

THE MYTH OF RELATIVISM

Is 7 the sum of 2+2? Is “up” above us or below us? Does the law of gravity operate only in certain cultures? Is the rape of a seven-year-old child good, neither good nor evil, or evil? Can black be both black and white simultaneously? Is *truth*, like *beauty*, only in the eye of the beholder? Such questions accentuate the philosophical current of our time—*relativism*.

Relativism and its first cousins, subjectivism, agnosticism, and humanism, are hardly new concepts, dating at least back to the Greek sophist, Protagoras, 2500 years ago. His credo, a thing “is to me such as it appears to me, and is to you such as it appears to you,” well expresses the mantra of today’s pervasive *your-truth, my-truth* dogma of postmodernism.

Relativism manifests itself in many areas of our lives, including science, art, entertainment, politics, morals, historical perspective, and religion. It has led to the tyranny of “political correctness,” “situation ethics,” history revisionism, and to displaying human waste as “art.” In religion, relativism holds that there is no one true, exclusive religion; the same religion can be true for one person, while not true for others.

In other words, relativism denies the existence of absolute, objective truth at all, with one notable exception, which is the relativist’s Achilles’ heel: He cannot even state his creed without advocating at least one thing he believes to be an absolute, objective truth. His creed is that **all things are relative**. We immediately want to ask him if his creed is absolute and objective. If he answers “No,” why should we give him a hearing? If he answers “Yes,” he thereby denies what he has affirmed. Absolute, objective truth to the relativist is that there is no absolute, objective truth. Relativism is thereby exposed as the manifestation of irrationality that it is.

Since there is this one exception to the relativist’s thesis, might there be more? If there is absolute truth in mathematics e.g., $2+2=4$), might there not be in other areas of thought, including religion (dare we suggest it)—matters of the soul? The relativist despises the Bible, principally because it dares to make absolute, exclusive truth claims, such as the following: “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved” (Mark 16:16a); “For except ye believe that I am he ye shall die in your sins” (John 8:24b); “I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no one cometh unto the Father, but by me” (John 14:6).

Relativists charge Christians with arrogance, all the while arrogantly advocating relativism. Relativists boast of their tolerance, all the while having no tolerance for the Bible’s truth claims and those who hold it to be the very Word of God. Relativists despise evangelism by Christians, all the while eagerly seeking converts to their irrational dogma.

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