

- Bumper sticker: Jesus is the answer – but what’s the question?
- Introduction: Read **John 18:33-38**. The setting is the trial of Jesus before Pontius Pilate.
- Pilate’s question, “What is truth?” was rhetorical. He didn’t wait for Jesus’ response.
- Many of us, in our quest for ultimate reality, have asked the same thing: What is truth?
- The answer is Jesus himself.

To connect with ultimate reality, believe and stand fast in Jesus.

Connecting with Ultimate Reality

See **vv.13-14**.

- The Lord loved you.
- God chose you.
- The Spirit sanctified you (set you apart).
- You believed, when God called you through the gospel message.
- You are now destined for glory, along with Jesus Christ.

Connecting with Ultimate Reality

- If the idea of *faith* or *belief* seems difficult to understand, it might help to think of it in terms of *trust*.
- God is personal, so “believing the truth” is more than intellectual belief or blind faith, it is trusting in Him.

- This is actually how the Old Testament often expresses it:
- See, for example:

Psalms 9:10(NKJV)

And those who know Your name will put their trust in You; For You, Lord, have not forsaken those who seek You.

Psalms 18:2(NKJV)

The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer; My God, my strength, in whom I will trust; My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.

Psalms 31:1(NKJV)

In You, O Lord, I put my trust; Let me never be ashamed; Deliver me in Your righteousness.

- Many people have questions about how to reconcile two ideas in v.13, namely:
- God from the beginning chose you for salvation
- Through ... belief in the truth
- We may wonder how both can be true.
- See the additional PowerPoint entitled Middle Knowledge – visit dckoso.wordpress.com

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Sustaining the Connection

- See **v.15**.
- Stand fast and hold the traditions you were taught.
- *Traditions* are things which are passed on from one person to another.
- Tradition for its own sake is not good.

Mark 7:5-9(NKJV) Then the Pharisees and scribes asked Him, “Why do Your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashed hands?”

He answered and said to them, “Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written: *‘This people honors Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me.*

And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.’

For laying aside the commandment of God, you hold the tradition of men—the washing of pitchers and cups, and many other such things you do.”

He said to them, “*All too well you reject the commandment of God, that you may keep your tradition.*

- But when it comes to the traditional teaching of Scripture, we are wise not to innovate.
- Paul is encouraging the Thessalonians and us to continue in the teachings of the apostles.

2 Timothy 2:2(NKJV) And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

- We have to stand fast in these teachings from generation to generation regardless of perceived changes times or circumstances.
- It is in this sense that we are “traditional.”
- We cannot, however, add traditions of our own choosing to what the Scriptures say.

Remembering God’s Role

- See **vv.16-17**.
- These verses contain Paul’s wishes, his prayer and his blessing for the Thessalonian church and for us.
- A genuine life of faith is always conscious of the balance between what we need to do and what God does on our behalf.
- These verses make an excellent prayer that we can pray for one another.

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Truth, the Gospel and the Lord Jesus Christ

- From the beginning of God’s revelation to the human race, He has revealed Himself as a God of truth.

Deuteronomy 32:3-4(NKJV) For I proclaim the name of the Lord: Ascribe greatness to our God.

He is the Rock, His work is perfect; For all His ways are justice, A God of truth and without injustice; Righteous and upright is He.

- This same connection with the truth is what He desires for His people.

Exodus 20:16(NKJV) “You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

Psalms 51:6(NKJV) Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts, And in the hidden *part* You will make me to know wisdom.

- Moreover, God’s truth is not something conditional or changing. It is everlasting and unchanging just as He is.

Psalms 100:5(NKJV) For the Lord *is* good; His mercy *is* everlasting, And His truth *endures* to all generations.

Psalms 117:2(NKJV) For His merciful kindness is great toward us, And the truth of the Lord *endures* forever. Praise the Lord!

- In Daniel 10:21, a heavenly being that appeared to Daniel refers to the Scriptures as “the Scripture of Truth.”
- From the beginning of Christ’s ministry, He made clear the connection between Himself, God the Father and the truth.

John 1:14-18(NKJV) And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

John bore witness of Him and cried out, saying, “This was He of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me is preferred before me, for He was before me.’”

And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace.

For the law was given through Moses, *but* grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared *Him*.

John 4:23-24(NKJV) But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God *is* Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”

John 8:31-32(NKJV) Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, “If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed.

And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

John 14:6(NKJV) Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. In **John 14:17, 15:26 & 16:13** Jesus calls the Holy Spirit the “Spirit of Truth”.

- When Jesus prays for His followers He asks His Father to sanctify us by His truth.

John 17:17(NKJV) Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.

- Paul points out the connection between the message of the gospel and the truth.

Ephesians 1:13(NKJV) In Him you also *trusted*, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise,

Colossians 1:3-6(NKJV) We give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you,

since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of your love for all the saints;

because of the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, of which you heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel,

which has come to you, as *it has* also in all the world, and is bringing forth fruit, as *it is* also among you since the day you heard and knew the grace of God in truth;

- Finally, we need to assess our own relationship with the truth as this will affect our relationship with Jesus.
- Dishonesty, a lack of integrity, or the inward falsehood of deceiving ourselves will impact our relationship with Him.

Ephesians 4:14-15(NKJV) that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—

1 John 1:5-10(NKJV) This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.

If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.

But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.

- Jesus is the truth incarnate, the ultimate reality.
- He is the answer to the age-old question, “What is truth?”
- Next Week: 2 Thessalonians 3 More on Christian Behavior