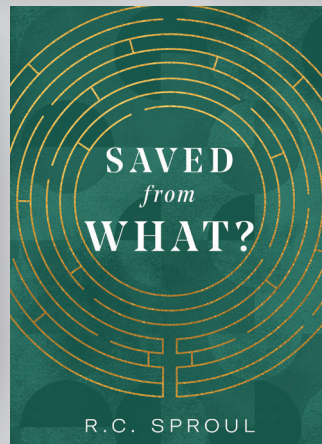
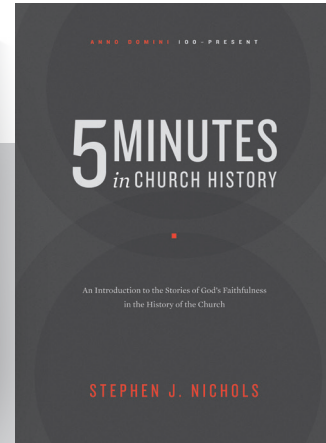
5. **A.**

The Christian sees his ability to reason as completely reliant on what our Creator has revealed about Himself and His creation. We understand that we are not completely autonomous beings and are dependent creatures, so we dare not reason apart from God's revelation.

6. **C.**

Dr. Mohler describes how the modern age was already a revolt against revelation and how there eventually came a revolt against the rationalism of the modern age itself. The revolt against the modern age is what is called "postmodernism."

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the deep truths of the Christian faith to everyday life.



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