

LET GOD BE TRUE

We will commemorate the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus in just a couple of weeks on Easter Sunday. If you had been in Jerusalem 2000 years ago today, everything would have seemed normal. But behind the scenes, the religious authorities were plotting to get rid of Jesus, the teacher and miracle worker who proclaimed Himself to be their Messiah. Their plans were beginning to gather momentum, and it would now be just a few days until Jesus would stand falsely accused at His trial.

The civil judge in His case would be a puzzling and pathetic figure named Pontius Pilate, the Roman procurator of Judea. He had little understanding of the Jewish people and had gained a reputation for total insensitivity to their customs and manner of life. Yet he feared the damage they could do to him by their continual complaining to Rome, so when he heard the case against Christ, he was torn between displeasing the Jews and condemning an innocent man. He thought that a personal conversation with the accused might help him make a more intelligent decision, so he retreated from the crowd to talk with Jesus privately.

John 18:33-38 [34] Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again, and called Jesus, and said unto him, Art thou the King of the Jews? [34] Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me? [35] Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me: what hast thou done? [36] Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence. [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. [38] Pilate saith unto him, **What is truth?** And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault at all.

When Pilate couldn't get an admission of guilt from Jesus, he threw up his hands and exclaimed in total exasperation, "What is truth?" Then he went back outside, never waiting for Jesus to answer his question. **What is truth?** It was a good question and it deserved an answer. Jesus could have given Pilate one if he had waited just a moment longer. But he did not really want an answer, because he was not honestly seeking the meaning of truth. Like many people today, he was expressing skepticism about the whole subject of truth. He was doubtful that there was any such thing as absolute truth, or that anyone could know it if there was.

Some so-called intellectuals today insist that all truth is relative, that what is true for one may not necessarily be true for another, or that what may have been true in the past is not necessarily true today. They claim that it's all in the way you see it, and that in the final analysis no one has any ultimate answers. One opinion is as valid as another.

But above this din of confusion and despair, another voice is heard ... the voice of this same Jesus speaking to His disciples on the night before His trial in Pilate's court – "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me" (John 14:6) ... and the voice of Jehovah when He revealed Himself to Moses on Mount Sinai centuries before – "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth" (Exodus 34:6). There IS such a thing as truth, and it resides in a person, a person King David called the "Lord God of truth" (Psalm 31:5).

The prophet Jeremiah declared "the Lord is the true God" (Jeremiah 10:10), and the apostle Paul commended the Thessalonian Christians because they "turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God" (1 Thessalonians 1:9). The Bible doesn't pull any punches here – all other so-called gods are really not gods at all, just woefully inadequate imitations of the one genuine God!

The Old Testament word for truth comes from a root word indicating firmness, stability, or a reliable basis for support. It refers to something that rests on trustworthy facts. The New Testament word for truth adds the idea of being open and unconcealed, and therefore being real and genuine rather than false or imaginary. The God of truth is the only God whose statements about Himself are consistent with the facts! He has integrity. He is who He says He is!

Isaiah also called Him "the God of truth" (Isaiah 65:16), but he used a different word which is translated "amen" every other time it occurs in the Old Testament. Isaiah literally called Him "the God of the Amen." The word amen means "verily" or "truly," and refers simply to something that is so. When God says "amen," He is asserting that something is and shall forever be so. When we say "amen" we are agreeing – "let it be so!"

Jesus is also called "the Amen" (Revelation 3:14), because He is the embodiment of all that God is. That is why He could say to His disciples, "I am the truth," and why He could tell Pilate that He came to bear witness to the truth. That is why John could say, "grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" (John 1:17). That is why Paul declared that Jesus is the visible manifestation of the invisible God (Colossians 1:15) – He is no imposter or deceiver. Jesus Christ is the God of truth!

The Apostle John stated it powerfully: “And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life” (1 John 5:20). Jesus is the true God!

The Psalmist went so far as to say that God’s truth reaches “unto the clouds” (Psalm 108:4), another way of stating that it is complete, perfect, and unlimited. The Psalmist also said, “The truth of the Lord endureth forever” (Psalm 117:2). God has all the true facts; they will always be true, and He will never forget any of them.

People lie. We all know that. We have all been lied to and we have all distorted the truth for our own advantage at one time or other. But whatever men may be like, we have no reason to question God, because at least four times in Scripture we are assured that God does not lie (Numbers 23:19; 1 Samuel 15:29; Titus 1:2; Hebrews 6:18).

“God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?” (Numbers 23:19)

That’s why the Apostle Paul said, “**Let God be true, but every man a liar**” (Romans 3:4). When God speaks, it is true, accurate, and correct to an infinite degree. All truth is God’s truth and we are totally dependent on Him for our knowledge of truth. Since He is the author of truth and since He created our capacity to grasp truth, we can come to a knowledge of truth only through Him (1 Timothy 2:4). The good news is that God has no intention of hiding His truth from the people He made. His desire is for everyone to know the truth!

How does God reveal His truth to us? Through His Word!

- Scripture is “inspired” or “God-breathed” (2 Timothy 3:16, NIV)
- Scripture comes “from the mouth of God” (Matthew 4:4)
- Scripture was written by men who were “moved by the Holy Ghost” (2 Peter 1:21)

Psalm 19:7-11 [7] The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. [8] The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. [9] The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. [10] More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. [11] Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward.

Psalm 119:151 Thou art near, O Lord; and all thy commandments are truth.

Psalm 119:160 Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever.

In His prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane, moments before His arrest, Jesus added this testimony ...

John 17:17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

If God’s Word is truth, then it is necessarily without error. Truth and error are antithetical and mutually exclusive. If it is true, then it cannot be in error, and if it is in error, then it cannot be true. Yet there are some today who claim to be Christians and still insist that it is unnecessary to believe in an inerrant Word from God. They say that the Bible is inspired by God, but they consider it to be no problem if it contains historical or scientific mistakes. The subject of inerrancy has become one of the major theological issues among evangelicals in our generation, and it is not an issue on which we can afford to remain neutral. To weaken the Biblical doctrine of inerrancy is to set us adrift on a sea of human speculation and rob the Christian message of its power.

If parts of the Bible are true and parts are false, what criteria can we use for determining which parts we can accept as correct? Who will make that decision? The parts that are false cannot be from God since He is the God of truth, so they must be of human origin. Yet Scripture claims to be from God in its entirety. If we are the ones who determine what is true and what is false, then we are elevating ourselves above Scripture, and ultimately above God Himself.

If the Bible is not true in its historical and scientific facts, then we cannot be sure it is true when it speaks about eternal salvation. We are left with no sure word from God. We cannot be certain that anything about the Biblical message is true, and we are left to follow the spirit of our age. That’s why some professing Christians who have denied the inerrancy or relevancy of Scripture have already begun to adopt the world’s viewpoint that truth is relative. **But we still believe that truth is truth!**

When there is a conflict between what God has said and what man says, **“Let God be true, but every man a liar!”**

- Man says that sin is no big deal, that we can’t help ourselves, that “the devil made me do it,” that situational ethics applies, or that a loving God couldn’t bring Himself to put sinners in Hell. But God says, “the wages of sin is death” (Romans 6:23). **Let God be true, but every man a liar!**

- Man says that we cease to exist at death, that our spirit becomes one with the cosmos, that we achieve godhood, or that we are reincarnated to try life all over again. But God says, “it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment” (Hebrews 9:27). **Let God be true, but every man a liar!**
- Man says that we all worship the same God, that all religions lead to Heaven, and that it doesn’t matter what you believe as long as you are sincere. But God says that He is looking for a people who will “worship Him in spirit and in truth” (John 4:24). **Let God be true, but every man a liar!**
- Man says that it doesn’t matter what church you attend, that all denominations basically believe the same thing, and that all that matters is that we just love Jesus. But God says that there is “one Lord, one faith, one baptism” (Ephesians 4:5). **Let God be true, but every man a liar!**
- Man says that belonging to a church will give you “Brownie points” with God, that once you have become a Christian it doesn’t matter if you sin, and that you can serve God in your heart without it affecting how you live, look, talk and walk. But God says, “faith without works is dead” (James 2:26). **Let God be true, but every man a liar!**
- Man says that society has changed, that the ancient Scriptures don’t apply to modern man, and that the old-fashioned gospel is irrelevant to a cutting-edge, technological-savvy generation. But God says, “earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints” (Jude 3). **Let God be true, but every man a liar!**
- Man says that all we need to do is accept the Lord as our personal Savior. But God says, “except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish” (Luke 13:3). **Let God be true, but every man a liar!**
- Man says that baptism is just an optional religious ceremony. But God says, “he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved” (Mark 16:16). **Let God be true, but every man a liar!**
- Man says that we receive God’s spirit automatically, somehow without really knowing it, almost by osmosis at the first moment we acknowledge Jesus in our minds. But God says, “ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you” (Acts 1:8). **Let God be true, but every man a liar!**

Adam before sin asked the question of a regenerated mind - "**Is it true or is it false?**"

Adam after sin asked the question of an unregenerated mind - "**Is it right or is it wrong?**"

Many so-called believers still think like sinners - "Do I have to do this to be saved?" NO! Think this way – "**What or Who is TRUE?**"

Proverbs 14:12 There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.

Give your life to God unreservedly! When you serve God and it seems like things are going WRONG, He is still TRUE! When you serve the devil and it seems like things are going RIGHT, He is still FALSE!

Truth is what matters! **Let God be true, but every man a liar!**

John 8:32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.