



## The Progress of Truth

### *The Truth Project's Success in North Carolina*

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**I**N THE 1938 FILM *CAN'T TAKE IT WITH YOU*, GRANDPA VANDERHOFF SAYS, "EVERYBODY'S GOT AN '-ISM' THESE DAYS. WELL, IT'S JUST AS CATCHING. WHEN THINGS GO A LITTLE BAD NOWADAYS, YOU GO OUT, GET YOURSELF AN '-ISM' AND YOU'RE IN BUSINESS."<sup>1</sup> THIS FLIPPANT STATEMENT SHOWS HOW MUCH THE AMERICAN PERSPECTIVE OF THE BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW HAS BEEN ALTERED SINCE THE NATION'S FOUNDING. ORIGINALLY, THE BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW WAS THE COHESIVE SYSTEM OF BELIEFS THAT DOMINATED THE SOCIETAL NORMS AND INTERACTIONS IN AMERICA.<sup>2</sup> ACCORDING TO THE BARN A RESEARCH GROUP, ONLY NINE PERCENT OF BORN AGAIN CHRISTIANS BASE THEIR DECISION-MAKING ON A BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW.<sup>3</sup> CLEARLY, AS TIME HAS PASSED, THE WAY AMERICANS APPROACH THEIR WORLDVIEW HAS BEEN DISTORTED FROM A CLEAR COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO THE NOW ACCEPTED TACTIC OF VIEWING THE WORLD THROUGH AN ALLEGORICAL PAIR OF FOGGY LENSES.

Dr. Bruce Little, the Director for The Center of Faith and Culture at Southeastern Baptist Theolog-

ical Seminary, explains that a "worldview" is simply the way a person views or interprets the world.<sup>4</sup> A Christian worldview, according to Dr. Little, is an interpretation of the world informed by historic Christianity and creation. Francis Schaeffer, an American evangelical Christian theologian, philosopher, and Presbyterian pastor, is undoubtedly the man of choice to reference when researching the historic interaction between culture and Evangelical Christianity. In his address at the University of Notre Dame in April 1981, he proclaimed, "Christianity is not a series of truths in the plural, but rather truth spelled with a capital 'T.' Truth about total reality, not just about religious things. Biblical Christianity is Truth concerning total reality—and the intellectual holding of that total Truth and then living in the light of that Truth."<sup>5</sup> Dr. Little summarized Schaeffer's impact by saying, "Francis Schaeffer taught us to think 'worldviewishly.' Evangelicals saw Christianity as an all-encompassing way of life—not just a mere religion."<sup>6</sup>

In their book *American Grace*, a massive research project outlining the cultural developments of this century and their affect on society at large,

political scientists Robert D. Putnam and David E. Campbell wrote, "...The opinions held by one's fellow parishioners, correlates more strongly with one's political ideology than do one's own religious beliefs."<sup>7</sup> The results of this study are alarming. These statistics speak to the change in the ways an individual solves problems—and what set of 'evidences' they use to substantiate their stance. When did something external to the foundational Truth of the Bible become the influencing force in American lives? Are more Americans basing important decisions on a mere "ism" and ever-changing emotions rather than on an unchangeable and irrefutable understanding of the Truth?

Focus on the Family created *The Truth Project* with the intent to address these alarming questions. In fact, each lesson plan is specifically designed to unravel, define, prove, and clarify a major question in regards to the Christian faith. Dr. Del Tackett, the former president of the Focus on the Family Institute and chief spokesperson for *The Truth Project*,<sup>8</sup> combined research on the biggest and most basic issues of human existence, crafting twelve lessons to be taught in a relational small group environment and outline: the existence of God, the nature of reality, the existence and knowability of absolute truth, and the moral and ethical propositions of these and other crucial questions.<sup>9</sup>

## Truth in North Carolina

The North Carolina Family Policy Council started *The Truth Project* partnership with Focus on the Family in June of 2009. Now under the leadership of Rev. William Roach, *The Truth Project* is making great strides. "Since that first event, we have been in all of the regions throughout the state of North Carolina," Rev. Roach explains. "Literally, we have seen the mountains, the ocean, and everything in between." However, the program's impact is far more critical than a geographical understanding of North Carolina. Through *The Truth Project*, people are seeing the importance of taking action. "I have had the personal pleasure to witness those beautiful 'ah-ha!' moments within marriages and families who participate in *The Truth Project*—which is such an affirming testimony to know that a real under-

standing of the Truth changes people. I have seen people change because of this program, which is an easy explanation for why I invest my time and heart into seeing it grow," Rev. Roach continues. "What an honor and a joy to know that through this astute training tool, people all across the State of North Carolina are feeling the incredible call Christians have to contend in the public sphere for what they know to be right—for what the Lord says is right."

## The Bayleaf Experience

One of the many churches to experience the fruits of *The Truth Project* in North Carolina is Bay Leaf Baptist of Raleigh. Led by their senior pastor, Dr. Marty Jacumin, Bay Leaf Baptist has had over 370 adults participate in the worldview small group series, and has trained 56 leaders, since 2009. Before bringing *The Truth Project* before the entire church, Dr. Jacumin went through the DVD series on his own. His exploration began when he witnessed a growing problem among young adults after they leave for college. Dr. Jacumin explained, "In our culture today, the numbers indicate that we lose around 70 percent of young Christians when they leave for college, and the question I kept returning to was; are they prepared to defend their faith? Are they even prepared to try? It's almost like many of them go away and the only response they have to give when approached with hard questions about their faith is, 'Well, this is what mom and dad taught me.'<sup>10</sup> As Dr. Jacumin and the Bay Leaf Baptist Church staff considered this troubling reality in their own congregation, it prompted them to ask themselves a difficult question, "Are our parents prepared to defend their faith properly and accurately so they can teach their children?"<sup>11</sup> *The Truth Project* became the tool to help bridge this gap between the Bay Leaf Baptist congregation and the broader community.

## Lay Leader Led

*The Truth Project* has become much more than a conversation starter as Bay Leaf Baptist families sharpen one another and grow together. "We encourage parents and children to participate in *The Truth Project* together," Dr. Jacumin explains. "If anything else, it gets people comfortable dealing with hard questions—and what's going to be our answer and our guide? Is it going to be culture? Or is it going to be God's Word?"<sup>12</sup>

In 2 Corinthians, the apostle Paul proclaims, "With these weapons we break down every proud argument that keeps people from knowing God. With these weapons we conquer their rebellious ideas, and we teach them to obey Christ."<sup>13</sup> In a broader sense, Dr. Jacumin sees the greater impact of *The Truth Project*. "The Bible tells us to prepare to give a defense of the hope we know there is to come," Dr. Jacumin says. "So I think *The Truth Project* helps tear down some of the fears and apprehen-

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sions surrounding engaging others about Biblical worldview. The more comfortable we are with what we believe, the easier and more confidently we can boldly defend it in all nations.”<sup>14</sup>

The success of *The Truth Project* in many North Carolina churches is that it has granted a solid biblical worldview understanding to those who participate. Bo and Judy Batchelder, members of The Church of the Apostles in Raleigh, have been pleased to see God grant the gift of wisdom through *The Truth Project* within their congregation. Two years ago, Bo and Judy attended a large training conference for *The Truth Project* that was facilitated by the founder of the program, Dr. Del Tackett of Focus on the Family. “Our hope is to facilitate small groups at The Church of the Apostles in a systematic and comprehensive Biblical worldview study,” Bo said. “We have hosted three small groups of *The Truth Project* at our home—and each small group has been a special time of learning, sharing, and growing.” Bo and Judy have seen first hand how *The Truth Project’s* unique style of community learning leads to deep discussions, teachable moments, and enlightened awareness across the spectrum of Biblical Truths. They have been amazed at the results of their three “semesters” of teaching The Truth Project to the members of their church. “The impact of *The Truth Project* will be to transform Christians from being ignorant of worldviews to claiming a Truth-centered worldview,” adds Bo. “As more and more Christians participate, a renewed sense of community will deepen in families, churches, and throughout North Carolina.”

The mission of the North Carolina Family Policy Council is to strengthen the family by educating North Carolinians and equipping citizens to be voices of persuasion on behalf of traditional family values in their localities. Churches and pastors have a similar mission to educate and equip Christians to be voices for and live out Biblical Truth. It is readily clear, then, why *The Truth Project* partnership has been such an encouraging endeavor. “The progress and success of *The Truth Project*, like many other ministries, rests upon the dedication of both the pastors and the lay leaders,” says Rev. Roach. “Mainly because pastors help cast the vision for the church and lay leaders work hard to help fulfill that vision.” As God calls each body of believers towards a specific mission, *The Truth Project* becomes an educational tool that can help bridge the gap between their community vision and their community success. There is great joy in watching these North Carolina churches set their specific goals—and then reach them with the assistance of *The Truth Project*. According to Rev. Roach, this is the undeniable trend. “Christians are both salt and light in their culture, and that occurs when they take the gospel beyond the doors of their congregation,” explains Rev. Roach. “Historically, this has meant that Christians have stood against the tide of immoral

## Expanding the Truth Project in NC

- 26 — Number of trainings the NCFPC has hosted
- 11 — Number of states from which people have traveled to NC trainings
- 18 — Number of cities in which NCFPC has held trainings
- 821 — Number of NCFPC training attendees

behavior, they have fought for proper expressions of education, and they have worked to create beauty and order in society.” With every goal that is accomplished, Christians all around the globe see the fulfillment of their greatest callings—the Great Commission and the Great Commandments.

### A New Push for Truth

The North Carolina Family Policy Council is launching a new vision for *The Truth Project* in North Carolina. The vision includes involving new churches, new Christians, new leaders, and new participants—all with the passion and drive to understand the pillars of a Biblical worldview accurately. Rev. William Roach is committed to making this new vision a reality, but he cannot do it alone. “The future of *The Truth Project* and worldview studies is to disciple people to recognize that God has spoken and He is not silent, which means that there is not an avenue of life in which God has not spoken—hence, the role of the Christian life is to take the paradigm of God’s revelation in the Scriptures and apply them to every facet of life,” says Rev. Roach.

The paradigm that Rev. Roach is referring to is something that blankets each and every Christian, and more specifically, each and every Christian North Carolinian. This new vision calls individuals to examine the validity and strength of their personal Christian worldview. This new vision also poses the question; are Christian North Carolinians prepared to defend the Truth of their faith? The North Carolina Family Policy Council is excited to launch this God centered vision to help ensure that every single person can confidently reply, “Yes.” The confidence behind that reply, however, depends in part on the dedicated involvement in *The Truth Project* training seminars of churches, pastors, and leaders across the state through the guidance of the North Carolina Family Policy Council.

Please join the North Carolina Family Policy Council in this new vision, visit our website, [ncfamily.org](http://ncfamily.org), and sign up for a *Truth Project* training seminar today. We encourage pastors to attend the Truth Project Leader training or send a staff member. Then, with that training, lead a small group through the *Truth Project*. It will take off from there. ❖

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ENDNOTES:

- 1) IMDB. Can't Take it With You. <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0030993/> Film released 11/3/1938. Accessed 3/29/11.
- 2) Allan Turner. Christianity: Counterculture or Subculture? <http://allanturner.com/secular.html> . 2009. Accessed on 3/29/11.
- 3) The Barna Update, "A Biblical Worldview Has a Radical Effect on a Person's Life," December 1, 2003; and "Most American Christians Do Not Believe that Satan or the Holy Spirit Exist" March, 2009.
- 4) Dr. Bruce Little. Personal Interview conducted by Kami Mueller, on 3-31-11 at 1:00pm.
- 5) Nancy Pearcey. Total Truth: Liberating Christianity from Its Cultural Captivity. Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway Books, a division of Good News Publishers. Page 15.
- 6) Dr. Bruce Little. Personal Interview conducted by Kami Mueller, on 3-31-11 at 1:00pm.
- 7) Robert D. Putnam and David E. Campbell. American Grace. New York, New York: Simon & Schuster, 2010. Page 436.
- 8) Dr. Del Tackett is the Instructor of Christian Worldview at the Focus Leadership Institute.
- 9) Focus on the Family. How Does Focus on the Family's The Truth Project define "worldview?" [http://family.custhelp.com/app/answers/detail/a\\_id/14307](http://family.custhelp.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/14307) Published 9/21/2004. Accessed 3/29/11.
- 10) Dr. Marty Jacumin. Personal Interview conducted by Kami Mueller on 3/25/11 at 11:00 am.
- 11) Ibid.
- 12) Ibid.
- 13) The Holy Bible. NLT. 2 Corinthians 10:5.
- 14) Dr. Marty Jacumin. Personal Interview conducted by Kami Mueller on 3/25/11 at 11:00 am.