

Reaching the Lost What is your view of truth?

Intro: Let me take you on a journey back through time, to the first century. We enter the inner chambers of the Herodian Palace in Jerusalem. It must have been one of the most unusual encounters in all of history. Two men face to face, alone so far as we know; and you are impressed with how different they are where they stand.

In their encounter comes the meeting of two very different views of the world and approaches to authority and truth.

*Pilate therefore entered again into the Praetorium, and summoned Jesus, and said to Him, "Are You the King of the Jews?" Jesus answered, "Are you saying this on your own initiative, or did others tell you about Me?" Pilate answered, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests delivered You up to me; what have You done?" Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting, that I might not be delivered up to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm." Pilate therefore said to Him, "So You are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say correctly that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice." Pilate *said to Him, "What is truth?" And when he had said this, he went out again to the Jews, and *said to them, "I find no guilt in Him. (Jn. 18:33-38)*

Listen carefully to the words of these two men. Embodied in their statements are two profoundly different views of truth; and their views of truth made them very different men.

Contrasting two views of truth

For Pilate, the ultimate authority was human. I suppose he would have looked to Caesar as the ultimate authority. For Jesus, the ultimate authority was divine. He looked to the heavenly Father as the ultimate authority.

Pilate was ruled by pagan skepticism--"What is truth?" Jesus was ruled by spiritual faith--the truth comes from God.

Pilate says in effect, "Who has it?! Who can know it?" He places truth in the realm of the relative and uncertain. And Jesus says in effect, "I have it!"

Truth is absolute and attainable!

Pilate might have expressed it this way, "Let each person do what is right in his eyes, by whatever principles he chooses to live." Jesus says, "Let each man do what is right in the eyes of God."

Pilate says, "Who can say to anyone else this is right, or this is wrong." Jesus says, "Tell others of the truth so they too can know it too."

One's sense of justice was derived from what was expedient to keep the peace, not necessarily what was right. Go along to get along. Jesus' view was derived

from what the love and will of God demanded even if it brought conflict to the world.

Pilate's approach says, "Live by whatever scruples you please, but if they are not convenient, then simply discard them at will to save your life." Jesus' approach says, "Live by the will of God even if it means forfeiting your life". Pilate's approach led him to selfish cowardice to save himself. Jesus' approach led to unselfish courage to save others.

Which of these two best represents our attitude toward truth?

Applying the Principles in our own lives

If we are to really know the truth and be shaped and blessed by it. We must adopt the attitude of Jesus, not Pilate.

We must recognize that truth is objective, not subjective.

It does not originate from a source within us, but from a source outside us.

It is not based on personal feelings upon divine communication.

Sanctify them in the truth; Thy word is truth. (John 17:17)

It resides in the one that God has chosen to reveal it; and we have no basis to reject it other than our own personal rebellion against God.

We must acknowledge that Jesus is the authoritative and infallible guide of our lives. His word is the standard by which we must live.

God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. (Heb. 1:1-2)

Jesus answered, "You say correctly that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to bear witness to the truth. (Jn. 18:37)

*Jesus *said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me. (Jn. 14:6)*

Jesus therefore was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, "If you abide in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (Jn. 8:31-32)

To attain the precious goal of knowing the truth, you must stay on the path that Jesus directs never turning aside from left or right; for when you do you are left with Pilate to wander in uncertainty and error!

We must acknowledge that the NT Scriptures reveal the authoritative word of God's Son and last spokesman.

People often look at the Scriptures as some non-descript codified body of law that can be rejected at will. But if we understand what the Scriptures are, we see that they are not "the authority", they are authoritative because they are the words of the one who has all authority--Jesus.

While on earth Jesus bore witness to the truth the Father had given Him to His apostles.

Now they have come to know that everything Thou hast given Me is from Thee; for the words which Thou gavest Me I have given to them; and they received them, and truly understood that I came forth from Thee, and they believed that Thou didst send Me. (Jn. 17:7-8)

He sent the Holy Spirit to further that revelation.

But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. (Jn. 16:13)

It prompted Paul to say:

And for this reason we also constantly thank God that when you received from us the word of God's message, you accepted it not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe. (1 Thes. 2:13)

Therefore the NT Scriptures reveal the truth of God for this age from the ruling King Jesus Christ. When you reject the Scriptures you are not rejecting some words on a page, you are rejecting Jesus as King.

We must do what the Lord says to be saved.

And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. (Mt. 28:18)

We live in a society where when we don't like the principles of one in authority we remove him from authority. But Jesus is a monarch, not an elected official! He cannot be removed from his throne by man; because he was not put there by man. All you can do is submit to or rebel against his authority.

Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice." (Jn. 18:37)

One of the clearest states of what it means to be under authority was given by a Roman centurion who came to Jesus for healing for his servant.

For I, too, am a man under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to this one, 'Go!' and he goes; and to another, 'Come!' and he comes; and to my slave, 'Do this!' and he does it." (Lk. 7:8)

Conclusion: As Christians we follow one who claims to be King over all, to have all authority in heaven and earth, and whose mission on earth was to reveal to man the truth! Let's let the king speak about how to be saved:

No one can come to Me, unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day. It is written in the prophets, 'And they shall all be taught of God.' Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father, comes to Me. (Jn. 6:44-45)

I said therefore to you, that you shall die in your sins; for unless you believe that I am He, you shall die in your sins." (Jn. 8:24)

And Peter said to them, "Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. (Ac. 2:38)

If you follow Jesus' road, you can know the truth and the truth shall make you free from sin. And prepare you for heaven--Rom. 2:8. I urge you if you haven't already to submit to Jesus' authority as King, hearing his voice, know the truth.