



The Gospel of John: Behold the Man

John 18:28-38

Pastor Brad Wood

In the passage we studied this week, we reflected upon the trial of Jesus before Pontius Pilate, uncovering profound truths about the nature of Christ's kingdom and our own relationship with truth.

As we witness Jesus standing before the Roman governor, we're challenged to consider our own response to the question, 'What is truth?'

This account reminds us that Jesus came to bear witness to the truth, inviting us to look beyond worldly power to recognize the eternal significance of His kingship. We're prompted to reflect on how we, like Pilate, might be tempted to dismiss or ignore the truth standing right before us.

The message urges us to embrace Jesus' truth, even when it seems insignificant by worldly standards, and to consider how this truth can transform our lives and provide a firm foundation for our faith.

5-Day Devotional and Small Group Guide

Day 1: The King of Truth

Reading: John 18:33-38

Devotional: Jesus stood before Pilate, declaring His kingdom and purpose: to bear witness to the truth. In a world of shifting perspectives and ‘relative’ truths, Christ stands as the embodiment of absolute truth. As we navigate life's complexities, how often do we—like Pilate—ask "What is truth?" without truly seeking the answer? Today, reflect on areas where you might be dismissing or ignoring God's truth in your life. Are there aspects of your walk where you're settling for comfortable half-truths rather than embracing the fullness of Christ's teachings? Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal any blind spots and to give you the courage to fully embrace God's truth, even when it challenges your current way of thinking or living.

Day 2: God's Sovereignty in Suffering

Reading: Isaiah 53:1-12

Devotional: This prophecy reminds us that even in Jesus' trial and crucifixion, God was in control, working His will through human choices. Isaiah's words about the suffering Servant vividly portrays this truth. As you read, consider how God's sovereignty extends even to the darkest moments of human history and personal pain. Reflect on a time of suffering in your own life. How did you see God working... even if it wasn't clear at the time? Today, surrender your current struggles to God, trusting that He is weaving a greater purpose through them. Ask for the faith to declare, like Joseph in Genesis 50:20, "You meant evil against me; but God meant it for good."

Day 3: The Insignificant King

Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:18-31

Devotional: Pilate saw Jesus as insignificant, failing to recognize the King of Kings standing before him. Paul reminds us that God often chooses what the world considers foolish to shame the wise. Where in your life might you be overlooking God's work because it doesn't fit your expectations? Are there "insignificant" people or situations God might be using to teach you? Today, ask God to open your eyes to His presence in unexpected places. Look for opportunities to serve or encourage someone the world might overlook, remembering that in God's kingdom, true greatness often comes in humble packages.

Day 4: The Inescapable Choice

Reading: Matthew 27:11-26

Devotional: Pilate tried to remain neutral about Jesus, but ultimately had to make a decision. We too cannot remain neutral about Christ. His claims demand a response. As you read about Pilate's dilemma, consider areas in your own life where you might be trying to "wash your hands" of responsibility regarding your faith. Are there commands of Christ you're hesitating to fully obey? Is there a ministry or service opportunity you know God is calling you to, but you're holding back? Today, make a conscious choice to fully commit one area of indecision to Christ, trusting that His way leads to true life and freedom. Follow through by acting on the choice you have made.

Day 5: Promises Fulfilled

Reading: 2 Corinthians 1:18-22

Devotional: The sermon concluded with a powerful reminder of God's faithfulness in keeping His promises, illustrated by the rainbow. Paul affirms that all of God's promises find their "Yes" in Christ. As you read this passage, reflect on God's promises in your own life. Are there areas where you're doubting His faithfulness? Make a list of specific promises from Scripture that speak to your current situation. Today, choose to stand on these promises, regardless of your circumstances or feelings. Thank God for His unchanging nature and ask for a renewed trust in His word. Remember, just as the rainbow spans the entire sky, God's promises cover every aspect of your life.

Small Group Guide: The Significance of Truth

Key Takeaways:

1. Jesus came to bear witness to the truth, which is central to His mission and kingship.
2. Pilate's response "What is truth?" reflects a cynical worldview that still persists today.
3. Our response to Jesus and His truth is the most important decision we can make.
4. God's promises apply to all believers, even when we struggle to see them in our lives.

Discussion Questions:

- How might Pilate's encounter with Jesus challenge our own perceptions of truth and power in today's world?
- In what ways do we—like the religious leaders—sometimes focus on outward appearances of piety while neglecting more important matters of the heart?
- How does Jesus' statement that His kingdom is 'not of this world' impact how we as believers should engage with earthly politics and power structures?
- What can we learn from Jesus' willingness to engage with Pilate—despite knowing the outcome—about reaching out to those who may seem hostile to the gospel?
- How might our lives be different if, unlike Pilate, we truly recognized and embraced the significance of Jesus when He stands before us?

- In what areas of our lives might we be dismissing or undervaluing the 'insignificant' things that God Himself deems important?
- How can we ensure that our pursuit of truth leads us to Jesus, rather than ending in cynicism like Pilate's question 'What is truth?'
- What are some ways we can remind ourselves of God's promises to us, especially in times when we doubt their application to our own lives?
- How does the image of the expansive rainbow serve as a reminder for God's all-encompassing promises, and how can we internalize this truth?
- In what ways might we be tempted to remain 'neutral' about Jesus in our daily lives, and what are the dangers of such a stance?

Practical Applications:

1. **Prayer:** Choose one of God's promises from the Bible that resonates with you. Write it down, pray over it, and place it somewhere you'll see it daily as a reminder of God's faithfulness.
2. **Reflection:** Spend some time this week journaling about areas in your life where you might be questioning or struggling with God's truth. Bring these to prayer and seek wisdom from Scripture.
3. **Scripture Study:** Read through **Isaiah 53:1-7** and consider how Jesus responded during His trial. Note which aspects of this passage are reflected in Jesus' actions.
4. **Accountability:** Partner with someone in the group to encourage each other in pursuing and living out God's truth this week.
5. **Thankfulness:** Each day this week, thank God for His truth revealed in Jesus Christ. Ask for His help in living out the truth and sharing it with others.
6. **Service:** Practice sharing your faith with someone this week, focusing on the truth of who Jesus is and what He's done in your life.

Further Discussion Questions:

- What struck you most about Pilate's interaction with Jesus in this passage?
- Jesus said, "For this cause I was born, and for this cause I've come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth." How does this statement impact your understanding of Jesus' mission?
- Pilate asked, "What is truth?" How do you see this attitude reflected in our society today? How can we as Christians respond to this skepticism?
- Pastor Brad mentioned that "no decision or indifference... is a decision." How have you seen this play out in your own life or in the lives of others regarding faith in Jesus?
- How does the concept of Jesus as the "King of Truth" challenge or encourage you in your faith?
- Pastor Brad shared a personal story about God's promises and the rainbow. How have you experienced God's faithfulness to His promises in your own life?

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