Factual Faith – Belief Founded on Truth

By Jaco Prinsloo

Dedicated to all the people of the earth in search of the Truth.

Isa 43:9 Let all the nations be gathered together, and let the people be assembled: who among them can declare this, and shew us former things? Let them bring forth their witnesses, that they may be justified: or let them hear, and say, It is truth.

All scripture taken from the Holy Bible, King James Version, 1611. Based on the 1962 edition of the American Bible Society.

Contents

Introduction

Have you ever stopped to think whether information that you have just received from a friend, from someone you've just met, from a family member, or even something you've just heard over the news, is 100% true and trustworthy? Have you ever been in a situation where two different individuals gave you the same basic information, but where the content differed slightly between the two accounts? How did that make you feel? Can you know whether the information has been altered in any way? Did the people have ulterior motives? Did they intend to leave you with a specific perspective? How do you go about determining whether the differences in accounts by individuals on the same topic has to do with their interpretation of the data, or whether they actually believe what they are saying?

Have you ever witnessed a minor motor vehicle accident and heard both parties agreeing 100% on what happened? I doubt it. The question to ask is, if it is so easy to mislead or twist the truth, can you ever be sure of anything? If we find it difficult to identify the truth in concrete subject matter, what about abstracts like faith? This is a subject devoid of physical sensory perception and establishing the truth of spiritual subject matter, is probably the most difficult of all.

Have you ever wondered how you can know that what you believe is really the truth? What does it mean to believe? According to Eric Schwitzgebel, human belief is said to be the psychological state in which an individual decides to hold a proposition or premise as being true.[1]

Have you considered whether your beliefs are based on your emotions, or have you decided to adopt a specific belief blindly following a tradition? What role did the media play in what you hold as true today? Is it even possible to determine whether or not what you believe is accurate and true? Are you able to discern who is right and who is wrong with so many contradictory opinions floating around? Is there any way in which you can tell?

My aim in this book is to demonstrate to you how it is possible to obtain absolute certainty of the truth, when it comes to spiritual matters. My desire for you as you read, is that you will come to new insights about this subject and - if you have ever doubted the reality of the spiritual - that you will realise that it is the one subject in which one can have 100% confidence of it being factual and true.

I approach this subject in the following way:

Firstly, we consider the aspects that influence our thinking. People have different views about various subjects and our thinking have been influenced by several identifiable aspects. Why is that and why would people have varying opinions on the same subject?

Secondly, we look at how science is used by people to get behind the crux of a matter. We also expose some ideas that are accepted by the scientific community and the population in general as the truth for which there is no substantiating “scientific evidence”. In fact, for some “scientific truths”, there is evidence to the contrary mounting.

Thirdly, we consider the spiritual and supernatural aspects of life and look at how it is possible, from a human perspective, to evaluate these subjects scientifically. We investigate the supernatural qualities of the Bible which in the original Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek texts demonstrate qualities of extraordinary design that can only be attributed to supernatural inspiration by someone existing outside of our dimensionality.

Finally, having access to this hidden knowledge, would you choose to investigate the subject further or to ignore it? How would you respond to this knowledge – conveying “Absolute Truth” and God’s love for you?

Chapter 1: So many Viewpoints

Today, there are close to 7 billion people living on planet Earth, consisting of a variety of nations.[1] Each having communities comprising unique individuals of different cultures, tastes and habits. We see how people have adapted to their environment and how their lives are influenced, subtly guided and moulded by various perspectives around them. We know that a person's values and behaviour, a society's unique culture, or a nation's position and standing in the world, did not develop overnight. People's belief systems and that of their societies are formed over extended periods of time and influenced by various factors. When considering a person living in a family unit – as part of a community or society – we can easily identify different facets that would play a role in shaping who and what that person will become. We see how society influences the way you think about life in general as you grow up, but also how you are moulded and shaped as a result of the impact of people around you. These influences come from various sources.

Barbara and Philip Newman constitute that factors can be external in the form of the environment, or caused by situations that one has to deal with on a daily basis. It could be the social situations in which you find yourself and the social pressure of your peers. The influence could also be internal - your emotional status, health and lifestyle which may affect how you think about life and the world. Some influences could shape you over an extended period of time, like a family tradition, going back decades or even centuries and it could determine how you interact with people. Other circumstances could have an impact on you over a short period of time, like a tragedy in the family. Even the media presenting a trendy new fashion, could shape the way in which you would interact with peers, based on new fashionable trends that are promoted through the media. This in turn would even help you to distinguish yourself from other people.[2]

In some cases, according to Gary Ferraro, where people have adapted to harsh environments, the knowledge passed down from previous generations will aid in the survival of a new generation and would be considered essential. This could include knowledge on survival in extremely hot or cold climates, how to find food and to preserve it for times when there is little to none available. Parents living in these conditions would teach their children everything they have learned from their parents and through their own experience, in order to prepare them for life. This is a necessary prerequisite for surviving in certain environments. If you put a person,

who lacks the knowledge that some of these people groups have accumulated over centuries, in a situation where they would have to survive without it, they may find it extremely difficult to cope, or even survive.[3]

Tim Kasser shows how life could be easy in affluent situations. Here children are provided for in luxury by their parents. They live pampered and comfortable lives, free from the cares of physical survival. Here, the society they live in, does not require focus on staying alive. Taking care of the basics like food, clothing and a roof over their heads would be considered "worries of the poor". Nonetheless people living in these societies may perhaps struggle to survive emotionally. They often do not have the same emotional attention, focus or care from their peers, as would be the case in societies that are less materialistic and more "people-focused". A materialistic society would not apply its strategy for survival on extracting knowledge from the previous generation. Where people rely on their finances and position to supply their every need, they do not perceive the environment to be any threat to their existence. They would rather focus their efforts towards improving their position and status and could be competing with their peers on a materialistic level. This might include owning brand items, trendy designer clothes promoted by the media, or moving up a corporate ladder - always aiming for the top position.[4]

Whether it is life in the city, rural areas, seashores or jungles, or even the arctic region, each of these environments will require specific perspectives and abilities from its inhabitants. The people around us and the information we share with our peers and parents help shape us. It affects how we fit into our community, how we relate to others, the way we think about things and ultimately, the person we become during our lifetime on Earth.[5] Our personalities, the interaction with our environment and our peers form the foundation for cultural development. Cultures all over the world have been shaped over millennia. As knowledge accumulated and technology improved, the ability to deal with life, in specific locations on Earth, also blossomed and advanced. Although some of the cultures have similar traits, others are very distinct and have particular and unique.

Charles F. Gritzner states that personality types found within specific communities also play a major role in shaping views and beliefs. If we compare countries like Mexico and Japan, we will notice distinct differences related to people's personalities. In Mexico people tend to value the importance of social interaction. People living in Latin America would be considered

passionate, driven by their emotions - they highly value personal relationships with their family and peers.[6]

In Japan on the other hand, people would focus on being the best at what they do, their honour, meeting their commitments and not failing in anything they attempt. Although their interactions with others would require certain etiquette, their priorities would in general not be as focused on social interaction, as is the case with people from Mexico. The Japanese people would spend more time per day studying or working to achieve the best possible position in their career, because failing to focus on these aspects, may bring shame and social rejection to you and your family. Mexicans' personalities, together with most Latin Americans, would contain on average more people with Sanguine personality types, while the people living in Japan, would on average have more people with Melancholic personality types.[7] These qualities are neither right nor wrong, but they shape and influence their thought patterns throughout life. All of these factors combined, contribute to the person that we become, living within a specific society with particular traditions and a historical heritage, and ultimately what we believe.

Some viewpoints are formed on a purely personal level. Here an individual would form his (all subsequent references must be understood to refer to he/she and his/her) own viewpoint based on his own thoughts, personal experiences and the knowledge he gained on physical, emotional and spiritual levels. His exposure to education would also affect his thought processes. (It may not always be a positive influence, as we will demonstrate later in this book.)

Aiden Wilson Tozer found in his research on Japanese culture that no matter where one finds oneself on Earth or whoever one encounters, all people seem to have a built-in need to worship someone or something. Whether it be god/s, man-made idols, ancestral spirits, angels, nature, historic people, or even themselves, there seems to be a natural tendency in human beings to find an object to worship.[8]

The Yanomami Indians live in small communities in the forests of Venezuela and Brazil. Their lifestyle does not require much in the form of clothes or earthly possessions. They live simple lives and are dependent on the rainforest and their vegetable gardens for food, so they spend a substantial amount of time each day hunting and gathering food. They have an abundance of water with showers falling almost on a daily basis. Food sources are also supported by fertile soil and providing food for the family would not be considered a challenge. Their families are their most valuable asset and they focus on strengthening the bonds between families through arranged marriages. They live in small villages that are scattered throughout the rainforest.

The size of these villages could be anything from a few people to as many as 300. Their skills and abilities are passed on through generations and this allows them to maintain and improve on the experience, gained over hundreds of years. Threats to their existence include attacks from other villages, which may be a few days walk away, or attacks from the outside world that could destroy their environment. They also have to fend against wild animals and insects in the jungle as well as the diseases that they may transmit. Through their experience over years they have learned how to deal with these issues and survive with ease.

The Yanomami people's traditions are shaped by the belief that the natural and spiritual world is a unified force; nature creates everything and it is considered sacred. They believe that their fate and the fate of all people are inescapably linked to the fate of the environment and that with the destruction of nature, humanity is actually committing suicide. Each village would normally have a shaman as a spiritual leader. These people were living isolated lives in the rainforests of the Amazon, cut off from the outside world, till there was a gold rush in the 1980s.[9]

The Inuit tribes of the Arctic, another tribal community, distinctly different from the tribes living in the Amazon rainforests, survive. These people live in some of the coldest and harshest parts of the Earth, including the north-eastern tip of Siberia, the islands of the Bering Sea, the coastal regions of mainland Alaska, parts of Greenland and the northern coastal regions of Canada. Traditionally, these people also lived isolated from the rest of the world and had to sustain themselves by means of hunting. Whether it was walruses, whales, seals or caribou, their nomadic existence would be closely linked to their food sources.

Until relatively recently, they would have had to follow their source of food and move with migrating animals to survive. Living in extremely harsh conditions, would have been fatal if they did not prepare for the elements they would have to face during a hunt or when they moved over land or sea to set up camp close to their food source. It is also believed that in centuries past, people who became a burden to Inuit tribes - the elderly and even infants with defects, would have been murdered in times of starvation to allow the survival of the strongest in the tribe. In some cases old and sickly tribe members would even willingly sacrifice themselves for the benefit of the tribe. The entire village would then attend the suicide procedure, where the victim would be dressed, wearing his clothes inside-out.

The Inuit's traditional beliefs are filled with mythological tales of adventurous walrus and whale hunts. The long winter months that they had to endure, gave rise to tales of fantastic creatures and ghosts miraculously appearing. Inuit people are superstitious and try to find the faces of

their dead in the Aurora Borealis, or northern lights. Children are even taught that if they whistled at the Lights, it would fall down and cut off their heads. They also believe that their diet consists of the souls of the animals they kill; therefore they believe that it should be done with the utmost respect for the animal and in such a way that the soul of the animal would not avenge its death. The Inuits believe that they constantly have to appease the supernatural to live a normal day-to-day life, free from streaks of bad luck through which entire communities could be wiped out.[10]

The tribes mentioned above, come from totally different backgrounds and have adapted to very different environments, with all the associated risks involved. They have lived isolated lives for many years and yet, as all other people living on Earth, hold to very specific views when it comes to the spiritual or the supernatural.

Have you ever considered this question: Why do people hold spiritual beliefs and why are we different from animals? Animals may display behaviour in the form of submission to other animals or to humans, but nothing that we could define as communication with spiritual entities or acts of worship. On Earth we as humans seem to be unique in both the need to worship, as well as the ability to worship a higher spiritual being.

There are more than 10,000 distinct religions or beliefs in the world today.[11] What you believe, will be among the myriad of different beliefs and viewpoints that people hold about who we as human beings are. Our past, our present and our purpose on Earth and what will happen to us after we die forms an integral part of who we are. Being thinking beings with the ability to conceptualise, we can utilise information we remember from our past, to plan ahead. We have the ability to think about the future and ask questions about anticipated future events. At some point the questions that everybody seeks answers to, will naturally surface: What happens to me when I die? Where do I go when I die? Where did I come from? and What is my purpose on Earth while I am alive?

The dilemma is that it has become almost impossible to distinguish between what is true and what is not. In recent years, relativism and the disappearance of absolutes have slowly crept into popular mainstream thinking and philosophy.[12] No longer are absolutes proposed on any matter, but rather a personal interpretation of the information as it is experienced by the person considering a specific subject. People are expected to interpret information in such a way that it allows them to come up with their own “truth” on any matter. This essentially becomes a biased emotional interpretation of any issue, whether it be valid or false, purely based on the perception

of the viewer, rather than factual evidence. This principle is especially applied to issues of morality, where physical evidence is not always readily available. Where grey areas over issues exist, where it is difficult to clearly distinguish between “right” and “wrong”, the view of the majority is normally accepted as “true” or “valid”.

In today’s world most societies will classify people, who clearly define right and wrong, as old-fashioned, fundamentalists or bigots, just because they maintain a specific viewpoint which may now have been labelled out-dated by the majority, who have now adopted a new or revised viewpoint. It has become socially unacceptable to have a fundamentalist standpoint on any subject these days, even if any opposing viewpoint would have shocked the world a decade or two ago. Everyone is encouraged to interpret a subject, based on their own experiences in life and their view of the world around them. They must find answers that best address their questions and if theirs match the majority view, great! People are told that what is true for one person, may not be true for the next. What is unacceptable behaviour for one person may be totally acceptable for another.

In some countries, legislation has even been put in place that makes it a criminal offence to belong to specific groups that hold views, which are seen as opposing that of the majority. In these instances a paradigm shift occurred. The same, previously accepted views are now labelled as hate crimes. It is also interesting to note that a tendency has arisen over the past few decades that would favour the view of the majority over that of minority groups. [13] With this difficulty of discerning between right and wrong, having also to deal with social pressures and acceptance from peers, how would you then go about identifying a specific belief to choose from? How would you go about seeking out and finding a belief that will not leave you with empty promises and a life’s worth of sacrifices and rituals which will turn out to have all been in vain?

If you are destined for an eternity that depends on your choices today, would you not want to make sure that you “know for certain” that your faith is built on a solid, sure and factual foundation? A basis where you can have 100% certainty, rather than a belief in which you have to deal with 50% doubt.

If all situations or subjects are treated as grey areas, instead of clearly defined black or white situations - where a right and a wrong can clearly be identified - they could in many cases have devastating effects and significantly impact people’s lives. The fact that a person’s viewpoint on a matter may move from a clearly defined true or false, to an undefined grey area of: “maybe

this", or "maybe that" - depending on how he experiences life and how he feels that day - will ultimately not alter the mechanics behind the subject in view, no matter how people's viewpoints may change. The way in which a "truth" or a fallacy" will affect a person, will remain constant and is not affected by a shift in opinion. Attempting to impose a viewer's interpretation on a subject can be quite dangerous, as the impact and final affecting results remain the same, even if an altered viewpoint or "perceived truth" is held by the majority. The fact that the law of gravity exists on Earth will not be altered in any sense whatsoever by how people view the matter. Whether you believe that gravity is factual and true or not, will in no way affect how the Earth's mass will interact with your body through gravity.[14]

To demonstrate this a little more clearly, let us consider the following scenario as an example: A man takes a bottle of cyanide (we do not know why he has a bottle of cyanide in his house) and puts it on a shelf in his garage, next to some of the pesticides he uses in his garden. The bottle is clearly labelled on the outside, stating that the liquid contained in the bottle is cyanide, that it is lethal and should not be consumed.

If we analyse this situation we would find the following: There is the person who performed an action at a specific point in time, by putting a bottle of poison on a shelf on a specific date. This person would be intimately familiar with the reason why he did this and would not question the contents of the bottle or the reasons for his own action. He also wrote instructions on the label to prevent other people from coming to harm when faced with questions about the bottle and its substance. This could be compared to a historic situation or event where people today may have varying opinions or viewpoints, regarding the accuracy or factuality of information regarding that situation.

If a person, other than the man who placed the bottle on the shelf, now walks past this bottle on his own, he will be faced with a situation in which he will need to decide how he views the information presented to him. If he adheres to the instructions on the label and believes that the information is true, he lives; if he chooses to ignore it and applies his own interpretation, he will put his life at risk and could die.

There are also several ways in which people could then interpret and deal with the information, as their viewpoints may be influenced over time, due to different forces that are at work. This may eventually lead them to believe something other than what is written on the label. Below are some possible situations:

A: -- If you see the bottle which you filled with the deadly liquid, which you labelled clearly with the original information about the poison and put the bottle on the shelf on a specific date, it seems logical that you, would pay attention to the information on the label and do as it says. You remember filling the bottle with poison, and because you do not want harm to come to yourself or others you also applied a label that clearly states the danger in black and white to those who may encounter this scenario with questions about it. Having first-hand recollection of filling the container with cyanide and those memories still fresh in your mind, you would not entertain thoughts of applying a different interpretation to what you have in front of you. If people follow these rules (or read the label correctly and do as it says) they stay safe and no harm comes to them. They have interpreted the situation correctly and have applied the correct action by doing as the label instructs.

B: -- If however, the bottle and label gathered some dust over time, the person who originally filled the container with the poison has sold the house with its contents and is no longer present to provide answers to questions about the container, people reading the label may have new questions that the original owner did not even entertain. They may view the bottle with its contents and label with a slightly different perspective than the original homeowner. Thoughts entering their minds may include:

1: -- Did the previous owner really put cyanide in this bottle?

2: -- How long has the bottle been standing there?

3: -- Is the information on the label valid?

4: -- What was the cyanide used for?

5: -- Is the poison still poisonous after some time has passed?

6: -- Should we perhaps get the contents of the bottle tested, just to make sure?

If even more time passes and the house is sold periodically over generations, so that the label on the bottle is not only dusty, but becomes faded to such a degree that one can barely read what was written on it: Similar questions would come to mind, but in addition, people may now have insufficient information available to assist them in understanding how the subject should be treated. This could be analogous with moving viewpoints on a subject from a clearly defined black and white area, into a grey area.

Since the label no longer provides enough information regarding the contents of the bottle, people may opt to open the bottle and sniff it or taste some of the contents to determine what they are actually dealing with.

If the label was completely removed, or someone attached a new label with new information, it could have catastrophic consequences:

1: -- The person dealing with the subject now has no idea about the dangers that are lurking in the bottle in front of them - the new label does not cancel the effects that the contents would have on a person.

2: -- They have no idea of how the bottle came to be on the shelf, what it contains or who the person was who filled it initially. Even though they see a container with some liquid in it and a faded or altered label; they have no idea who put the bottle on the shelf or how he filled the bottle, or for that matter, the information on the original label. All they have to assist in their evaluation of the situation is the evidence currently before them.

3: -- They would not know that the bottle contains a poison and while a new label provides information to the reader, it could be totally misleading, incorrect and untruthful.

4: -- Swallowing some of the fluid in the bottle, unaware of the effects the contents will have, would kill someone.

What this little analogy is trying to portray, is the way in which modern day society steers the population into paradigms, where viewpoints on most subjects or situations in life are encouraged to undergo a transition from a well-defined understanding of a subject to a personal interpretation, which is moulded to suit the individual's preferences.

When viewing evidence today about historic events, for us, living centuries or millennia after these events, the information may have become faded. We interpret the information related to these events through the dust that have accumulated over the eras. Our interpretation will be different to those of people living in the time of a specific event happening and who were actually there to witness it. As time passes and the evidence fades, old viewpoints become out-dated or obsolete in the minds of the majority in society and have to be replaced by more modern views, which are considered hip or trendy and acceptable to the majority.

As an example: Specific groups of people have now cast doubts over the factuality of the Holocaust - questioning whether it ever occurred.[15] The evidence for the events that transpired

is overwhelming. However, as time passes and fewer survivors remain to substantiate the facts, it becomes easier to question a world-changing event, such as the Holocaust. There are certain principles that remain the same. No matter how much time passes, or how much society wants to shape people's viewpoints or thoughts on a subject, or how liberal the thinking becomes, the mechanics behind a subject in view always remain constant.

In the example above, the contents of the bottle remains poisonous, no matter how people's viewpoints or thoughts on the matter are swayed or influenced, either by their own thoughts or by external factors, like ink fading on the label, or long periods of time passing. It is important to constantly evaluate the world around you. You have to evaluate whether what the media or society (holding to a specific trendy or majority viewpoint) is portraying can be properly substantiated and if it can always be accepted as the truth. You have to always ask yourself: Is the information that is presented to me just somebody's opinion and can I perhaps evaluate it further to establish for myself if it is in fact true? It is important that you should consider the following questions on any matter where there are different viewpoints:

A: -- Can I always trust my own opinion, or that of the majority, on any matter to be 100% correct, if there is insufficient scientific or other supporting evidence?

B: -- Should I adopt a new viewpoint if information that supports an opposing viewpoint to mine, becomes available? (Or if my viewpoint is proven to be wrong)

C: -- How can I KNOW that the belief or viewpoint that I hold, is 100% correct?

D: -- When it comes to spiritual matters, does it really matter what I believe?

E: -- If it does matter and I am wrong, how does that affect me and my family now, later and when I die?

A few decades ago, the distinction between right and wrong for various viewpoints was much clearer and much more obvious than today.[12] In most modern societies, people who refuse to adopt the latest trends or viewpoints are often rejected by their peers or given a derogatory label by society and then left with one of two choices on the following question:

What is more important to me?

A: -- My "friends", the group of people where I was previously accepted, rejecting me now,

or

B: -- My viewpoints, which are now seen as socially unacceptable by my peers.

It seems as if everyone wants to feel accepted and wanted by the people around them Driven by a craving for acceptance, most people follow instructions, as long as it means that they will not be left alone or singled out as a person rejected by society.[16]

Media and associated technologies play key roles in influencing society by their perception of the world around them.[17] To give another example: When a fashion designer exhibits his designs at a fashion show, employing models who all seem to be starving, creates in the viewer's mind an assumption that beauty can only be achieved through starvation. At the same time an opposing view is indirectly formed, where people who are not starving themselves are seen as the non-conformers and as a result, unable to be seen as fashionable, until they achieve the portrayed image.

Looking at this objectively, there is no particular reason why very lean people in designer clothes would be more fashionable than more full-bodied or even athletic people, in clothes that complement their figures. The only reason why people who seem to be starving themselves are seen as more fashionable is because this is the current image that is being portrayed as the norm by fashion designers. This is then promoted through the media who will emphasise aspects that advocates of these thoughts want their audiences to see and hear. People calmly accept and conform to this indoctrination as the norm and follow it.

According to Virginia Blum, if you were living in Los Angeles, California, for example, you would be socially more acceptable to your peers, if you underwent cosmetic surgery.[18] Some of these procedures have devastating results, as can be seen in some well-known public figures where things did not go according to plan and left them looking very unnatural and even scarred for life in some cases.

Reasons for cosmetic surgery might be to boost self-confidence, dissatisfaction with their looks and often, as a result of peer pressure. People will often do whatever they have to, to preserve their standing as trendy and current, for acceptance in society, no matter the cost or consequence.

The question we have to ask ourselves is: Who decides what is acceptable? If we look at the examples above, what are the motives for projecting certain images into people's minds? Why are these projected viewpoints important and why does the media place so much emphasis on them? When you look at this objectively, you get a distinct feeling that there is more going on

here, than is given credit for. You also notice a distinct deviation from what was previously considered to be an absolute, where right and wrong could clearly be distinguished, to areas which are now open to random interpretation.

In most cases, if we compared the present moral situation with that of previous centuries, we would also notice a distinct decline on moral views of right and wrong. [19] John Brueggemann found that the majority of society no longer consider the abortion of an unwanted baby as morally wrong, although it is in actual fact murder. This practice would have caused social uproar a few decades ago.

Another example would be the influence of the latest socially accepted values on the family structure. A few decades ago, we had fewer broken families, according to Gaffal.[20] When people got divorced in the early 1900's and even up to the 1980's, the majority would have frowned upon a split in the family. Divorcees, generally, felt ashamed, because people viewed marriage in a very different light - marriage was sacred and once you entered into marriage, it was meant to last, come what may. This viewpoint has changed dramatically and marriage is no longer viewed as something sacred, but could be akin to a fashion statement. Once the trend is over, you move on to the latest and greatest.

Shocking statistics that can be found on the internet shows the following: Today, almost 70% of children in the USA live in homes that can be classified as non-traditional families.[21] Research has shown that the majority of people from broken homes do not fare as well in life as those that come from homes with a stable family structure; yet the media promotes these changed viewpoints. Society is being so over exposed to the negative in movies, or television series, famous people's family issues, divorces, new partnerships and children born out of wedlock, that it has become perfectly acceptable and even fashionable. Ultimately, this affects the values of people living in societies where the mainstream viewpoint on matters around family has been so twisted, that a stable family is even seen as old-fashioned.

People's level of commitment, not only in their marriages, but in all walks of life, has drastically declined since the 70's.[22] Today, people anticipate divorce, even before they get married. They have prenuptial and other contractual agreements on ways of dissolution of the marriage, when it occurs sometime in the future. This removes any form of trust that may have existed between the parties, even before they started their lives together and is in most cases a recipe for disaster. Couples go through different experiences and even trying times during their marriage. In any marriage there will be times of joy or times of conflict, where both parties will have to find

ways around problems and move forward and in the process grow closer to each other. How can you then truly feel safe in a marriage when you constantly live under a cloud of uncertainty about the other party's commitment to the marriage? Often, at the first sign of conflict, the marriage is ended. The devastating effect of divorce on the children has been proven over and over. In today's society marriage is often labelled as a way to complicate your life. Just "living together" removes the responsibility and commitment from the relationship. It becomes the selfish pursuit of pleasure, fun and excitement, with total disregard for the feelings and needs of the other parties involved. Children don't have stability or a sense of security and even sometimes feel that they are somehow responsible for their parent's breakup. Victims of this selfish behaviour then go through life struggling, having a sound foundation removed and the children of the next generation end up even worse off, not knowing any better.

Below are some statistics from 2003, referenced from the internet:

68.7% of American Youth are living in non-traditional families:

23.3% living with biological mother (Step-family Association)

4.4% living with biological father (Step-family Association)

1% in Foster Families (U.S. Census Bureau)

3.7% living with non-relatives (U.S. Census Bureau)

6.3% living with grandparents (AARP - U.S. Census Bureau)

30% living in Step-families (Step-family Association) [23]

The same trends, which these children experienced in the homes of their parents, are often carried through to their lives as adults. Research proves that a distorted viewpoint of marriage causes the majority of children coming from something other than the traditional family, to have some kind of difficulty in their lives.[22]

Behavioural Statistics

75% of children/adolescents in chemical dependency hospitals are from single-parent families. (Center for Disease Control, Atlanta, GA)

1 out of 5 children have a learning, emotional, or behavioural problem due to the family system changing. (National Center for Health Statistics)