

What Is Truth?

John 18:37

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FOCAL Read Responsively **John 18:37** Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. **To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.**

Everywhere you look you see what Charles Stanley has called *Casual Christianity*. George Barna recently concluded after interviewing thousands of people that:

“... being a Christian or associating with the Christian faith is not as attractive to Americans as it used to be. That is largely due to two realities. First, the mass media have unfavorably caricatured the Christian faith, devout Christians and Christian churches. Second, it is relatively rare to find someone who is an exemplar of the Christian faith ...”

In other words there are two factors that have poisoned Christianity in America. The first factor is *external* to our faith, whereas the second factor is *internal*. The godless media outlets have mocked and vilified Christians and Christianity, while at the same time intentionally making **Christ** and His **Scripture** to be no more or less relevant than **Muhammad** and the **Qur'an**, or the **Vedas** for the **Hinduism**, or the **Tipitaka** for the **Buddhist**. Christianity is not the same as all other world religions. Our Founder **Jesus Christ** tells us that the reason He came into this world was **“to bear witness unto THE truth”**. Jesus was quite clear in His numerous statements that **“He is THE way, THE truth, and THE life. No man comes unto the Father but by Him” (John 14:6)**. Christianity is distinctively different than every world

religion because its Founder made it so. The godless media may not understand nor agree with this, but any plain reading of Christ's Scripture leaves no doubts as to what He said. He was very truthful, forthright, and direct – He alone is God's provision for salvation.

The *internal* attack against Christianity has come from those who profess to be Christians but are no more Christians than a wolf is a sheep. Of the thousands of professing Christians Barna interviewed he found that **“Most self-identified Christians are comfortable with the idea that the Bible and the sacred books from non-Christian religions all teach the same truths and principles”**. This is utter hogwash. Jesus said that He came into this world to **“bear witness unto THE truth”**. Not “a truth among many”, but THE truth. Jesus also qualified His followers by saying **“Every one that is of the Truth heareth MY VOICE”**. The Christian – born of the truth – **hears Christ's Voice**. The so called **“self identified Christian”** who is **“comfortable with the idea that the Bible and the sacred books from non-Christian religions all teach the same truths and principles”** does not fall within the parameters of what Jesus said. The true believer in Christ hears Christ's Voice as his Shepherd. Jesus said:

John 10:14-16 I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. (15) As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep. (16) And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.

Jesus spoke of being the **One Shepherd** Who headed up **one fold** (His Church) and a unified **sheep**. Jesus Christ is very exclusive in His claims. He said:

John 10:25-28 ... ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. (27) My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: (28) And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

Jesus Christ was not casual in His claims, and His believers have no right to be casual in their faith. Jesus Christ stepped outside of His comfort zone to preach His unique message of salvation to a lost and dying world. Jesus **gave a good confession (1 Timothy 6:13) before Pilate**, and He expects His people to **give a good confession before a watching and ever dying world**. Without Christ there is no hope. With Christ there is life, both now and into eternity.

1. Jesus Christ Is The Very Definition Of Truth

FOCAL **John 18:37 Pilate** therefore said unto him, **Art thou a king then? ...**

ILLUSTRATE When the world asks the Christian **“are you saying that Christ alone is the way to God?”** too often *political correctness* takes over and we begin to equivocate. May I say this – political correctness has made too many people so stupid that, *if brains were dynamite, they wouldn't have enough to blow their own noses*. You can quote me on that! I was at our local hospital the other day and saw the stupidest sign I ever

saw in my life. It said **“Our Property is Tobacco Free”**. Think about those words for a minute. I never knew that buildings smoked cigarettes or chewed tobacco. The last time I saw a smoking building it had just burned down, so I was particularly happy that the place I was wasn't smoking. Whatever happened to putting up signs like **“No Smoking Allowed”** or **“You Will Be Fined If Caught Smoking Anywhere On Our Property”**? Putting up a sign that says **“Our Property Is Smoke Free”** is like saying **“Our Grass Cries When You Walk On It”**. Say what you mean. Jesus always did.

Truth isn't always *sweetness and light*. In our society we equate “truth” with “what feels right” or “what seems right to me”. Think about this for a moment.

Pilate asked Jesus **“Are you a king?”**. How did Jesus answer Pilate? Did He beat around the bush. No! Look at His words:

FOCAL **John 18:37** Pilate therefore said unto him, **Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world**

Jesus plainly states to Pilate **“you are right in saying I am a king – that's why I was born into this world, that's why I came here in the first place”**. Jesus was very clear as to Who He is, and left no doubt in Pilate's mind – nor in ours. He is a King. But think about Jesus' condition as He says this.

Jesus has been praying in Gethsemane all night long. Sometime during the night He came into that Garden

with eleven of His disciples (for Judas was off betraying Him). He asked **Peter, James, and John** to pray with Him as He went into the depth of the Garden of Despair, but they would not stay awake. **Three times during that dark night Jesus prayed “let this cup pass from Me. Nevertheless, Father, not My will but Thine be done”**. Such was His agony of prayer that He sweat as it were great drops of Blood. At one point as He prayed:

Luke 22:43 And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him.

Oh, what an awful dark night! Our Lord had His **dark night of the soul** where His holy nature met the holy and eternal Plan of Salvation. Jesus would have to go to the Cross for His people. He would have to bear the brunt and bow of our sins so that we who believe in Him could be saved. As Jesus came away from His time of prayer a **group of guards burst into the Garden**. Dragging Him away captive He was **taken from Annas to Caiphias, Caiphias to Herod**, and at each stop in His illegal midnight trial He was struck, humiliated, and beaten.

CONTEXT **John 18:19-22** The high priest then asked Jesus of his disciples, and of his doctrine. **(20) Jesus answered him, I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing. (21) Why askest thou me? ask them which heard me, what I have said unto them: behold, they know what I said. (22) And when he had thus spoken, one of the officers which stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, Answerest thou the high priest so?**

Jesus stands before Pilate. His clothing is dirty, perhaps bloodstained. His face and hair disheveled and bruised. Does He look like a king? No, for the hands of awful men have hurt Him, beat Him, condemned Him, mocked Him. Is He a King in spite of all this? Absolutely.

Truth is not always pretty. Truth does not always feel good, nor is it dressed up. Truth is, however, an absolutely established by God. Pilate would later say:

John 18:38 Pilate saith unto him, **What is truth?** ...

Truth is not what you make it to be. Truth is *what God has said in His Word and through His Word is true.*

The world asks “**What is truth?**” and, like Pilate, makes up its own answers. It says “**I find no fault in Him. Shall I release Barabbas the murderer or Jesus the innocent?**” The crowd says “**release Barabbas the murderer, for we want nothing to do with this Jesus. He wants to be our KING, and this we cannot have!**” Never mind that there was a time when:

John 6:15 When **Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone.**

When Jesus was feeding the five thousand with **five barley loaves and two small fishes** the world was ready to crown Him King. But the Christ Who stood

condemning sin, preaching of Hell, the Christ Who said:

John 3:16-19 **For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (17) For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. (18) He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. (19) And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.**

The **singular Christ Who came to be the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world (John 1:29)** is not desired, for man does not want to recognize himself as a sinner in need of God's unique Savior. The Christ the belly and heals the sick, yes, we will take Him. The Christ Who demands your allegiance and says “**follow Me as King**” - **no, we're not interested in Him.**

I see this so often in our world today. I receive calls from people who want food, shelter, or funds from the Church and from Christ, but who never attend Church nor walk as Christ walked. They care nothing for the Christ of the Scripture, the **beaten King standing before the confused Roman Governor.** They say “**what is truth?**” As **C.H. Spurgeon** once said:

“Pure Christianity, in its outward appearance, is an

equally unattractive object, and wears upon its surface few royal tokens. It is without form or comeliness, and when men see it, there is no beauty that they should desire it. There is a nominal Christianity which is accepted and approved of men, but the pure Gospel is still despised and rejected.”

2. Jesus Christ Is A Very Unique King

FOCAL John 18:37 Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, **Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.**

There is absolutely no one who is a true believer in Jesus Christ Who thinks Him to be only *one King among many*. Jesus Christ is unique among all. He is King of Kings and Lord of Lords, eternal God in human flesh.

Look at what Jesus said of Himself. He said “**to this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world**”. Do you see that word “**and**”. That connects two distinct statements. Let's look at the *last statement first*. Jesus said:

FOCAL John 18:37 **for this cause came I into the world ...**

WORD STUDY The word translated “**came into**” is the *Perfect Active Indicative* of ERCHOMAI (ερχομαι er'-

khom-ahēe) which means “**to come into**”. In order to come into a place you have to come from another place. Jesus was not talking about coming from the womb and into the world for He has already said in the first part of His declaration “**for this cause I was born**”.

Jesus Christ did not begin to exist when He was born in Bethlehem, nor was He suddenly formed when He was conceived in the virgin Mary by the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:35). He was, is, and will always be Eternal God!

In the introduction to this Book John writes:

John 1:1-2 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. (2) The same was in the beginning with God.

God the Son was **in the beginning with God, and WAS God**. There is never a time when Jesus Christ was not and is not God. John the Baptist said of Jesus:

John 1:15 ... This was he of whom I spake, **He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me.**

Jesus Christ is **before all, even John**. Jesus Christ the King of salvation **came into this world from Heaven** to save us from our sins. Jesus Christ is the Eternal I AM. When Moses spoke to God in the desert asking Him “**Who shall I say send me?**” the Eternal Creator told him:

Exodus 3:14 And God said unto Moses, **I AM THAT I AM:** and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, **I AM hath sent me unto you.**

Go forward in time a few thousand years when Jesus speaks to the self righteous but unsaved Pharisees. Let's look at that conversation. Jesus told them ...

John 8:56-59 **Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad. (57) Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? (58) Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am. (59) Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.**

Jesus Christ – that King of Kings – took the Eternal Name of God, so holy that the average Jew would not pronounce it, and applied it to Himself. The Jews knew what Jesus was doing and saying. This is why they **took up stones to cast at Him**. The punishment for blasphemy was stoning to death. But, dear friend, Jesus did not blaspheme! He is God. **He came into this world from Heaven for us.**

The Bible says:

Colossians 1:16 For **by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:**

ILLUSTRATE All things were created by Jesus, and for Jesus. **Do you realize the magnitude of that statement?** The speed of light is 186,000 miles per second. If you were moving at the speed of light you could circle our planet seven times in one second. You could go to the moon in 1.3 seconds. It would take you about eight minutes moving at the speed of light to get our sun. If our sun were hollow you could put a million earths inside of it. Our Galaxy is – I can only say GI N O R M O U S ! It would take between 250,000 to 300,000 **light years** to cross our entire Galaxy. As far as scientists can tell there are around **100 billion stars in our Galaxy, and 100 billion Galaxies** in the space that we can see.

ILLUSTRATE, Continued A little boy was playing with a balloon. He would let go of the string, and it would go up to the ceiling. Then he's get on the couch or chair and, jumping up, grab the balloon's string and pull it back to himself. He did this over and over again, giggling and fascinated, much to the delight of his dad. Then the little boy decided to go outside and do the same thing. He released the balloon but, alas, there was no ceiling to stop it. He came into the house crying. But then he stopped and, looking at his dad, said “Daddy, next time you go on the plane will you get my balloon?” We like that little boy playing with the balloon. We have no idea how huge God's space is. It is impossible for human minds to conceive of its size – **yet all things were made by Christ and for Christ**. Not only this the Bible says:

Colossians 1:17 And **he is before all things, and by him all things CONSIST.**

Word Study Jesus Christ created all things. “By Him were all things created ... all things were created by Him and for Him”. But that's not all. By Jesus all things CONSIST. That word translated “consist” is the Greek *Perfect Active Indicative* of SUNISTAO (Word: συνιστάω *soon-is-tah'-o*) which means “to be held together”. The *New American Standard* translates this verse as:

Colossians 1:17 He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.

The Bible says that Jesus Christ upholds all things by the power of His word

Hebrews 1:3 Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

and that it is He alone Who purged our sins, and now sits at the right hand of God the Father. Jesus Christ existed in glory with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit before the world was ever created. He prayed:

John 17:5 And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.

Jesus Christ is not like Muhammad. He is not like Buddha. He is not like Zeus, or one of the pantheistic gods or goddesses of the East. Jesus Christ is not a

different kind of man. He is a different kind of God. He is God in the flesh!

This brings us to the first statement Jesus made of Himself. He said:

FOCAL John 18:37 ... To this end was I born, ...

Jesus was born of a Virgin into humanity, according to the prophecy of the Coming Messiah. The Lord spoke through Isaiah saying:

Isaiah 9:6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

The CHILD was BORN, but the SON was only GIVEN. The Son was not born, for God the Son preexisted with God the Father from eternity to eternity. But Jesus Christ condescended to be born into this world, to take upon Himself human flesh so that He could make payment for our sins.

Jesus Christ was born of a Virgin into this life according to prophecy. The Bible says:

Isaiah 7:14 Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

This prophecy was fulfilled in Christ and Christ alone.
The Bible says that:

Matthew 1:20-23 ... the angel of the Lord appeared unto {Joseph} in a dream, saying, **Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. (21) And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. (22) Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, (23) Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.**

Jesus Christ – Eternal and Preexistent Son of God – came into this world through a Virgin Birth. The Scripture says:

Philippians 2:7-8 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: **(8) And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.**

Jesus **took humanity upon Himself**. He is a King – He is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. The Scripture says:

1 Timothy 6:14-16 **our Lord Jesus Christ: (15) Which in his times he shall show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; (16) Who only hath immortality, dwelling in**

the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen.

What a wonderful and unique Savior we who are Christians have!

3. Christians Are A Unique People

FOCAL **John 18:37** Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, **Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.**

I want to say this with as clear and loud and politically incorrect voice as I can: If you are one of those who profess Christ to be your Savior but believe that there are *other saviors equally acceptable to God* then I call you a liar. Not only that, Christ calls you a liar! Jesus said:

Everyone that is of the truth heareth My voice.

Jesus never left His people an option as to following – or believing – other gods and goddesses. If you are saved, then you can only be saved by faith in Jesus Christ. The Scripture clearly states:

Romans 14:8-11 For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's. **(9) For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and**

living. (10) But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at naught thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. (11) For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.

Every knee shall bow to Jesus. To make Jesus but one god among many, or one way among many to God, is to make Him what He never made Himself. Jesus said “**if you are OF the truth then you hear MY Voice**”.

Don't be part of the problem – be part of the solution. Jesus came into this world as a King. He **bears witness to the truth.** Jesus by His very life testified that **all are sinners in need of the Savior.** He taught us that **He is the Only Savior of the world, the Lamb of God that taketh away our sins.** Jesus sends the Holy Spirit of God to live inside of every believer who calls upon Him and Him alone for salvation.

ILLUSTRATE In ancient times the kings would leave their palaces to go forth and lead their troops in battle. Jesus Christ went forth from Heaven's Throneroom, but as King of Kings He went alone. He came into this world to battle Satan and his forces. He laid down His life for His people, and now lives – walking and talking and leading His people to continue to battle Satan in this world. As Jesus is the King of Kings He is the King of Truth. What He says is true, what His Book declares is true and all others are liars. True Christianity is never promoted by force of arms nor by deception, but by plainly declaring the truth that faith in the finished work

of Jesus Christ is the only way to salvation. Just as Jesus walked through this world for three years touching people, healing them and saving them, Jesus walks through this world even now through His Spirit and His Church. Tell others about Jesus. Stand up for Him.

I conclude with this.

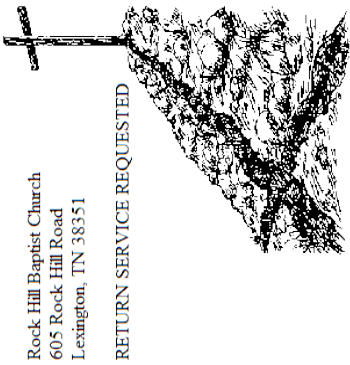
Jesus stood before Pilate and gave a good confession before him. Nonetheless He suffered the death of the Cross. **Christ laid down His life for you and I.** If you are born again, as He is so are you to be. **Lay down your lives for Him.** Christianity demands that we get outside of our comfort zone and tell others that the Christ Who saved us will save them, too. **Peter, James and John** went with Jesus to the Mount of Transfiguration, and there they saw Jesus as He really is. **His face did shine as the sun, and His clothing was a white as the light.** Peter spoke up, saying:

Matthew 17:4 ... Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah.

Oh, it's so good to be here, seeing Christ revealed on the mountaintop. It's so good to gather together as brothers and sisters in the Lord, and Christ in our midst. But it is far better to leave the mountaintop so we can tell others what we have ourselves experienced.

Jesus did not stand before Pilate so that we could hide from fallen man. Jesus did not declare Himself a King so

we could lump Him in with Muhammad, Joseph Smith, Buddha, and the other deluded religions that have people shaving their heads and dressing in robes. Jesus did not hang on a Cross bearing our sins so that we could put the spotlight on other gods and goddesses. **He gave Himself for the sins of the world.** We need to stand up and proudly proclaim that truth so that other can be saved by faith in Him!



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