

Around the World

Truth Is Universal

There are truths that apply to everyone.

For many centuries, people looked around them and assumed that the Earth was flat. Of course, we now know that it is round. The round shape of Earth is an example of a universal truth, one that applies to people of all cultures and backgrounds. Even if some continue to believe that the world is flat, this doesn't change the reality that the Earth is actually round.

Science and math explore universal truths.

Science and mathematics are based on the central premise that it is possible to discover universal truths about nature and the world around us. For example, since chemical reactions are consistent from place to place, we can design car engines that work anywhere in the world. Likewise, " $3 \times 3 = 9$ " is a mathematical reality that holds true in every country and culture.

We don't create truth; we discover it.

When we discovered that the Earth is round, we didn't create its shape. We simply observed the Earth as it truly is. When we write out the multiplication table, we are discovering mathematical principles that have always existed. We are able to discover laws of science and mathematics which exist independently of our personal preferences, feelings, or experiences.

We can seek truth together with mutual respect.

When we recognize that universal truth exists, we have a shared position by which we can seek truth together. When two people disagree on a scientific matter, for example, they can discuss the evidence on each side. In a respectful way, they can work to arrive together at a better understanding of the truth.

Moral and religious truths are universal truths.

We can discover truths which apply to everyone in the areas of faith and morality, too. For example, if humans have a moral obligation to treat one another as persons rather than objects to be used, this is a truth that transcends cultural differences. It is a truth we discover, but do not create. Similarly, if God exists (or does not), this is a reality that applies to believers and non-believers alike.

We can seek such truths in respectful discussion.

If two people disagree on the question of God's existence, but they recognize that this is a reality greater than their own opinions or preferences, then they have a foundation for a respectful discussion. There is no reason to attack one another on a personal level. Instead, they can present the reasons for their positions in a friendly manner, seeking to arrive together at a fuller understanding of the truth.

