

Introduction:

- Theme: There are only two options to believe. You accept that TRUTH is the Word of God and Jesus Christ or you believe truth is ever changing with culture and society. Which do you believe?
- IE. Which traveler finds the truth faster: the man who's lost but won't stop for directions, or the woman who does? Of course, the answer is: the woman. The quality that separates the two travelers isn't information or brainpower, it is humility. APPLICATION: When equal minds search for the right answer, the tiebreaker is humility. Humility is our secret weapon in the search for truth. By contrast, the greater our confidence in ourselves, the longer we stay lost! "*God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble*" (James 4:6). Humility is key to finding truth. Most people, because of sin or sins effect, are not really looking for truth, just trying to prove they are right. Let's go to our text.
- *"Then Pilate went back into his headquarters and called for Jesus to be brought to him. "Are you the king of the Jews?" he asked him. Jesus replied, "Is this your own question, or did others tell you about me?" "Am I a Jew?" Pilate retorted. "Your own people and their leading priests brought you to me for trial. Why? What have you done?" Jesus answered, "My Kingdom is not an earthly kingdom. If it were, my followers would fight to keep me from being handed over to the Jewish leaders. But my Kingdom is not of this world. Pilate said, "So you are a king?" Jesus responded, "You say I am a king. Actually, I was born and came into the world to testify to the truth. All who love the truth recognize that what I say is true." **"What is truth?"** Pilate asked. Then he went out again to the people and told them, "He is not guilty of any crime."* (John 18:33-38, NLT)
- We have heard that truth is relative. What this means is that what's true for you may not be true for me, what's true for Americans may not be true for Europeans, what's true for some religions may not be true for other religions. In other words truth is not based on an absolute but upon things that change therefore making it relative.
- It is really important that we answer Pilate's question this morning. Our lives and our eternal destiny are based on the answer. Three Things I want to look at: Pilate's Question, Jesus' Answer and Our Choice.

I. Pilate's Question: What Is Truth?

- A. "What is truth?" is a question the whole world is asking.
 1. Part of the reason we are feeling such a shaking taking place globally is because the world has been re-defining truth out of the human experience. We call that humanism – a belief system developed leaving God out of the picture (humanism). And since each human is different so will be the responses to what truth is. And since humanity is fallen or sin-centered and self centered, is it no wonder we come up with such messes?
 - a) Pilate was in the middle of a very deprived situation.
 - b) He was trying to find an answer to the question: "What should I do with Jesus?"
 2. When things are shaking, and begin to be questioned and are making no sense (not even common sense) then know that absolute truth is on trial... or has already been tried and condemned in a mock court.

- a) A stunning 2014 pole taken showed 62% of Christians do not believe in absolute truth. That has to be way higher today.
 - b) Americans today are most likely to base truth on feelings. This is the effect of our culture on us when God is taken out of it. There are no absolutes so everyone does what is right in their own eyes and life becomes a mess. *"In those days Israel had no king; all the people did whatever seemed right in their own eyes."* (Judges 17:6, NLT)
God was their King. Guess they were not following His lead.
 - c) The whole world is asking this question today, not just Pilate.
- B. Jesus is the one on trial but the reality is, Truth is on trial! Jesus is actually reaching out to Pilate, for Pilate's sake...for your sake. Pilate asks, "Are you a king?"
1. Jesus declares that he came to *"testify to the truth."* *"Then Pilate responded, "Oh, so then you are a king?" "You are right." Jesus said, "I was born a King, and I have come into this world to prove what truth really is. And everyone who loves the truth will receive my words."* (John 18:37, TPT)
 - a) Jesus is the chief witness that God sent into the world.
 - b) Jesus is to both speak the truth and demonstrate (live) the truth.
 - c) People who were not religious loved Him. He set them free, gave them worth, healed them and filled them with hope and love from an all powerful Father. *"And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."* (John 8:32, NLT)
 2. "What is truth?" is a question that Pilate asks but walks away before it is answered.
 - a) The truth is on trial and Pilate did not want to face it.
 - (1) The truth is on trial today! In a way, we are all being confronted with the truth of Jesus, from His word.
 - (2) When Jesus and His words become a threat to us or our society or our way of thinking or our culture, we walk out on him, same as Pilate and religious leaders.
 - (3) When truth doesn't make us feel good or make us happy, we simply change it. We walk out on it. We justify it. We mold it to fit our lives, our morals. We have no absolutes. When we have no absolutes, we have no compass. We have no sun to navigate. We have no anchor. Those things give us a solid point of reference to work from. Without it we drift, we veer off course.
 - (4) IE. If you walk into a store full of clocks and watches. They're all close but not exactly in sync with what time it is. Watches don't relate to the atomic clock therefore they all have a different time. But our computers, cell phones and GPS devices do. Those devices are constantly linked electronically ...to an anchor, an atomic clock. Atomic clocks ensure we don't veer off course even one-second per 30 million years. They are our anchor or standard of time. Without that anchor we slowly (sometimes quickly) veer off course...hopelessly losing time. Society is no different. If societal truth is not anchored in an absolute truth, it is ever changing to deal with our shifting belief systems in our different cultures. Culture changes, sometimes for the better, sometimes not.

(5) We call this 'relativism'. Or truth is relative to circumstance, feeling, emotions, cultures, beliefs. If truth is relative it cannot be trusted. It is this understanding that is destroying our country and soon our way of life. Think of those who are preaching tolerance ...yet watch how intolerant they become when you ask them to be tolerant.

b) How are we going to respond to this confrontation with the "Truth of God."

(1) Will we turn away from truth? And create our own.

(2) Will we try to find truth somewhere else? A fashionable truth. Ie. Hollywood

(3) Will we be moved by others opinions more than the voice of God?

(4) Or we will turn our ears and hearts to hear from God.

II. Jesus' Answer to "What Is Truth?" John writes/speaks more of the 'Truth' than any other NT writer. As Christians let's listen to what Jesus had to say about the truth.

A. What Jesus said about Truth:

1. Your Word is truth. "*Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.*" (John 17:17, ESV) The Word of God/the Bible is truth. It is in 'red'! It comes from Jesus, the Son of God himself. We should believe Him. Why?...
2. Jesus is Truth. He is the Way, the Truth, the Life. "*Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."*" (John 14:6, ESV) On several occasion He answered "I AM" ie. "...before Abraham was, I AM."
3. "*Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice.*" (ESV John 18:37)
4. God is truth. Heb 6:18 says it is impossible for God to lie. Numbers 23:19 "*God is not a man that He should lie or the son of man that He should change His mind.*" God has revealed His truth through:
 - a) His Word. John 17:17
 - b) His Son. John 18:37
 - c) His creation. Romans 1:19-20
5. And we are given the Spirit of Truth. (John 15:26; 14:17;16:13)

B. Truth has a standard.

1. Truth is not shifting and changing to match cultures and societies.
2. We can't change TRUTH but the Bible says truth can change us!
3. We have an anchor for our souls - Hebrews 6:19. Daniel and the three Hebrews had this anchor.
4. Truth does not change. It will always be the same. That is why we can trust God. Back to Nu 23:19

C. Jesus is literally telling Pilate: *All who love the truth recognize that what I say is true.* It is Pilate's opportunity to believe! But he turns away.

1. Jesus said. "Pilate, are you listening? Pilate, I am testifying of the truth to you.
2. What are you going to do with it?"

3. Pilate's eternal destiny hangs in the balance. Pilate thought he held Jesus' destiny in his hands. But in reality it is Pilate's destiny that's at stake here. That destiny depends upon how Pilate responds to truth. *"Everyone on the side of truth listens to me."*
4. Are you listening to Jesus this morning?
- D. Truth can be known. John 8:32 You shall know the truth and it shall set you free.
- E. Truth is as eternal and absolute as God himself.
- F. Truth is transforming if obeyed. *"You were cleansed from your sins when you obeyed the truth, so now you must show sincere love to each other as brothers and sisters. Love each other deeply with all your heart."* (1 Peter 1:22, NLT)
- G. So we have heard Pilate's question and Jesus' answer to "What is truth?" Now we must respond.

III. Choose You This Day - the nice thing about God is that He has given us free choice. He does not make us do...

- A. The Hebrew word for 'choose' gives us insight. Let's look at two familiar OT passages.
 1. Moses - *"I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. **Therefore choose** life, that you and your offspring may live,"* (Deuteronomy 30:19, ESV)
 2. Joshua - *"And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the Lord, **choose** this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."* (Joshua 24:15, ESV)
- B. "Choose" comes from the Hebrew word 'bahar' - meaning to look at and examine. IE. It is what you do at the supermarket when choosing fruit, vegetables, steak and of course bacon.
 1. *"It is important to note, ... that it always involves a careful, well thought-out choice. The word is used to express that choosing which has ultimate and eternal significance."* Oswalt, J. N. (1999). [231 בחר](#). R. L. Harris, G. L. Archer Jr., & B. K. Waltke (Eds.), *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (electronic ed., p. 100). Chicago: Moody Press.
 2. After examining and looking at all the evidence both Moses and Joshua told the children of Israel to choose God! Moses gave them the answer. Choose LIFE!
- C. Two thieves hung on crosses beside Jesus. Both mocked Jesus but one eventually had a change of heart as he watched and listened to Jesus. He confronts his fellow thief. "Can't you see this man is different? Jesus, remember me when you come into your Kingdom." On a cross he chose truth. He chose to believe the truth.

Conclusion:

- What will you choose today?
- Will you like Pilate walk away and be moved by the crowd?
- Or will you choose Jesus to be the anchor of your life and of your soul?