

Theme: “Names of Wondrous Love” – THE TRUTH

Text: John 18:37-38 (EHV)

³⁷ “You are a king then?” Pilate asked. Jesus answered, “I am, as you say, a king. For this reason I was born, and for this reason I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice.” ³⁸ “What is truth?” Pilate said to him. After he said this, he went out again to the Jews and told them, “I find no basis for a charge against him.

“What is truth?” (v. 38). That’s not a bad question Pilate asked Jesus. After all, if the world in Pilate’s day was anything like ours is today asking “**What is truth?**” seems quite reasonable. It’s hard to know what is or isn’t true anymore, isn’t it? It’s hard to know if what we see on TV or the internet, or read in the newspaper, or hear on the radio—even if it’s “the news”—is actually true. The result is we’ve become, essentially, a society full of people like Pilate who are asking, “**What is truth?**” and doubting whether there actually is such a thing.

Earlier on Maundy Thursday evening before Jesus stood before Pontius Pilate He had told His disciples, “**I am...the truth**” (John 14:6). Notice He didn’t just say, “I am truthful,” or “I tell you the truth.” No, Jesus is even more than that: He is truth itself! What did Jesus mean by this? As we examine again His conversation with Pilate that first Good Friday we’ll find the answer. That answer points us to one of Jesus’ “**Names of Wondrous Love**”—**THE TRUTH**.

1. No Truth?

Let’s recall why Jesus was standing before the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate, in the first place. The Jewish high court, the Sanhedrin, had already passed their death sentence on Jesus late Thursday night, but since they were subject to the Roman government they had no authority to put someone to death (if they had, they would have stoned Jesus, which was the Jewish method of execution). They had to try and convince Pilate that Jesus was worthy of this death sentence. Their charge of “blasphemy” against Jesus (that Jesus claimed to be God) wouldn’t have mattered one bit to Pilate. So they came up with charges that would force Pilate to investigate further. We read in the Gospel of Luke, They began to accuse him, saying, “**We found this fellow misleading our nation, forbidding the payment of taxes to Caesar, and saying that he himself is Christ, a king**” (Luke 23:2 EHV).

No official representative of Rome could ignore such a threat to the emperor of Rome. So Jesus is hauled before Pilate and he asks Jesus, “**Are you a king, then?**” Jesus’ answer: “**I am, as you say, a king. For this reason I was born, and for this reason I came into the world, to testify to the truth**” (v. 37). In response, all Pilate could muster was the jaded question “**What is truth?**” (v. 38). With his question Pilate seemed to imply that there was no absolute truth especially in religious matters. If anything, Pilate was likely a pagan skeptic, a practical agnostic. For him the answer was simple: There is no truth.

Sound familiar? The unbelieving world still asks the question “**What is truth?**” Absolute truth in matters of morality and religion simply doesn’t exist, they insist. What seems true for one generation may change for the next. What true for one person may not be true for the other. It’s why expressions like “my truth” have become so prevalent. You hardly ever hear anyone speak of the truth, because most people don’t believe it exists. Truth is relative in the minds of many, and therefore, right and wrong are also relative. Sadly, for many, the conclusion they come to is, “There is no truth.”

As I mentioned earlier the problem for Pilate and anyone else who asks the question “**What is truth?**” doesn’t lie in the question itself. It’s not listening to or believing the answer Jesus gives when He says, “**I am THE TRUTH.**”

2. Know Truth!

Listen again to Jesus’ words to Pilate from our text, “**For this reason I was born, and for this reason I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice**” (v. 37). Notice, that Jesus answered Pilate’s question before he even asked it! Truth itself was standing before Pilate that day in the person of the Son of God, but he did not listen.

Today Jesus the Truth stands before us again in his Word. In Him and in His Word we find the answers and **THE TRUTH** to so many of the questions, the doubts, and the skepticism that come from within us, and from the outside world around us. In His Word Jesus tells us the truth about the beginning of all things, as well as the end. He tells us the truth about who we are and what we have been made through faith in Him. He tells us the truth about human sexuality and marriage, about sin and forgiveness, about life and death, heaven and hell. Will we listen to Him? Do we treasure Jesus, **THE TRUTH**? Do we believe what He says, apply it to our lives, and share **THE TRUTH** with others?

This Lenten season let’s listen again with our ears and our hearts open, by God’s grace, to the words of the One who is **THE TRUTH**. Hear what He has to say to us in His Word:

- † “**From infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.**” (2 Timothy 3:15 EHV).
- † “**So then, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message comes through the word of Christ.**” (Romans 10:17 EHV).
- † “**If you remain in my word, you are really my disciples. ³² You will also know the truth, and the truth will set you free.**” (John 8:31, 32 EHV).

Jesus Christ is truth in person. He is God’s living word of salvation. He is truth in action. He stepped from eternity into time, clothed Himself in humanity, slept in a cradle, suffered on a cross, shed his blood as the God-man to make Himself the truth of our salvation. If we want the truth about how we are saved, there is only one answer—Jesus. If we want to tell others how to be saved, there is only one truth to speak—Jesus. We can live without many of the “truths” the world puts forward, but we cannot be saved without Jesus. As Jesus Himself said, “**I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me**” (John 14:6 NKJV)

God help us listen with believing hearts to Jesus’ answer to that all-important question “What is truth?” God help us to treasure Jesus’ answer, “I am **THE TRUTH**,” because it shows his wondrous love for you and me. Amen.