

Trust is huge to truth. That is, we assume far more is true than we have any direct proof for believing. Much of what we assume to be true, we do so because others appear to believe it. Whole neighborhoods, regions, nations, and cultures have convinced themselves and most of their members of things that were not in fact true. At times, those errors have been epic, even disastrous, leading to terrible starvation, disease, and deprivation. At other times, though, the errors may have been salvific. Medievalists thought the black death to be from bad air or ethers, so better to stay inside. Untrue, but staying inside had its positive effect in slowing the transmission of the deadly bacterium. But in either case, for better or worse, societies often convince their members of the society's erroneous truth.



Much else of what we assume to be true, we do so because of the apparent authority of those who tell it to us. Parents speaking lessons to their children fall into that category. The child believes the household truth to be absolute, until experiencing other households. We joke that teens believe few things their parents tell them, teens often believing that they know better. But in fact, teens likely largely accept that the world is as their parents experienced and represented it, until the teen goes off to college or the workplace only to learn the limits of their parents' perspectives. Parents are not the only truth-telling authorities. How often have we believed

the experts only later to discover the experts were wrong? Bloodletting was an accepted medical practice from antiquity until times more recent than medical experts would like to admit. Count George Washington among those who may have died from medical bloodletting.

The Bible's truths, though, are neither a matter of popular wisdom nor parochial authority. Indeed, the Bible challenges us to weigh the popular against the biblical, rather than the other way around. We stand on God's word, not what the majority would have us believe. The Bible also challenges us to reject worldly authorities, those fools who pretend to know, when biblical principles contradict them. The Bible as God's word doesn't claim a worldly authority but instead a higher authority, one that judges all things against itself. The Bible reveals a sort of meta truth that transcends worldly truth, to which one of the most-popular Bible verses refers when admonishing us to trust in God rather than our own understanding. Don't take anything as gospel other than the Gospel truth.