

## The Consequences of Subjectivism and Relativism

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From a practical point of view, the question of whether we can know objective truth is one of the most important questions in apologetics, because today most arguments between Christians and non-Christians eventually come down to this point. What usually happens is this: After the Christian has won the substantive argument, the non-Christian, unable to refute the Christian's argument, retreats to this ubiquitous line of defense: "What you say may be true for you, but not for me. Truth is relative. What right do you have to impose your beliefs on me? You're being judgmental."

Christian apologetic strategy must be ready to cope with this move. We must be prepared to show our opponents (i.e., our friends) that they take refuge in this relativism and subjectivism only after they have lost the argument, never after they have won it, or think they have won it.

The consequences of a subjectivism and relativism of truth are destructive not only to apologetics but also to intellectual honesty and to life. For if truth is objective, if we live in a world we did not create and cannot change merely by thinking, if the world is not really a dream of our own, then the most destructive belief we could possibly believe would be the denial of this primary fact. It would be like closing our eyes while driving, or blissfully ignoring the doctor's warnings (C. S. Lewis, "*The Poison of Subjectivism*," in *Christian reflections*).

Of all the symptoms of decay in our decadent civilization, subjectivism is the most disastrous of all. A mistake can possibly be discovered and amended if and only if truth exists and can be known and is loved and searched for...

(Pocket Handbook of Christian Apologetics by Peter Kreeft and Ronald K. Tacelli, Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2003, 132-133)