

MEANING

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What is the meaning of words? What is the meaning of meaning?

Questions search for answers. Answers create more questions. The cycle is endless because knowledge is an endless river flowing from God the source of all knowledge.

A look at the meaning of words requires the study of numerous categories of knowledge. It requires thought. Thought requires vocabulary. The study of word meaning is a study in fascination.

Tracing the meaning of meaning can be extremely interesting if you want to know how the meaning of something came to mean what it means. What is the meaning of anything? Where did this meaning come from? Who gave it this meaning? There are so many unanswered questions. There is so much to learn about life, so little time.

To trace the meaning of words for example we must trace the historical circumstances and the changes in usage, back through the centuries. Time, culture, religion, knowledge, education, slang and the lack of education, all, can dramatically affect the usage and changes in words.

Let us examine and discuss the dominant sense of a word. The “dominant sense” of words means the way we most often use them and hear them used. We hear a word and immediately we relate its meaning in our mind - we make sense of it. When this process results in non-sense, we find it humorous and laugh. This is how comedians succeed in making us laugh.

Proper word usage is the only security words have for survival. If a word is not used correctly it begins to lose the original intent of expression. The original expression can become clouded by misuse or even be lost forever. Should this occur a piece of the historical “knowledge puzzle” is also lost – a piece of knowledge that becomes extinct. How many words have been lost throughout history? How many words are now extinct, lost in the sea of ignorance and indifference? No one can say for sure. Perhaps you have never really thought about the significance of literature, and proper grammar. Perhaps you should because knowledge through literacy is the responsibility of everyone.

Our tendency is to accept tolerable word usage. But, the more concessions we allow, the more exceptions, the weaker language becomes. Original word usage and the resultant thought expression can dramatically change in only a few generations. Education and literature, guard, strengthen and preserve meaning, as well as effective and accurate use of vocabulary by society.

If we dumb down then we are really dumb because we weaken our knowledge; our ability to learn; and our ability to communicate effectively. Therefore, knowledge becomes more difficult to maintain and understand. We must “smart up.” We must be ever-learning, ever challenging our minds or our minds automatically “dumb down” to illiteracy and from illiteracy to degeneracy.

The way we use words is the way we perceive them. Most perception comes from commonality and environment. Our vocabulary can be large or small depending on our association with people, the amount of reading we do, and our education. Our vocabulary determines our ability to think; to properly absorb knowledge; to ask questions and reason. We must have ever increasing vocabulary to have ever increasing knowledge. We must ever increase in knowledge and in so doing our vocabulary must be able to describe new knowledge in terms that we can relate to one another. New knowledge requires new terminology.

What we say and what we are understood to say can often be two different things. In order to properly express ourselves and be understood we must share a common understanding of words. However, what a word means and what we mean when we use it can be quite different. The more ways we use a word the more variety of meanings are attached. The more meanings we give a word the further from its original meaning we stray and the more difficult it is to communicate.

As stated above, over time the original meaning of words can be lost. Another way in which words can become lost is by what is known as “spin-offs.” Spin-offs are words that ride piggy back and then strike out on their own. In other words they were attached in meaning to an original word and then over time detached and became their own word with independent meaning. During this transitional phase the original word is lost in infamy. The spin-off word detached from its original also loses its identity. Spin-offs become new words without identity. In this scenario our appreciation for words and our ability to express ourselves is weakened because our ability to think with original word clarification is clouded, lost somewhere in the cobweb of tolerance, abuse and misuse.

Comparing dictionaries printed over the past fifty to a hundred years, I instantly noticed changes in definition and additions to definitions and word usage. Of course, I also found new vocabulary used to describe new knowledge. New terminology describes or defines new knowledge. Knowledge is defined by words and words find description from knowledge. Defining knowledge and words gives us a means of communication, a means of thought and reason.

Faith is the first step of belief. Belief is the first step to perception. Our ability to co-exist depends on our ability to communicate, understand and tolerate one another. Words can bring us together or keep us apart. Words can hurt or words can heal. Words allow us to think evermore deeply depending on the depth of our vocabulary. Knowledge is built upon knowledge, precept

upon precept, line upon line.

The word “breath” for example is the root word of all life. Words are the fountains springing forth from life. Both breath and word have the same root meaning and source. If everyone were interested in vocabulary and knowledge, reality could hold many surprises for mankind

IS REALITY WHAT WE PERCEIVE IT TO BE?

Our perception of reality is formed by our understanding of knowledge and should not be based on our environment, but from our environment.

We could not understand our existence without vocabulary. Life has meaning because we are able to think. Life has no meaning to something that cannot think. Because we think, we exist and we exist to think. We think because of vocabulary. Vocabulary is the life blood of thought. To think is to know. To know is to think. To think is to question. Questions demand answers and learning is endless. Knowledge is inexhaustible. Without knowledge there would be no perception no reason. Knowledge is a necessity of consciousness. Consciousness is a necessity of life. Life is God’s breath in us by necessity.

We would not be civilized, for example, without morality. Morality is the governing and guarding factor of freedom, and of existence. Justice guards righteousness. Righteousness is the foundation upon which society exists. Absolute righteousness must exist because the survival of existence demands absoluteness.

To understand we must master the vocabulary of expression. Proper word usage protects and preserves knowledge, freedom, morality, society and meaning. Vocabulary is the building block of life, communication and education.

How we think determines who we are and what we become as an individual and as a society. Individually we must master the disciplines of learning, tolerance, love, beauty, knowledge, vocabulary and most of all – truth. Truth is not how we perceive it - Truth is Absolute. God’s Word is Absolute. God is fascinating!