

*Grace, mercy & Peace from God our Father & Jesus Christ our King. Amen*

### ***What is truth?***

#### **Is it what people in power tell us it is?**

They have an agenda to promote, constituents to keep happy, multimillion dollar donors to which they are indebted at the least and puppets of in some cases.

#### **Is it what journalists tell us?**

They have a code of professional ethics, and other journalists checking their stories, but *they need to sell papers, please their publishers, honor the deals they make with their sources*. I think it's safe to say that life is not nearly as scandalous, horrible, tragic or corrupt as it reads in the news. Because face it, people doing the right thing, dealing honestly, caring for their neighbor, living quietly, and working hard fails to retain our attention.

#### **It is what the commentators from Fox entertainment tell us?**

I mention Fox separately because I recently learned that Fox News doesn't register itself as a news agency – subject to the standards of journalistic standards of fair and unbiased reporting – but as an entertainment program. This is not my opinion of Fox News, but Fox News' own legal description on its website, which reads, “*Fox News Network LLC furnishes the Company Sites and the Company Services for your personal enjoyment and entertainment.*” ***Go to: <https://www.foxnews.com/terms-of-use> if you think I'm not telling the truth.***

## Is it what science tells us?

**Kind of.** Scientific truth – by its own definition – is not absolute; *science is an evolving set of beliefs about how the world works based on empirical evidence the best theories to explain that evidence.* I believe in science. It has improved our understanding of the world and our lives immeasurably, but even scientists admit its limits.

### ***What is truth?***

***This is the question placed before us on this Christ the King Sunday.***

It is Pontius Pilate's question to Jesus after Jesus has said, "Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice."

Pilate's question, "What is truth?" is a confusing conclusion to his interrogation of Jesus. ***We don't know whether Pilate is actually asking Jesus the question in earnest or not; whether he is admitting his own ignorance concerning the entire topic; whether Pilate is making light of this prisoner Jesus' claim of truth even as the rabbi stands before him under his power; or whether he is cynical about the entire idea of there being any truth.*** Since the conversation ends here we have no idea what Pilate intended.

Nonetheless, the question "What is Truth?" remains before us. More importantly, ***it is one of the pervasive question of our time.*** And many of Pilate's motivations for asking that I mentioned remain alive and well.

There is the attitude that truth is irrelevant – a relic of the past. There are two different ways this plays out. ***The first*** is the admission that ***I know and care nothing about truth***, and that's okay because *it doesn't really exist anyway.* Unfortunately, such a belief ***leads to utter meaninglessness.***

The second is that ***there is no guiding truth***, and ***the only thing that matters is being able to get what you personally want***. The attitude that ***might makes right***, or translated into ***consumerism's golden rule*** “He who has the gold rules.” But we ***don't need to live in this society for long to see that this attitude has led us down a road of poverty of spirit and empty lives***.

In our post-modern society ***the complete dismissal of any authoritative truth*** has become all too common. ***Ethical tolerance*** rules the day with ideas ***such as*** “Whatever you do is okay as long as you're not hurting anyone else.” Or “The only rule ‘Thou shall not judge another person under any circumstances.’” The problem with such ideals is that they ***never take into consideration the need for the common good***, only the good of the individual. ***If no one has any expectation of the standard of human behavior and no one monitors how people live, our life together inevitably degrades into an each for themselves tug of war with no concern for the whole or anyone else***.

Even if Pontius Pilate were earnestly asking Jesus the question: *What is truth?* ***Even if we ourselves seek answers to Pilate's question with all integrity, we will inevitably run into the problem that faced the Greeks and Romans. If everyone seeks a truth based on principles and propositions, the entire arena of seeking truth becomes little more than a squabbling match in which everyone claims it and no one really knows what it is***.

***The question: “What is truth?” doesn't get anyone anywhere***. Every approach we take to answering the question has already been ***tainted by our personal judgement*** – the burden of eating from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil; we have an opinion, which means the truth will always elude in favor of our biases.

***In fact, Pilate's question misunderstands Jesus' words from the very***

***beginning.***

*Jesus says, “Everyone who belongs to **the** truth listens to my voice.”*

You cannot possess the truth; you cannot know the truth; you cannot learn the truth; you cannot have a corner on the truth. ***The best any of us can hope for is to belong to the truth – to be possessed by, guided by, in conversation with, convicted by and forgiven by the One who is the Truth.*** Because the truth is not a principle; the truth is not perfect knowledge; the truth is not beauty; the truth is not something to be learned.

The truth is a person. God himself, incarnate in human form, Jesus Christ, the servant king of all. If we want to know the Truth we must listen to Jesus’ words; don’t even think about the Old Testament or Paul or James or the other letters until you hear and know Jesus words. From there we learn to care for others, not judge them; to forgive rather than to get even; to seek to love others rather than seeking to be loved; to deny ourselves and take up our cross if we desire to live; that the first will be last and the last first; that those who desire to lead must be servant of all.

To know Truth we must walk with Him, love with Him, deny ourselves with Him, die with Him. And as our lives sink more deeply into the Truth who is Christ the King, we know more deeply and completely how much Jesus, the Father and Holy Spirit love us because they have done all this and more, even to dying on a cross.

*The truth is a love that will not let us go.*

*I cannot possess the truth, but he has made me His own in the waters of Holy Baptism.*

*I cannot fully know the truth, but I am fully known by him – warts and all, sinner that I am – and loved in spite of myself.*

*I cannot learn the whole truth, but I can ask that through the Holy Spirit I might learn from Him. For he will gladly teach me the way of servanthood, the way of the cross, the way of life.*

***JESUS IS THE KING WHO LAYS DOWN HIS LIFE FOR HIS PEOPLE  
THAT WE MIGHT KNOW A LOVE THAT RISEN FROM THE DEAD  
TRANSCENDS THIS LIFE AND WILL HOLD US INTO ALL ETERNITY.***

*He is Jesus, King of Kings; Lord of Lords.*

*He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.*