

# EPISTEMOLOGY: Foundations For Knowing Truth (How Do We Know?)

**EMPIRICISM** - 427 BC Plato / 300's Aristotle

Definition: The method of seeking knowledge by observation and experiment.

Emotions and experience are the source of knowledge.

Biblical Response: Observable data is distorted by fallen, finite senses. (Prov. 14:12)

**RATIONALISM** - 400's BC Heraclitus

Definition: The principle of accepting reason as the only authority in determining one's opinions or course of action.

Biblical Response: The mind is fallen and finite. (Job 28:12-13)

**CRITICISM** - 470-399 BC Plato

Definition: Judging truth by means of conscience.

Biblical Response: Conscience is fallen and finite.

**MYSTICISM** - 427 BC Plato

Definition: Knowledge and truth attained through revelation or mystical experience.

Biblical Response: Ability to hear God is fallen and finite. (1Cor. 13:12)

**PRAGMATISM**: 480-411 BC Protagoras / Gorgias

Definition: Testing validity of all concepts by practical results

Knowledge is based and determined on past experiences; operating on past successes "it worked before".

Biblical Response: Man's experiences and his understanding of them are fallen and finite.

**TRADITIONALISM**:

Definition: Basing truth on the way it has always been done.

Influenced by culture and/or ritualism.

Biblical Response: Man's culture and tradition is fallen and finite. (Psalm 40:6-8; 51:16-17; Hebrews 10:1, 4-18)

**BIBLICAL CHRISTIAN**:

Definition: Truth based on what God says through the Bible.

Biblical Response: The Bible takes into account the fallen and finite nature of man. (Rev 22:6). We can trust the Bible.