

Jesus is the Truth



What is Truth? (Part 2)
by Derek Prince

It's good to be with you again as I continue with my theme for this week which takes the form of a very searching and penetrating question: What Is Truth?

Yesterday we looked together at that dramatic confrontation between Jesus and Pontius Pilate, where Pilate is examining Jesus concerning the charge that He has set Himself up as the King of the Jews, as it's recorded in John's gospel chapter 18, verses 33–38, and I'm going to read that account again today because it's so very important to our theme:

> "Pilate therefore entered again in the Praetorium, and summoned Jesus, and said to Him, 'You are the King of the Jews?' Jesus answered, 'Are you saying this on your own initiative, or did others tell you about Me?' Pilate answered, 'I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests delivered You up to me; what have You done?' Jesus answered, 'My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting, that I might not be delivered up to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm.' Pilate therefore 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 bear witness to the truth. Every one who is of the truth hears My voice.' Pilate said to Him, 'What is truth?'" (NASB)

On that account of the confrontation between Jesus and Pilate and on Pilate's question at the end, "What is truth?" in my talk yesterday I made four comments which I will briefly recapitulate. First, Pilate's question has never yet been answered by secular philosophy. Secular philosophy has never come up with a satisfactory definition of what truth is.

Second, one supreme purpose for which Jesus came was to bear witness to the truth. He said that He was born for that very purpose. This shows us that the world needs to have the truth identified. It's so important in the sight of God that He sent Jesus to identify, to reveal the truth.

Third, it is kingly to stand for the truth. When Jesus was asked if He was a king He said, "Yes, I am a King and I stand

for the truth." It's much easier to compromise, but it's cowardly. It's kingly to stand for the truth.

Fourth, at that moment when Pilate asked that question, "What is truth?" he was actually confronted by the truth in the person of Jesus. And his question was not because he desired an answer, his question was an attempt to evade the issue. Then he took water and washed his hands and said, "I'm innocent." He said to the Jewish people, "It's your responsibility." But I serve notice on you, Pilate was not innocent and you and I are not innocent when we compromise with the truth when we're confronted with it.

Today we're going to look at the answer which Jesus Himself gave to this question: What Is Truth? Although Pilate did not know it, Jesus had actually answered the question a little while previously in a private conversation with His disciples. This private conversation is recorded in John 14, verses 2–6. Jesus says:

> "'In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. And you know the way where I am going.' Thomas said to Him, 'Lord, we do not know where You are going; how do we know the way?' Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me.'" (NASB)

Jesus said there about Himself, three things: "I am the way; I am the truth; and I am the life." He presented Himself as the complete and final answer. "You want to know where to go, I am the way. You want to know what to believe, I'm the truth. You want to know how to live, I'm the life. I am the answer to those questions."

The particular aspect of the answer of Jesus that we will focus on in our talks this week is that statement, "I am the truth." Pilate said, "What is the truth?" Jesus says, "I am the truth." It's very important to see that God's answer to the question—what is truth?—is a person not an abstraction. Anything less than a person cannot contain the totality of truth and cannot satisfy human longings.

I remember as young man, as a student, a student of philosophy, I longed to come to grips with that question: what is truth? And I searched in the realm of the abstract, in the realm of Plato and Aristotle and modern philosophers. And sometimes I thought I was almost there but it eluded me and it left me feeling so empty, so frustrated that I would turn to very carnal pleasures just to forget my frustrations. But then in the grace of God, some years later, like Pilate, I had a personal confrontation with Jesus. But I'm so glad that I didn't respond like Pilate. I accepted Jesus as the truth and oh the depth of satisfaction that I had in coming to know the truth in a person. You see personality is one of the great wonders and mysteries of the universe. Any answer to the question, "What is truth?" that leaves out personality is obviously an incomplete answer. But Jesus is the complete answer! He says, "I am the truth."

The next thing I want to say is this. I hope you will listen carefully. We apprehend this truth by intuition—by faith. We do not arrive at it by reasoning. Let me read some words in Hebrews, chapter 11, verse 1:

> "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." (NASB)

Faith is the only way we can relate to the unseen world. Our senses won't do it. Our reason won't do it. There's this other means of intuition of perception which the Bible calls faith. And then in Hebrews 11:3:

> "By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible." (NASB)

Faith leads to understanding. We have to get the order right. It's not we understand and then we believe. But by faith we understand—when we believe then we understand. I want to say that the truth about Jesus is totally reasonably. I am a professional logician, I find the Bible and particularly the statements of Jesus the most logical exposition to be found anywhere in human writings. But reason doesn't reveal it to you. Faith perceives it, then reason approves it. You have to get the order right. But there has to be a moment of intuition, a moment of commitment, a moment when in a sense you step out of the known realm and into the unknown and you make this faith commitment—"Jesus I recognize You as the truth. And as the truth, I accept You."

I want to say just a little more about receiving Jesus as the truth by intuition, by faith not trying to reason it all out. And I want to take what might seem to you a very strange example—the instructions that God Israel in the Old Testament for how they were to cook and eat the passover lamb—bearing in mind that the passover lamb is a preview, a type, a picture of Jesus. When Jesus came, John the Baptist said, "Behold the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world." So I am going to read from Exodus, chapter 12, verses

8–11, the instructions for how they would cook and eat the Passover lamb.

> "That same night they are to eat the meat roasted over the fire, along with bitter herbs, and bread made without yeast. [Or unleavened bread] Do not eat the meat raw or cooked in water, but roast it over the fire—head, legs and inner parts. Do not leave any of it till morning; if some is left till morning, you must burn it. This is how you are to eat it: with your cloak tucked into your belt, your sandals on your feet and your in your hand. Eat it in haste; it is the Lord's Passover." (NIV)

Just five points there quickly to help you to understand what it means to accept Jesus by intuition. First of all the lamb had to be roasted in its entirety with fire. Roasting I understand to be an act of worship. It's the fire of worship. When confronted with the truth there comes a moment when we have to acknowledge God in the truth with worship.

Second, it had to be eaten with bitter herbs which speaks of godly sorrow for all of our misdeeds and our misspent past. Third, it had to be eaten with unleavened bread and the New Testament tells us that unleavened bread speaks of sincerity and wholeheartedness. Fourth, nothing was to be left to the morning. That's how we have to apprehend truth. We cannot take it bit by bit. We cannot say, "I'll take this much and leave that much, and I'll think that over and see if it's acceptable." There is a point when we have to accept the truth in its entirety. We roast it with fire; we leave nothing over till the morning.

And finally, it had to be eaten in haste. There was an element of urgency. It's not a question that we can dilly-dally about. We don't always have the truth in front of us. There are moments when we're confronted by the truth, and those are the decisive moments in our lives and we have to make a decision—we cannot postpone it.

Let me just go through that again quickly:

1. Roast with fire—that's worship
2. Bitter herbs—that's godly sorrow
3. Unleavened bread—that's sincerity and wholeheartedness
4. Leave nothing till the morning—that's total acceptance
5. Eaten in haste—it's an urgent question.

Our time is up for today. I'll be back with you again tomorrow at this time. Tomorrow we'll take another important step in answering our question: What Is Truth?

Radio Program

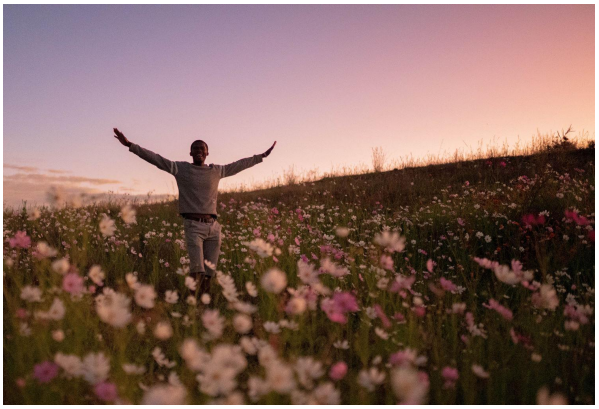
Transcript: TS-R092-102-ENG
Last Updated: 13 Apr 2023
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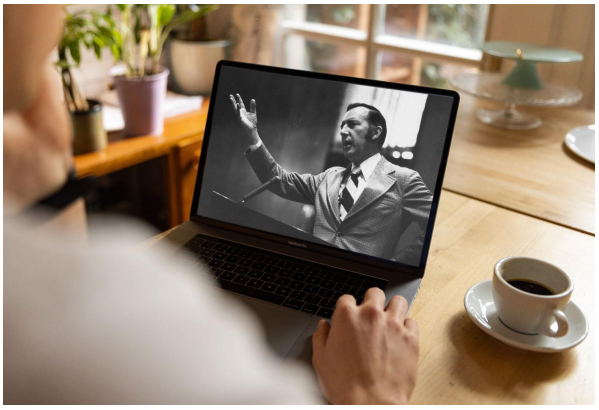
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