

The Truth Wins

John 18:37-38 (NIV)

³⁷ "You are a king, then!" said Pilate. Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. In fact, the reason I was born and came into the world is to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me." ³⁸ "What is truth?" retorted Pilate. With this he went out again to the Jews gathered there and said, "I find no basis for a charge against him."

It was a very good question. And Pontius Pilate asked just the right person. "What is truth?" But it seems he didn't really want an answer. What is truth? As in, "whatever!"...and He walked away. What if Pilate had stepped into the truth, instead of stepping away from it?

We desperately need truth. We're built for truth, we hate it when we are lied to or when we can't figure out the truth. We know, inherently, that lies we tell are not good and may come back to bite us. We've been suckered by lies and embarrassed and hurt.

It naturally causes us to wonder "what is the truth?" And the Father of Lies is always spooking around with lies. We're in the midst of a massive war between the Truth, capital T, and all other claims to truth. And the truth is, it wears on us.

This is one slick way to confuse the Truth that God wants to be clear for us: call it one of many opinions. Take a friend up to a piece of modern art, you know the kind where it's just a bunch of blotches of color splashed on a canvas. You and your friend can have different interpretations of what an artist was trying to express. And that's just fine - there's probably not an objective truth to be found there.

But that gets translated to places where it does not work. Have a friend look at the universe and his interpretation might be that it all just happened, by some sort of explosion, evolving out of nothing while you say it is the craftsmanship of an Almighty Creator God. It's just the same as modern art, my opinion is as valid as yours, says...Satan, really. The lies fly at us constantly. If someone doesn't know my Savior, I can fully understand why they'd be skeptical of just about everything these days.

But here's something worse. Sometimes, like Pilate, I step away.

I've walked away from the truths I don't like. That I'm not blameless. That I should have apologized where I defended myself. I'm hostile in this old heart to anything that wants to judge me. Or anything that points out I'm not all that I thought I was. So what I naturally do is lie to myself. This sin isn't really hurting anyone. I know I'm not perfect...but I hide my sin well enough. I do a whole lot of good. In other words, I confront the truth with, "whatever".

But the lies do hurt me. What if tonight we step into the truth, closer to Jesus, instead of stepping away?

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

Lord Jesus, our sins cry out for your blood to purify us - pour it over us.

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

What is truth? Truth is the God of eternal Truth standing right there in front of Pilate. And He does not intend to be just one voice among many - there is a one and only-ness to Jesus who once said, I am the Truth. When

the dust settles over the battlefield and the lies lie there dead and done, He stands, Jesus stands! He still stands! He is the Word of Truth that stands forever.

There is the Truth standing before Pilate with skin and bones like yours and mine, God become one of us to absorb the lies that we've told and lived and the lies that have hurt us. He didn't walk away, He walked into this mess to pour out His blood and to pour that precious, holy, life-giving blood all over us.

Pilate murdered the Truth. But that was the way Jesus sucked the power out of all of Satan's lies, especially the worst lie: that Jesus doesn't really love you. And then, on the third day, He wasn't dead anymore. As they say, the Truth has a way of coming out in the end.

Christianity is the one religion that invites you to investigate it and see if the claims are true. Go ahead, be a skeptic.

The evidence for it is overwhelming. It is faith to trust in Christ, but it is not blind faith to trust in Christ - it is faith in an historical fact - There He stands, Truth on the other side of the grave. The truth alive, the lies destroyed. He rose because He is who He said He was!

Go ahead and test it and then go ahead and flat out trust Him - with your sins, with your life, with your heart, with your future. God has always wanted you to be so certain of this one thing that you would stake everything on it: Jesus loves you.

In that love, He calls and pulls and loves us into line with His truth. God's Word is truth. Truth that makes us holy. And by the light of that truth, we can see what God sees. And it is a truth to treasure: Pilate said He could find not guilt in Jesus. And that's what Jesus now says about you! He can find no guilt in you now, because He has pulled it all away from you and replaced it with some sweet words: I baptize you. I forgive you. The lies are exposed and finished - this cross is the only Truth you need in the face of it all. By His blood, You are His and you are holy.

What is truth? Jesus. What is truth? Jesus died. Jesus lives forever and you live forever. Let that precious truth wear on you and into you again tonight.

So that you can go live securely and safely, Jesus Himself assures you, in His own beautiful words, right here and right now, words of truth that can never fail, words of the One who fought the lies and stands as victor, words that are filled with more hope and promise and love and comfort than we'll ever exhaust: John 14:1-6 *Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. And you know the way to where I am going.*" Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life."

Amen.