

264 *Two types of knowledge?*

One of my friends with whom I have lively discussions has pointed out that there are two types of knowledge: objective and subjective. Only God has objective knowledge, and if we humans set ourselves up as some sort of authority, saying we can make our own rules, that leads to Godless chaos – a bit like we have at the moment.

Yes, I agree: only God has objective knowledge; humans don't. The trouble is that what applies to 'them' also applies to 'us': not even Christians can know things objectively, only subjectively. How could it be otherwise, given our first premise?

'Yes, but we have the Bible, and that's God's Word,' you might reply, 'so we know the truth objectively.' Really? I thought only God could know things objectively? Does the Bible deliver objective truth?

As I have said many times, yes, God *inspired* fallible humans in their writing of the Scriptures, to point us in the right direction, first towards Jesus (OT) and second, in Jesus to know what God is really like. But, in my view at least, it doesn't give us objective rules that apply for all time.

In any case, having thought further about this, I would challenge the statement that there are (only) two types of truth. Isn't there a third type: knowing a person? So, for me, being a Christian is seeking to follow, emulate, copy, get to know better – and worship – a Person. And that causes a change in how we (seek to) live our lives.

Again, for me, the Bible is not a book to tell me (objectively?) what's right and wrong; rather it's a way (through the work of the Holy Spirit) to make me, day by day, more like Jesus, so that I *want* to do the right things.

Reality check: What is your main concern? Is it that even Christians are not following the behaviour laid down in the Bible? Are you concerned that some Christians (e.g. me!) are advocating behaviours that are simply wrong, and that the standards of God's Word are being set aside because of the pressure of 'the world'?

If so, you are claiming that there are certain things that you *know* are (objectively?) wrong. And when those Christians (e.g. me) suggest that broader Jesus-like concerns can take precedence over certain 'rules' in the Bible, we are just plain (objectively) wrong.

You say you fear that what I'm espousing is humanism and that bringing humanism into church would make me a false prophet. Please rest easy: I still believe as strongly as ever – more strongly – the central doctrines of the traditional Christian faith; I just can't objectively prove a single one of them!

I have spent 50 years trying to prove God to friends and family and to prove certain doctrines to fellow Christians. I no longer feel any need to prove anything to anyone; I'll do the living and loving and let God do the proving.