

## "The Truth"

Pontius Pilate once asked, "What is truth?" Well that question still worries many. Hello, I'm Phil Sanders, and this is a Bible study "In Search of the Lord's Way." The Bible gives an answer to that question, and we're going to explore that answer.

Welcome to In SEARCH of the Lord's Way! We're here to search the Scriptures for God's will. The Lord Jesus said to those who believed him in John 8 verses 31 and 32, that, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." I don't know about you, but I want to be free. The word of Christ can set us free and give us eternal life. And I don't want anything less than His word or more than His word. I want the pure word of God without any embellishment or human tradition added. Give me the Bible. Thanks for taking time with us today. We want to be a part of your life each week.

Over the last few years, the American people have awakened to the problem of lies and falsehoods. We've faced false advertizing, fake news, and political propaganda. We no longer trust much of what we see and hear on television or social media, because we've been deceived by so many messages. Many people think nothing of lying, but God still condemns bearing false witness and trickery. Jesus said Satan is the father of lies in John 8 and verse 44. And Paul had to deal with false apostles and deceitful workers who pretended they were angels of light in 2 Corinthians 11. Peter warned that, "there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies" in 2 Peter 2.

Well, I don't want to be fooled, and you don't either. Proverbs 23:23 says, "Buy truth, and do not sell it; buy wisdom, instruction, and understanding." Well, where do we buy this truth? Yes, the truth will cost you something! You must examine things carefully, embrace what is right, and refuse to accept what is not right. What is your standard of measure? Why, the Bible of course! God's ways are always true!

Now we offer this study on the truth free. If you'd like a printed copy or a CD of our study and you live in the United States, then mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to [searchtv@searchtv.org](mailto:searchtv@searchtv.org). Or, you can call our toll-free telephone number. That number is 1-800-321-8633. We also have materials free on our website [www.searchtv.org](http://www.searchtv.org).

The Edmond church will now worship in song, we'll read from John 18 verses 36 to 38 and then we'll explore the truth that sets us free.

Our reading today comes from the gospel according to John chapter 18 verses 36 to 38. Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting so that I would not be handed over to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm." Therefore Pilate 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 testify to the truth. (And) 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.

That's a reading from God's Holy Word. Let's pray together. Heavenly Father we're thankful that we can know the truth because Jesus brought it to us. And Father help us love the truth and to hold firmly to it. May Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. In Jesus' name, Amen.

The truth is that which corresponds to reality as opposed to that which is imagined or a whimsy. Truth tells us the way things really are. Now falsehoods do not correspond with reality; they tell us

something different than the way things are. They misrepresent the truth and sometimes twist it to their own desires. Paul said in 2 Corinthians 4 and verse 2, "But we have renounced disgraceful, underhanded ways. (And) We refuse to practice cunning or to tamper with God's word, but by the open statement of the truth we would commend ourselves to everyone's conscience in the sight of God." Now people who tell the truth are open and transparent, while false teachers practice cunning ways and tamper or twist the Scriptures to make them fit their desires.

Philosophers through the ages have asked whether truth is even knowable. Well, the Bible everywhere assumes that people can know the truth, if they will listen to God. The Lord Jesus promised in John 8:31 to 32, that, "If you abide in my word, (then) you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." Now by studying the words of Jesus we can know the truth and become His true disciples. Many students, sadly, study more from the writings of men than they do from the Scriptures. They listen more to the thinking of men than to Jesus and they miss fully knowing the truth of God's word. They fall into error because they listen to the wrong sources. And that's why we must continue to study God's word.

When people speak of truth, they speak of different kinds of truth. Some speak of objective and subjective truth. Well what do we mean by this? Well, I have here a jar of jellybeans. Now I ask you what is your favorite flavor of jellybean? Of course, the answer to this question depends on the individual. Now each person will have his own favorite flavor and may even change what he likes best. You see subjective truth is subjective to one's preferences. This is subjective truth, and it changes with the individual.

If I ask you, however, how many jellybeans are in this jar, there's a specific, correct answer. This jar contains exactly 182 jellybeans. And if you guessed anything other than 182, you'd be wrong. This is an objective, verifiable fact. And what one thinks or feels about it does not change the number of jellybeans. Now an objective truth is not subject to the whims of people.

Sadly, some people want to substitute their subjective feelings for objective facts. This substitution creates controversy, and some would rather ignore these objective facts to keep from facing the controversy. For instance, only Jesus is the Son of God who became flesh, who died for our sins, and who rose again on the third day. The Lord Jesus said in John 14:6, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. (And) No one comes to the Father except through me." Only Jesus can save you from sin or give you eternal life.

Now objective truth, unlike subjective truth, is narrow and defined. It is not subject to the whims of time or culture. You can't vote it in or vote it out. You can ignore it, but you cannot change it or make it go away. You can substitute what you like for it. But if you don't like it, you still have to face it. Even if the world disagrees with the truth, objective truth, it still remains true.

Now just because people differ in their understanding of morals doesn't change what God says in the Bible. What God calls sinful is truly sinful, whether we agree with God or not. When God condemns an attitude or a behavior, He has condemned it for all time. What I think or feel about that behavior or that attitude will not change what God has written in Scripture.

Then there are absolute truths and relative truths. Some believe truth is relative. And by this, they mean that truth is always relative to some particular frame of reference, such as a language or a culture. That some things are particular to a language or culture, however, does not mean that all things are relative to that group. Relativism denies there are any absolutes at all. You can't logically argue against the existence of absolute truth. If someone says, "There are no absolutes," he is arguing

for an absolute. One might well reply, "Are you absolutely sure about that?" Well if he's sure, then he's relying on an absolute (that there are no absolutes) and contradicting himself.

There are numerous absolute truths in Scripture. For instance, Genesis 1:4 to 5 says, "And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and (He called) the darkness Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day." Well, Genesis 8:22 says, that "While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease." Well it hasn't ceased in thousands of years.

The apostle John said about God in 1 John 1 and verse 5, "This is the message (which) we have heard from Him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all." Hmm.

Now when God gave the ten commandments in Exodus 20, He gave us several examples of moral absolutes; and these are principles of right and wrong in all times and places: "Honor your father and your mother." "You shall not murder." "You shall not commit adultery." "You shall not steal." "You shall not bear false witness." Or, "You shall not covet." Well, Christ, who is Lord of all, taught these things as well. God revealed in Hebrews 9 and verse 27, "it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment." Ah yes, there are many absolutes taught in Scripture, and we cannot change them, add to them, or take away from them.

You see the Scriptures themselves are imperishable. Psalm 119 verse 89 says, "Forever, O LORD, your word is firmly fixed in the heavens." The Lord Jesus said in Matthew 24 and verse 35, that "Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away." 1 Peter 1:23 to 25 says, "since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God; for "All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls, but the word of the Lord remains forever." And this is the word, this word is the good news that was preached to you."

Now it's because the word of God is firmly fixed that we can have hope in its truthfulness and in its promises. God's eternal word means that what was written in the first century is still true today. Its commands, its promises, and its principles are still as authoritative today as it was when the apostles wrote them down.

God Himself is the essence of truth. Titus 1 and verse 2 reminds us that He is the God who "never lies." Isaiah 65 and verse 16 calls Him the "God of truth." And Moses wrote in Numbers 23 verse 19, that "God is not man, that he should lie, or a son of man, that he should change his mind. (That is repent) Has he said, and will he not do it? Or has he spoken, and will he not fulfill it?" God's words that are found in the Bible are called the "word of truth" in 2 Timothy 2 and verse 15. And that's why we must give all diligence to know God's word.

John 1:14 says about Jesus, "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth." Well, Jesus brought us both grace and truth. You can't have one without the other. God's grace doesn't come packaged in lies or half-truths. You can't find God's grace or truth in strange doctrines that come from men. As we've noted, God's truth is found in the words of Christ revealed in the Bible. The Lord Jesus prayed in John 17:17, "Sanctify them in the truth; your word (that is what's in the Bible) is truth." The Lord wanted His people to be set apart as holy in the truth. He wanted them to know the truth and to hold fast to it, so they might be known as God's people. God's word is true, because God is true!

In John 6, several of Jesus' disciples decided well they didn't believe or like what He said and they abandoned him. So Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you want to go away as well?" Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, and we have believed, and have

come to know, (to know) that you are the Holy One of God” (John 6 verses 67 to 69). My friend if you want eternal life, you cannot find it anywhere else but in the words of Jesus. The Lord Jesus said in John 14 and verse 6, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” Now Jesus is not merely one way among many; He is “the way!” Jesus does not merely speak; He embodies the truth! Jesus is not merely one way to life; He is the life. And if we miss our opportunity in this life to follow Jesus, we have no hope of coming to the Father. He is the only way; His teaching is the truth; and only He has the words of eternal life.

Now the Lord Jesus said in John 18:37, “For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice.” If you wish to be “of the truth,” listen to Jesus. If people listened to the Lord Jesus, we wouldn’t have so much chaos and confusion. If we truly practiced what He taught, we’d have greater respect for life, greater relationships with one another, greater honesty, less violence, greater compassion, greater service to the needs of others. Many of our social and moral problems would disappear if we all heard and obeyed Jesus.

Instead, we’ve bought into the false notion that truth doesn’t matter! People claim, well “what’s true for you is true for you, and what’s true for me is true for me.” Well what they’re actually saying is there is no truth or morality. When people buy into that way of thinking, truth and morality disappear. Can you imagine living in a world that doesn’t believe anything is true or that doesn’t have any morals? Who could find peace? When morality doesn’t matter, people will choose to follow their selfish desires, and no matter who it hurts. When truth doesn’t matter, people will follow selfish ambitions that oppress the weak. Truth and morality matter!

Now because truth matters, what we believe matters! Paul urged the young preacher Timothy in 2 Timothy 2:15 to 18, “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth. But avoid worldly and empty chatter, for it will lead to further ungodliness, and their talk will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, men who have gone astray from the truth saying that the resurrection has already taken place, and they (will) upset the faith of some.” Truth is what blesses us, while falsehoods tear us apart. And this is why we must be faithful to the truth.

James 5:19 to 20 says, “My brothers, if anyone (of you) among you wanders from the truth and someone brings him back, let him know that whoever brings back a sinner from his wandering will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.” Truth can heal sin sick souls. The gospel truth can bring sanity to the confused, light to those in darkness, hope to the despairing, and eternal life to those who believe. “Buy truth, and do not sell it; buy wisdom, instruction, and understanding” (Proverbs 23 and verse 23). Oh I hope that you will. Let’s pray together. Father help us everyone to not settle for anything less than the truth that comes from Your word. Give us strength and help us always to do Your will on earth as it is in heaven. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

An earlier reformer said, “Therefore, O faithful Christian, search for truth, hear truth, learn truth, love truth, speak the truth, hold the truth, defend the truth till death.” Now the truth is that important and necessary thing for your soul to be saved. It’s more valuable than silver or gold and sweeter than the honeycomb. Only the truth can set you free! It will set you free from the deceptions of the devil, free from sin, and free to live an honorable Christian life. Do you love the truth, the truth that Jesus came into this world to give us?

1 Timothy 2 verses 3 to 4 says, “This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.” We don’t need partial truth

or half truths; we need the whole truth. The Lord Jesus said in John 16:13 that, "When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come." We have all the truth found in the written Word of God, given by the Holy Spirit to the apostles and prophets.

And if you wish to have that freedom from sin, then obey the truth. 1 Peter 1:22 teaches that you purify "your souls by your obedience to the truth." And when we believe in Jesus Christ, repent of our sins, confess Jesus as the Son of God, and are baptized into Christ, we're obeying the truth. And when we're baptized, God washes away our sins, adds to the church, makes us His children. Obeying the truth means following the teaching of the Lord, not adding to it or taking away from it. Have you obeyed the truth?

Well we hope today's study about truth has stirred you to consider your soul. And so think about what God says. If you live in the United States and you want a free printed copy or a CD of this message, mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to [searchtv@searchtv.org](mailto:searchtv@searchtv.org). Or, you can call the Search office toll-free at 1-800-321-8633. Now you can download these lessons or a newsletter online at our website: [www.searchtv.org](http://www.searchtv.org). You can watch SEARCH anytime on YouTube! Just subscribe to our channel, "SearchTVMinistry." There's also a schedule of our programs and a map with the location of churches in your area. We also offer free Bible Correspondence courses. Now don't worry, we're not here to get your money. We're here to help you get to heaven.

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