

Pilate-What is Truth?

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[0 : 00] Turn to John chapter 18. John chapter 18. Last week, I talked about Peter and his involvement leading up to the crucifixion and after the resurrection.

And some things that Peter had to face and some questions he had to answer for himself about who Jesus was. Today, I'm going to look at another character concerning Jesus' Passion Week, Pilate.

And the question that Pilate asked is, what is truth? And so today we're going to look at that. Look with me at John chapter 18, beginning at verse 28. And it says, Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas into the hall of judgment, and it was early.

And they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled, but that they may eat the Passover. Pilate then went out unto them and said, What accusation bring ye against this man?

They answered and said unto him, If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee. Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye him, judge him according to your law.

[1 : 21] The Jews therefore said unto him, It is not lawful for us to be put any man to death, that the saying that Jesus might be fulfilled, which he spake, signifying what death he should die.

Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again, and called Jesus, and said unto him, Art thou the king of the Jews? Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me?

Pilate answered and said, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me. What hast thou done? Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world.

If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered unto the Jews. But now is my kingdom not from hence. Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then?

Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth.

[2 : 27] Everyone that is of the truth heareth my voice. Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault at all.

But ye have a custom that I shall release unto you one at the Passover. Were ye therefore that I release unto you the king of the Jews? Then cried they all again, saying, Not this man, but Barabbas.

Now Barabbas was a robber. That's our word of prayer. Father, I pray that you would be with us this morning as we consider this scripture, consider what is happening here.

Lord, we thank you so much. Hopefully everyone here knows the truth. Jesus Christ is the truth.

He is the way, the truth, and the life. No man cometh unto the Father but by him. Lord, I pray that we would know the truth this morning, and we would leave here ready and able to share the truth with those around us.

[3 : 33] Lord, I pray that you would just help us to understand the foundation of our beliefs, the foundation that Jesus Christ is the truth.

Lord, minister to our hearts this morning in Jesus' name. Amen. Pilate comes across here. He's a little bit agitated, a little bit irritated with the Jews.

You notice he's giving short answers, short questions. He just kind of, you know, why am I being bothered with this? You notice he said it was early. Jesus had already been before Caiaphas, and now they're bringing him to Pilate.

And it's probably like 4 or 5 o'clock in the morning, if that late. It's early, it says. And he's irritated that he's having to do all this. And then he's irritated in the fact that this is a matter between you Jews and one of your religious questions and stuff.

What have I got to do with all of this? Why are you bothering me with this? So Pilate's not in a good mood when all this starts out. So he asked Jesus, he said, look, are you the king of the Jews?

[4 : 38] Are you really the one who's in control and the king? Jesus answers him, are you saying this or is somebody else telling you this?

Then he asked him again, and Jesus says, look, I came to bear record of the truth. Whether I'm king or not doesn't matter. But I came to bear record of the truth.

He tells Pilate, he says, look, notice there in verse 37. He says, I am, came I into the world that I should bear witness unto the truth.

And everyone that is of the truth heareth my voice. And Pilate, what is truth? Now did Pilate really want to know what truth was?

No. He didn't want to be bothered. He says, what is truth? And what does he do next? It says, he walked out the door. He didn't really care what truth was.

[5 : 47] You know, he lived in an age similar to what we do. You know, what's true for you may not be true for me. All of us have different truths.

Truth is relative. Don't talk to me about truth because truth can't really be known. Nobody knows the truth about anything. Pilate threw away an opportunity to know the truth.

The truth was standing right in front of him, looking him right in the face. And he says, what is truth? And he walks out the door. Pilate missed an opportunity.

It could have saved his soul for all eternity. But he let it go. You know, I want to look at Pilate's question this morning a little bit.

Consider this incident that happened here. And I'm going to look through the book of John. If you look through the scripture, you'll find out that there are 222 verses that use the word truth in them, in the Bible.

[6 : 54] 10% of those, 22 of those verses are in the book of John. John's going to let us know about the truth and what it looks like. And the first thing he's going to do is he's going to give us a perception of truth.

The perception of truth. There in verse 37, Pilate therefore said unto him, art thou a king then? And Jesus answered, thou sayest that I am a king.

To this end was I born, for this cause came I into the world. I should bear witness of the truth. People have different perceptions of what truth is. Pilate had a perception of what truth is. So that even when the truth was standing there right in front of him, he didn't see it.

Pilate had a perception of what truth should be. He had no grasp on it. He had no understanding of it. Because so much of what his day and age taught was like our day and age.

What's true for you may not be true for me. What's true for you and what's true for me may not be true for you. We have different perspectives on what truth is. You think about America today.

[7 : 57] How many of you have heard that said? What's true for you may not be true for me. If you were to ask people and take a survey, and they have.

We take surveys for everything. The surveys have been done. Two-thirds, 67% of the people in America say there is no such thing as absolute truth.

Nope. No absolute truth. Nothing you can count on 100% of the time. Much worse. 52% of born-again Christians think the truth is relative.

They claim to be a born-again Christian, and they say 52% say no, truth is relative. There is no such thing as absolutes. 75% of the people who call themselves Christian, whether they're born-again Christian, but they identify as Christian.

75% say no. There's no absolute truth. Think about that for a second. What is their life built on? If there's no such thing as absolute truth that you can count on 100% of the time, what is the foundation of your life?

[9 : 15] What is it built on? What are you following? You know, they can believe what they will, but there is such a thing as absolute truth. Jesus said he came to bear witness of the truth.

He came to show what truth was, and he was truth incarnate. He came to show that which is accurate, that which is true, that under any circumstances, it's going to be true, as opposed to things that are false or feigned or fictitious or things.

We can illustrate absolute truth very easily. It's not hard to do. But yet people say no, there's no such thing as absolute truth. But we can illustrate it very easily. The law of gravity.

And we don't even have to go far to do it. We could do it right here. But we'll just do it, you know, in the area. If I were to take you to downtown Ellsworth and take you to the top of City Hall, you know, that dome they got up there and stuff, and I'd take you up on that dome and say, there is no such thing as absolute truth.

So that idea of, you know, law of gravity doesn't apply to you because you don't believe in it, right? Right. Go ahead and jump. Are they going to find out there's such a thing as absolute truth?

[10 : 36] Yeah. Yeah. And it's probably going to cost them their life. You think about that. We believe in who God is and what Jesus Christ has done for us.

If you do not believe in that, you say, I don't believe that. Well, let's test that out. Apparently you're testing it out right now. What happens? You die and go to hell.

You test out that absolute truth, you're going to find out it's real. It is exactly the way God said it is. You know, we can say, you know, rocks are hard, water is wet, grass is green.

If somebody comes along and they say, I don't believe that. Don't? No. I think rocks are soft and water is dry and grass is orange.

Well, okay, I'm glad you believe that. But it doesn't change the fact that those are truths. Rocks are hard, water is wet, and grass is green.

[11 : 42] Or unless it's brown. Because it's been dried up. Somebody tried this on Abraham Lincoln. As far back, you know, we think this is a new thing in our generation. This goes all the way back to Pilate.

But Abraham Lincoln one day was asked. He was given presuppositions by some people. They wanted him to consider doing something. I don't remember what it was.

But they wanted him to consider doing something. And after hearing their logic and what they had come up with, Lincoln asked him a question. He said, how many legs would a sheep have if you called his tail a leg?

Five. Lincoln answered, no. It would have four legs. Calling a tail a leg does not make it one.

Does that sound like our day and age that we live in? Calling a boy a girl or a girl a boy does not make them one. We have so much where we try to, whatever you think, whatever you want, whatever makes your boat float, that's fine.

[12 : 49] You just go with it. I've decided I'm an animal. And so I'm going to live like one. And they're like, just because you believe that doesn't make it one.

There are absolute truths. Black is black. White is white. In is in. Out is out. Up is up. Down is down. You can't change those things.

They are absolute truths. You know, most of you are sitting there with absolute truth sitting in your lap. That book in front of you.

Absolute truth. No contradictions or anything in it. And you believe in absolute truth because you believe in Jesus Christ.

And as a Christian, the 52% there that said they were born again Christians but thought truth was relative. How do you do that? Because you have the Holy Spirit.

[13 : 51] If you're actually saved, truly saved, you have the Holy Spirit of God living in you. And when you have the Holy Spirit of God living in you, you know what truth is.

How do you know that? Well, first of all, John 14, 17. Even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him.

But ye know him, for he dwelleth with you and shall be in you. If the Holy Spirit is living within you, you have the Spirit of truth. You understand that the Word of God is true.

You understand that Jesus Christ is true. You have the Spirit of truth living in you. Look at John 15, 26. Well, when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me.

Jesus Christ is testified of by the Holy Spirit, which is the Spirit of truth. He is giving you truth after truth after truth as you learn more and more about Jesus.

[14 : 55] John 16, 13. How be it when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth. For he shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak, and he shall show you things to come.

Look at that one again. How be it when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth. For he shall not speak of himself, he is speaking about Jesus, who is truth.

But whatsoever he shall hear, he shall speak, and shall show you all things. The Holy Spirit reveals the things of God to us. The Holy Spirit reveals things from God's word to us.

The Holy Spirit reveals things to us to help lead us in the directions we should go. And the Bible says he is the Spirit of truth. So what's Christian saying, there is no such thing as absolute truth, has totally missed the boat.

You have to stop and kind of wonder, are they really saved? Because Jesus Christ said, I am the way, the truth, and the life.

[16 : 04] He says, I am the truth. And his word is true. You know, this is as opposed to what the world believes.

The world has been blinded by Satan. Those who are not saved have been blinded by Satan. And 2 Corinthians 4.4, it says this, In whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

The devil is trying everything he can to keep people from seeing the truth of who Jesus is. You know who Jesus is. You've been there.

You've accepted him as Savior. You know who he is. But the devil is trying to keep the world from seeing that. 1 Corinthians 2.14, But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, who is what?

The Spirit of truth. For they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. If you do not have the Spirit of God, the Spirit of truth living within you, you're not going to understand the things of God.

[17 : 12] You're not going to understand what truth is. You're going to be missing foundations for your life that are so very important. People consistently reject the truth because Satan has blinded their eyes and kept them from seeing things.

Ephesians 2.14, Ephesians 2.14, Beginning at verse 1. And you hath he quickened, who were dead and trespassed as a sin.

You. Those of you sitting here. He's quickened you. He's made you alive. You were dead and trespassed as a sin. You didn't understand what truth was.

Satan had blinded your minds. Verse 2. Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, that the spirit, the spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience.

He says, you've been following the devil. You've been doing what he wants. And then he goes to verse 3 and he says, among whom also we all had our conversation in time past in the lust of our flesh, according to the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

[18 : 24] We were lost. We were totally on our way to hell. We did not care about anything about God. We followed what the devil told us and how he led us. Whatever he said, we did.

Then we came to Jesus. Jesus. And Jesus is absolute truth. Jesus is the truth. Jesus believed truth and embodied truth so much that he came to this world.

He lived and died for us that we might know the truth. Yes, there is such a thing as truth, regardless of what society teaches us, regardless of what people say, regardless of what our scientists and philosophers and everyone, there is truth available to us in the form of Jesus Christ and his word.

What about the power of truth? The power of truth. Not only did Jesus tell Pilate that there was such a thing as absolute truth, but he's there embodying it.

He's there showing it to him. I am the way, the truth, and the life. And he's standing right in front of Pilate. Pilate's looking right at him.

[19 : 45] The power of truth. When we understand the power that Jesus has, the truth that's in him, it's going to change our lives.

John chapter 3, verse 21 says, But when he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

When we understand the truth of Jesus Christ and who he is, and we understand that we have the truth available to us through him and through the word, it's going to make a difference in our lives.

Our lives are going to be so different than that of the world. When they came to him, they embraced him. They're going to be, experience power coming into their lives.

These disciples here, and us today. When you come to Jesus, was there a difference made in your life? When you came to Jesus, did you understand that your life was not the same?

[20 : 45] Because you had encountered truth and had it as part of your life. What does truth do? We talk about the power of truth. What does it do? Well, truth, first of all, has the power to liberate. The power to liberate.

It has the power to set us free. John chapter 8, verse 32. And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

When Jesus said this, he was telling the hearers there that their truth had power to deliver them from the bondage of sin. He was telling them the truth had power to set them free.

When they came to Jesus, they understood what freedom was going to be all about. When you come and understand the truth that is in Jesus Christ, it sets captives free, opens blind eyes, heals broken hearts, transformed, shattered, and ruined lives, and fills people with the love of God, the hope of God, the joy of God, and the peace of God.

Think about your life before Christ. When you came to Christ, you understood the truth that he is the way, the truth, and the life. No man cometh unto the Father but by him.

[22 : 05] Think of the hope, and the peace, and the joy, and the love that came into your life. There was a soap opera.

And in that soap opera, I don't watch soap operas, never have, according to what I've read. There was a soap opera, and in it, one of the actresses said, the truth shall set you free.

Whoever said the truth shall set you free was a liar. Now, I know she was reading dialogue, somebody else wrote that, but still, she would say it, and somebody else wrote it.

There's two people you're going, uh, do you truly understand? No, you don't. Because you don't know what you're talking about. Because one came whose mission was to bring us the truth, to show us the truth.

Pilate asked, what is truth? Jesus says, here I am. I came so that I might be a witness of the truth to you. Second thing, truth has the power to separate.

[23 : 19] It has the power to separate. John 17, 17. Sanctify them through thy truth. Thy word is truth.

Sanctify them. He's talking to his disciples in John 17. It's the Lord's high priestly prayer. He's talking to the disciples, talking to God about the disciples, and he's also talking about us.

He talks about in there about those that have come after. He's talking about us. And he's praying for us, and he says, sanctify them through thy truth. Thy word is truth. What does sanctify mean? To render something holy.

To dedicate or consecrate oneself to God. Jesus is saying, look, the truth of God has the power to cleanse us. It has the power to make us whole.

It has the power to make us more like our Heavenly Father. It has the power to make us more like Jesus Christ. He says, the truth can change you. And we said, the word of God is truth.

[24 : 17] And so, what's Satan going to try to do? D.L. Moody once said, either sin will keep you from this book, or this book will keep you from sin.

This book makes all the difference in the world. When we yield ourselves to the truth of God's word, when we walk in the spirit and allow the spirit of truth to guide us, what is our life going to be?

It is going to be so much cleaner, so much happier, so much more joy-filled because we're following the truth of God's word. The problem is, we listen too much to others.

Ephesians 5, 6, let no man deceive you with vain words, for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of men. We listen to other people and what they say.

Instead of paying attention to God's word and what Jesus Christ has told us and what the spirit is telling us that Jesus said, we start to follow others and listen to what they say. And he says, you're going to be children of disobedience.

[25 : 23] John 15, 7, if ye abide in me and my words abide in you, you shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you. If my words abide in you, you're going to see Jesus doing things.

The truth of God's word has to abide in us. Third thing, it has the power to invigorate. The power to invigorate.

The power to give us life. The power to give us energy. The power to give us strength. The power to do all of those things that we need in order to live the Christian life.

John 4, 24. God is a spirit and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. Jesus is talking to the woman at the well. And he says, look, knowing the truth is going to help you in your worship.

Knowing the truth is going to put you right before God so you can worship the way that you need to. Real worship arises from a heart that has been saturated by the truth.

[26 : 32] We understand what God's word says. We take God's word in. We believe it as truth and it's going to change the way we worship God. You know, when we actually comprehend who Jesus is, what he has done for us, what he is doing for us, it will humble us and we will bow before him and worship as we ought.

It's not about stuff is you are God. We understand that.

You are God. And until we know the truth about him, we are not going to worship him as we truly should. You are God.

Third thing, the personality of truth. The personality of truth. Standing there, Pilate's asking him, are you a king?

Are you doing it? He says, what did he say? For this cause came I into the world. I should bear witness unto the truth. That everyone that is truth, that is of truth, heareth my voice.

[27 : 55] Following the truth, you're going to be hearing what Jesus is saying to you. You're following the truth, you're going to be hearing what the Holy Spirit is saying to you. You follow the truth, you're going to be doing what God has asked you to do. Knowing the truth is so important in how we live and how we do things.

Where is truth found? First of all, remind you of John 17, 17, sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth. The scripture is truth.

The scripture is truth. As I said, you're sitting right there now with truth sitting in your lap. And not just some of it, all of it.

Remember we talked about Thomas Jefferson in his Bible where he cut out parts and replaced them and I like this part. This supernatural stuff, these miracles and things, I don't believe that.

This is, no. No. Truth is truth. No matter what we think of it. The Bible is inspired, it's infallible, it's inerrant, all those big words, which means it's true.

[29 : 09] God gave it to us. 2 Timothy, those of you who have been with me in the afternoon, 2 Timothy 3, 16. All scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction and righteousness.

All scripture. All scripture. It's not men's opinions about things. It's not what great philosophers think about things.

All scripture is given by God. It's not what some religious leader teaches you. The Bible is the final ruler of everything that we believe.

It is the truth. If the Bible can't be believed, if we think it's wrong, then what are we living by, what is our foundation in our life?

What are we using to keep ourselves going if it's not the word of God and the foundation of it being the truth?

[30 : 20] Psalm 11, 3. If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do? What are we going to do if the Bible is wrong?

How are we going to live if the Bible is wrong? How are our thinking patterns going to change if the Bible is wrong? If the Bible is a lie, then there is no such thing as absolute truth.

And we're raising a generation who believes that. They go to school. They're taught in a classroom. The world is billions of years old.

And man evolved from a single-celled organism over millions of years. What have we done? We've destroyed the foundations.

If we're not made in the image of God, what does that do to the foundations? Well, abortion is okay. You can do abortion.

[31 : 23] It's not a big problem. Rape, killing, all of those that were just animals anyway. That's what animals do. true. If we're taught there's no absolutes, there's no right and wrong, there's no such thing as sin, well, we can just do whatever we want because there's no hell either.

And there's no judgment coming. And there's no, see, when we destroy the foundations, all of society falls apart. If the first 11 chapters of Genesis are not true, which is what a lot of people try to teach us, right?

Those first 11 chapters of Genesis are not true, then how do you know John 3.16 is true? In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

No, no, no, that is not how that worked. For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, have everlasting I believe that.

But I don't believe this over here. How can you believe that if this is wrong? It's in the same Bible. It's in the same book. How can you say yes here and no here and yes here?

[32 : 40] We say the Ten Commandments aren't relevant anymore. We can't use those. We can't have those hanging up in our schools and stuff. We can't do because they're not relevant anymore. If they're not relevant anymore, what are we using for foundation?

For our laws? We like to treat the Bible as a giant buffet. I like this and I like this.

Again, the Thomas Jefferson thing. I like this, I like that, I don't like that, I don't like that, I don't like that, I don't like that. I like this, I don't like that. We treat it like a giant buffet. How can we take any of it and say yes, it is true?

It is either true or it is not. We need to trust the Bible. It is God's word, it is inspired. Isaiah 40, verse 8, the grass withereth, the flower faded, but the word of our God shall stand forever.

God's word is going to be here. How many times have people tried to banish God's word? Just get rid of it from off the face of the earth. Don't let it be one of my favorite stories.

[33 : 52] Voltaire, the philosopher, he said in his lifetime, within 50 years, the Bible will be forgotten. It will not be there anymore, it is just, no, we're going to go far beyond that.

50 years later, Voltaire's house was home to a European Bible Society. How's God's sense of humor? Pretty good, isn't it?

Psalm 119, I don't think I did this yet. Psalm 119, 89, forever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven. God's word will still be there at the end of time.

It will still be there. Let it be. The Savior is truth. The Savior is truth. John 14, 6, I've been referring to it all morning here.

I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man cometh unto the Father but by me. The way, the truth, and the life.

[35 : 04] Jesus calls attention to the fact that he's the real deal. He's it. He's the only one. You remember Christmas time, we look at John chapter 1 and we talk about Jesus being born.

In chapter 1, verse 14, and the word became flesh and dwelt among us and we beheld the glory of the only begotten of the Father full of grace and truth.

And then in verse 17, it says, for the law was given by Moses but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. You know, there's a lot of other would-be saviors in the world, pretend people, if you follow them and do what they say and all that, oh, your life will be so much better and be so much, I am the way, the truth, and the life.

There is no other way to the Father. You know, the other ones, they'll lead us down some broad way. Jesus says, I'm the door to the narrow way.

[36 : 15] I'm the one who's going to show you. Acts 4, 12, neither is there salvation in any other. For there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.

One name, Jesus Christ. 1 John 5, 12, he that hath the Son hath life, he that hath not the Son hath not life. Our world today doesn't understand what real truth is.

They don't understand that the Word of God and Jesus Christ are the truth. And they're still true whether people believe it or not.

Whether you believe it or not doesn't change the fact that it's true. Hopefully everyone here this morning does. How many of you are old enough to remember Dick Cavett?

A few of you? Okay. Dick Cavett was having his show one day and he had the Archbishop of Canterbury on there. Now, the Archbishop of Canterbury is not somebody I would usually reference as a good person to listen to.

[37 : 29] But on this particular day he did okay. He was on there with an actress. I won't name the actress but during their conversation the Archbishop said Jesus is the Son of God you know.

To which the actress said maybe he is for you but he's not for me. To which the Archbishop answered he either is or he isn't.

There's a truth there. He either is the Son of God or he isn't. He either is who he says he is or we might as well all just hang it up and go home.

What is truth? I have it asked. The truth is the difference between night and day.

Black and white. saved and lost. The truth of God's word. The truth of God's word. The truth of God's word. The truth of Jesus Christ is the difference between saved and lost.

[38 : 37] with the truth we as Christians have a standard for living and we have a reason to live.

You take that all away what are you standing on? What's your purpose for living? Why are you here? It's the foundation of everything we believe.

I look around this morning I would believe everyone here is saved. Let me ask you this. As a Christian are you standing firmly on the fact God's word is truth Jesus Christ is truth.

Those are the foundations upon which you build your life. If you have any doubts about any of that your foundation has cracks in it. Your foundation is not as solid as you think.

If you leave the word of God in Jesus Christ you have no firm standing whatsoever. Now as I said I look around I think everybody here probably does know Jesus as Savior today.

[39 : 47] But are we telling others? So that they can have that foundation as well. So that they can know I have firm footing in this world because I know the truth.

His name is Jesus Christ. Are we telling others that? Are we showing them this is the truth?

Pilate goes what is truth? As he was standing right in front of him. Help people not to miss the truth of God's word.

Take your handbook this morning. Turn with me to the truth of God's word. Thank you so much. You're the truth of God's word.

Do you have anything for God's word? I said I'm going to we're saying What is truth of God's word? Do you have anything that that could do to the truth of God's word?