

INTRODUCTION – In John’s Gospel verse 18:38, Pontus Pilate asks “What is Truth?” Clearly this is one of the most enigmatic and precipitous questions of all time. So, how do you answer the question? How is truth defined? The question is made all the more relevant as we live in a world where truth has become more “subjective” and “relative” – being framed by the fluid nature of individual self-interest [AKA situational ethics]. In the past, truth was substantially more “objective” and “absolute” – based upon a fixed reality of the eternal and unchanging Character of God and His revelation in Scripture. If God is who He says He is in Scripture, and if His standard of character and conduct is resolute and knowable, obedience is no longer merely an option... it is an expectation. Christians who desire to honor God with their life by ascribing to a higher moral and ethical calling, often find themselves disadvantaged in a world where people reject God and His objective truth. Where the disciplines of logic and reason are replaced by how someone feels at the moment. In this article will explore what God has to say about “Truth” and humanity.

A. **The Phrase “I Tell You the Truth”** – Is employed 79 times in Scripture... appearing once in Daniel, then 78 times in all four Gospels. The Daniel quote is attributable to an Angelic being sent by God, the Gospel quotes are all attributable to Jesus, and both are referenced in the next section. In all, the word translated as “Truth” is used 214 times in Scripture. As a frame of reference, other key values are employed as follows: 1) “Love” is employed 505 times, 2) “wisdom” is employed 206 times, and 3) “Faith” is employed 246 times. These are obviously key values that God has much to say about, and which we would be wise to hear and understand. The following interpretation of the word “truth” is sourced from Zondervan’s New International Encyclopedia of Bible Words. As in all AD articles, large quoted content is identified from its source, presented in unbolded letters, and edited by AD for clarity. Bold letters are typically AD commentary.

1. **“Truth” in the Old Testament – ‘emet:** “The best English rendering of the Hebrew concept of what is true or the truth, may be the word ‘reliable’.” That which is true is absolutely reliable, it can be counted on, and thus is trustworthy. As Zondervan’s The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology points out, “The Hebrews recognized the *logical truth* that others also recognized, meaning that a true word can be relied upon because it accords with reality. Therefore, for both *a God of truth* and *a man of truth*, their word and deed must be cohesive [meaning one and in harmony].” In this context of the reliability of the truth, both “True” and “Faithful” are attributes used to describe God (Genesis 24:27; Psalms 31:5; Jeremiah 42:5) and *God’s Word* (1 Kings 17:24; Psalms 43:3; 119:43, 142, 151, 160). Thus, the reality of truth is knowable and reliable through time... it is consistent and unchanging.
2. **“Truth” in the New Testament – aletheia:** Both Paul and John use the concept of truth to make distinct theological affirmations. Other occurrences in Scripture may contrast truths and falsehoods or serve to underline the reliability of what is about to be said as true. Here are some distinctive meanings of “truth” that are found in the Epistles:

a. Paul's use of "truth"

- i. There are a number of everyday uses of "true" and "truth" by Paul, as in Romans 9:1 ("I speak the truth in Christ... I am not lying"). There are also theologically sensitive uses where Paul spoke of "the truth," meaning all of reality as God has revealed it... both in creation (Romans 1:18) and also in the gospel (Ephesians 1:13; Colossians 1:5; 1 Timothy 2:4). Paul's conviction about what is true is that 1) God has cleared away humanity's illusory beliefs and notions, and 2) through the gospel God has provided a clear perspective on reality. Through God's Self-revelation in Scripture, we at last have four aspects of truth... meaning reliable knowledge 1) about God, 2) about ourselves, 3) about the nature of eternity, and most importantly 4) about how to live in intimate relationship with the Lord and one another.
- ii. Paul wrote the truth (2 Corinthians 12:6) and so described reality, but, beyond that, it is vital that his listeners respond to and obey the revealed truth (Galatians 5:7). Paul often referred to his own way of life among those to whom he ministered. He operated consistently with 1) a heart open wide (2 Corinthians 6:3-13), and 2) in a relationship so transparent that no one had any reason to suspect or question his motives (1Thessalonians 2:3-12). Paul emphasized to Timothy not only the younger man's full acquaintance with Paul's lifestyle but also the need for Timothy to be a living example of the words Paul spoke and exhibited (1Timothy 4:12-13; 2 Timothy 3:10-11).
- iii. This aspect of Paul's fundamental approach to ministry is reflected in several uses of "truth." The truth is not only the reality as God has revealed it, the truth is reality as believers are able to experience it by making choices guided by God's reliable Word. Paul's lifestyle illustrated the reality his words described and to which he called his listeners to emulate.

b. John's use of "truth"

- i. Over half of the New Testament's use of the *aletheia* family of words (truth, true) appear in John's writings. At times the uses are commonplace, as in contrasting truths and falsehoods (John 4:18). But while different shades of emphasis can be distinguished, it is helpful when reading of truth to keep in mind the concept of truth's relationship to reality. What is said in God's Word is reliable, for God's Word is truth and ever in harmony with reality (John 17:17). But even more than that, we can be sanctified by the Word; for it strips away our illusions, then takes us by the hand to guide our steps. Jesus is "the truth" (John 14:6), for all of reality finds both its origin and its focus in him. He, who created and sustains the universe, is also humanity's Redeemer and the goal toward which all history strains (Colossians 1:15-23). We can "know the truth" and thus by it be set free only by keeping Jesus' Words (both knowing and obedience are pictured here - John 8:31-32). Only by following his teachings which

unveil reality can we experience reality and so find the freedom in Christ to be who God wants us to be.

- ii. This view of "truth" is important in grasping the teaching of 1 John 1 on fellowship with God. We have fellowship with God when we "live by the truth" (1:6). This is clearly not sinlessness, for the context immediately speaks of Christ's blood purifying us "from all sin" (1:7). The focus of the passage is squarely on reality. Thus, verse 8 deals with the claim of some to be "without sin" knowing such a claim is self-deceit, and if we hold such a view it is obvious "the truth is not in us." The reality is that even though we are redeemed beings [in Christ], sin finds expression in our lives. We are personally unable to deal with sin, but God is able. Therefore, when we confess our sin God forgives us and continues his purifying work within us with our cooperation.
 - iii. In short, John constantly calls us to adopt the divine perspective provided for us in Christ and in God's Word. As we refuse to live self-deceiving and deceitful lives, and instead commit ourselves to act by faith on those things that God says are real, we will personally experience truth and find our heritage of freedom.
- c. **Summation:** "Truth" and "True" emphasize reliability in both the Old Testament and reality in the New Testament, and the two concepts are interwoven in each Testament:
- i. God is reliable because his words and works faithfully portray who he is, and they are in full harmony with reality.
 - ii. God's reality can be known and experienced because his reliable words and actions unveil it to a blinded humanity, which must respond to him with faith [to find Truth].
 - iii. The Biblical concept of truth is particularly important in an age in which agreeing with what the Bible teaches is more closely associated with truth, than is living out the teachings of Jesus. God's words unveil a reality that we certainly ought to agree with, but that reality can never be experienced until we grasp God's reliable words by faith and put them into practice.

B. Specific uses of "I tell you the truth" in Scripture – for the sake of brevity, I have just included the verse where this concept is used. I encourage you to look at the context of the text in the surrounding verses where this concept is employed.

1. ^{Da 11:2} "Now then, **I tell you the truth**: Three more kings will appear in Persia, and then a fourth, who will be far richer than all the others. When he has gained power by his wealth, he will stir up everyone against the kingdom of Greece.
2. ^{Mt 5:18} **I tell you the truth**, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished.
3. ^{Mt 5:26} **I tell you the truth**, you will not get out until you have paid the last penny.

4. ^{Mt 6:2} “So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by men. **I tell you the truth**, they have received their reward in full.
5. ^{Mt 6:5} “And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men. **I tell you the truth**, they have received their reward in full.
6. ^{Mt 6:16} “When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show men they are fasting. **I tell you the truth**, they have received their reward in full.
7. ^{Mt 8:10} When Jesus heard this, he was astonished and said to those following him, “**I tell you the truth**, I have not found anyone in Israel with such great faith.
8. ^{Mt 10:15} **I tell you the truth**, it will be more bearable for Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that town.
9. ^{Mt 10:23} When you are persecuted in one place, flee to another. **I tell you the truth**, you will not finish going through the cities of Israel before the Son of Man comes.
10. ^{Mt 10:42} And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is my disciple, **I tell you the truth**, he will certainly not lose his reward.”
11. ^{Mt 11:11} **I tell you the truth**: Among those born of women there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist; yet he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.
12. ^{Mt 13:17} For **I tell you the truth**, many prophets and righteous men longed to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it.
13. ^{Mt 16:28} **I tell you the truth**, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.”
14. ^{Mt 17:20} He replied, “Because you have so little faith. **I tell you the truth**, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there’ and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.”
15. ^{Mt 18:3} And he said: “**I tell you the truth**, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.
16. ^{Mt 18:13} And if he finds it, **I tell you the truth**, he is happier about that one sheep than about the ninety-nine that did not wander off.
17. ^{Mt 18:18} “**I tell you the truth**, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.
18. ^{Mt 19:23} Then Jesus said to his disciples, “**I tell you the truth**, it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven.
19. ^{Mt 19:28} Jesus said to them, “**I tell you the truth**, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

20. Mt 21:21 Jesus replied, “**I tell you the truth**, if you have faith and do not doubt, not only can you do what was done to the fig tree, but also you can say to this mountain, ‘Go, throw yourself into the sea,’ and it will be done.
21. Mt 21:31 “Which of the two did what his father wanted?” “The first,” they answered. Jesus said to them, “**I tell you the truth**, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God ahead of you.
22. Mt 23:36 **I tell you the truth**, all this will come upon this generation.
23. Mt 24:2 “Do you see all these things?” he asked. “**I tell you the truth**, not one stone here will be left on another; everyone will be thrown down.”
24. Mt 24:34 **I tell you the truth**, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened.
25. Mt 24:47 **I tell you the truth**, he will put him in charge of all his possessions.
26. Mt 25:12 “But he replied, ‘**I tell you the truth**, I don’t know you.’
27. Mt 25:40 “The King will reply, ‘**I tell you the truth**, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.’
28. Mt 25:45 “He will reply, ‘**I tell you the truth**, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.’
29. Mt 26:13 **I tell you the truth**, wherever this gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her.”
30. Mt 26:21 And while they were eating, he said, “**I tell you the truth**, one of you will betray me.”
31. Mt 26:34 “**I tell you the truth**,” Jesus answered, “this very night, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times.”
32. Mk 3:28 **I tell you the truth**, all the sins and blasphemies of men will be forgiven them.
33. Mk 8:12 He sighed deeply and said, “Why does this generation ask for a miraculous sign? **I tell you the truth**, no sign will be given to it.”
34. Mk 9:1 And he said to them, “**I tell you the truth**, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God come with power.”
35. Mk 9:41 **I tell you the truth**, anyone who gives you a cup of water in my name because you belong to Christ will certainly not lose his reward.
36. Mk 10:15 **I tell you the truth**, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.”
37. Mk 10:29 “**I tell you the truth**,” Jesus replied, “no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me and the gospel
38. Mk 11:23 “**I tell you the truth**, if anyone says to this mountain, ‘Go, throw yourself into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart but believes that what he says will happen, it will be done for him.
39. Mk 12:43 Calling his disciples to him, Jesus said, “**I tell you the truth**, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others.

40. Mk 13:30 **I tell you the truth**, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened.
41. Mk 14:9 **I tell you the truth**, wherever the gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her.”
42. Mk 14:18 While they were reclining at the table eating, he said, “**I tell you the truth**, one of you will betray me—one who is eating with me.”
43. Mk 14:25 “**I tell you the truth**, I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it anew in the kingdom of God.”
44. Mk 14:30 “**I tell you the truth**,” Jesus answered, “today—yes, tonight—before the rooster crows twice you yourself will disown me three times.”
45. Lk 4:24 “**I tell you the truth**,” he continued, “no prophet is accepted in his hometown.
46. Lk 9:27 **I tell you the truth**, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God.”
47. Lk 12:37 It will be good for those servants whose master finds them watching when he comes. **I tell you the truth**, he will dress himself to serve, will have them recline at the table and will come and wait on them.
48. Lk 12:44 **I tell you the truth**, he will put him in charge of all his possessions.
49. Lk 18:17 **I tell you the truth**, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.”
50. Lk 18:29 “**I tell you the truth**,” Jesus said to them, “no one who has left home or wife or brothers or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God
51. Lk 21:3 “**I tell you the truth**,” he said, “this poor widow has put in more than all the others.
52. Lk 21:32 “**I tell you the truth**, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened.
53. Lk 23:43 Jesus answered him, “**I tell you the truth**, today you will be with me in paradise.”
54. Jn 1:51 He then added, “**I tell you the truth**, you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man.”
55. Jn 3:3 In reply Jesus declared, “**I tell you the truth**, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again.”
56. Jn 3:5 Jesus answered, “**I tell you the truth**, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit.
57. Jn 3:11 **I tell you the truth**, we speak of what we know, and we testify to what we have seen, but still you people do not accept our testimony.
58. Jn 5:19 Jesus gave them this answer: “**I tell you the truth**, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does.
59. Jn 5:24 “**I tell you the truth**, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life.

60. Jn 5:25 **I tell you the truth**, a time is coming and has now come when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live.
61. Jn 6:26 Jesus answered, “**I tell you the truth**, you are looking for me, not because you saw miraculous signs but because you ate the loaves and had your fill.
62. Jn 6:32 Jesus said to them, “**I tell you the truth**, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven.
63. Jn 6:47 **I tell you the truth**, he who believes has everlasting life.
64. Jn 6:53 Jesus said to them, “**I tell you the truth**, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you.
65. Jn 8:34 Jesus replied, “**I tell you the truth**, everyone who sins is a slave to sin.
66. Jn 8:51 **I tell you the truth**, if anyone keeps my word, he will never see death.”
67. Jn 8:58 “**I tell you the truth**,” Jesus answered, “before Abraham was born, I am!”
68. Jn 10:1 “**I tell you the truth**, the man who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber.
69. Jn 10:7 Therefore Jesus said again, “**I tell you the truth**, I am the gate for the sheep.
70. Jn 12:24 **I tell you the truth**, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds.
71. Jn 13:16 **I tell you the truth**, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him.
72. Jn 13:20 **I tell you the truth**, whoever accepts anyone I send accepts me; and whoever accepts me accepts the one who sent me.”
73. Jn 13:21 After he had said this, Jesus was troubled in spirit and testified, “**I tell you the truth**, one of you is going to betray me.”
74. Jn 13:38 Then Jesus answered, “Will you really lay down your life for me? **I tell you the truth**, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times!
75. Jn 14:12 **I tell you the truth**, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.
76. Jn 16:7 But **I tell you the truth**: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.
77. Jn 16:20 **I tell you the truth**, you will weep and mourn while the world rejoices. You will grieve, but your grief will turn to joy.
78. Jn 16:23 In that day you will no longer ask me anything. **I tell you the truth**, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name.
79. Jn 21:18 **I tell you the truth**, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go.”

- C. **The New World Encyclopedia states** – The meaning of the word “**truth**” extends from [concepts of] ‘honesty’, ‘good faith’, and ‘sincerity’ in general; to ‘agreement with fact or reality in particular’. The term has no single definition that the majority of professional philosophers and scholars agree upon, as various theories of truth continue to be debated. Here are some basic context examples:
- a. **In Philosophical contexts** – there are differing claims on questions regarding truth, such as what constitutes truth, how to define and identify truth, the roles that *revealed* and *acquired* knowledge play, and whether truth is subjective, relative, objective, or absolute. **In this context, truth may be fixed or more fluid; however, the disciplines of logic and reason prevail in discussing and defining it.**
 - b. **In Theological contexts** – truth is often attributed to divine origin and associated as being eternal, absolute, and immutable. Truth is also understood not only as a matter of conceptual understanding, but as an issue of embodiment, which involves an existential way of being, including a religious experience, and a way of living. An example [of this] is in Jesus' words "I am the truth" that indicate an inseparable relationship between truth and human existence. **Jesus here claims to be the embodiment of Truth, not merely one who knows and communicates the truth.**
 - c. **In Scientific contexts** – in recent years, science has reserved the right to employ the term ‘truth’ exclusively for that which is empirically discoverable and verifiable by the scientific method. Experiential proofs of a non-scientific nature are eliminated out of hand. In one sense this is disingenuous as each academic discipline has standards that govern them; thus, it is wrong to impose the scientific method upon the philosophical and theological contexts. The “Encyclopedia Britannica Online” community defines the “scientific method” accordingly:
 - i. The process of observing, asking questions, and seeking answers through tests and experiments is not unique to any one field of science. In fact, the scientific method is applied broadly in science, and across many different fields. Many empirical sciences use mathematical tools borrowed from probability theory and statistics, together with outgrowths of these, such as decision theory, game theory, utility theory, and operations research. Philosophers of science have addressed general methodological problems, such as the nature of scientific explanation and the justification of induction.
 - ii. The scientific method is critical to the development of scientific theories, which explain empirical (experiential) laws in a scientifically rational manner. In a typical application of the scientific method, a researcher develops a hypothesis, tests it through various means, and then modifies the hypothesis on the basis of the outcome of the tests and experiments. The modified hypothesis is then retested, further modified, and tested again, until it becomes consistent with observed phenomena and testing outcomes. In this way,

hypotheses serve as tools by which scientists gather data. From that data and the many different scientific investigations undertaken to explore hypotheses, scientists are able to develop broad general explanations, or precise and specific scientific theories.

In this cursory review of *truth* from the three contexts above, we can see that a one-size-fits-all approach to truth is unwise. However, in each of the contexts, the disciplines of logic and reason necessarily prevail.

- d. **“Truth” as expressed in these three contexts above have much in common, including:**
- i. **Truth is the result of diligent study across a variety of academic disciplines.**
 - ii. **Truth morphs over time as new information is discovered, analyzed and applied to the discipline.**
 - iii. **Intellectual honesty and integrity are requisite in study, research, validating methodology and application appropriate to the discipline.**
 - iv. **Truth is proven and validated by disciplined cross-referenced study process and procedure.**
 - v. **The context of a particular discipline does not negate the value or veracity of the truth they hold for other disciplines. Thus, theoretical truth is validated academically and experientially within the context of the discipline.**
 - vi. **Because something can’t be empirically proven doesn’t mean it isn’t true.**

D. Wikipedia the online Encyclopedia states that – “*Truth*” is most often used to mean “being in accord with fact or reality, or in fidelity to a known standard.” Truth may also often be used in modern contexts to refer to an existential ideal of “truth to self,” or “personal authenticity” in relation to a given standard.

- a. Truth is usually held to be opposite to falsehood, which, correspondingly, can also take on a logical, factual, or ethical meaning. The concept of truth is discussed and debated in several contexts, including law, philosophy, art, science, and religion. Many human activities depend upon the concept, where its nature as a concept is assumed [objective and absolute] rather than being a subject of discussion [subjective and variable]. Some philosophers view the concept of truth as basic, and unable to be explained in any terms that are more easily understood than the concept of truth itself. Commonly, truth is viewed as the correspondence of language or thought of an independent reality.
- b. Other philosophers take this common meaning to be secondary and derivative. According to Martin Heidegger, the original meaning and essence of truth in Ancient Greece was the revealing or bringing of what was previously hidden into the open, as indicated by the original Greek term for

truth, *aletheia*. On this view, the conception of truth as correctness is a later derivation from the concept's original essence, a development Heidegger traces to the Latin term *veritas*.

- c. Pragmatists like C. S. Peirce take truth to have some manner of essential relation to human practices for inquiring into and discovering reality as truth, with Peirce himself holding that truth is what human inquiry would find out on a matter, if our practice of inquiry were taken as far as it could profitably go: "The opinion which is fated to be ultimately agreed to by all who investigate, is what we mean by the truth..."
- d. Various theories and views of truth continue to be debated among scholars, philosophers, and theologians. Language and words are a means by which humans convey information to one another and the method used to determine what is a "truth" is termed a criterion of truth. There are differing claims on such questions as what constitutes truth: what things are truthbearers capable of being true or false about; how to define, identify, and distinguish truth; the roles that "faith-based" and "empirically based" knowledge play; and whether and to what extent truth is subjective or objective, relative or absolute.
- e. Friedrich Nietzsche famously suggested that an ancient, metaphysical belief in the divinity of Truth lies at the heart of and has served as the foundation for the entire subsequent Western intellectual tradition, paraphrased here:
"But you will have gathered what I am getting at, namely, that it is still a metaphysical faith on which our faith in science rests—that even we truth-knowers of today, and the godless anti-metaphysicians still take their fire too, from the flame lit by the thousand-year old faith, the Christian faith which was also Plato's faith, that God is Truth and that Truth is 'Divine'..."

E. Worshiping in Spirit and Truth – John 4:21-24

Jesus declared, "Believe me, woman, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth."

There is probably no more compelling a passage on Truth than Jesus' words to the Woman at the Well.

The following is a short piece of the study of the Woman at the Well contained in two other AD articles – the Gospel of John and Transformation Change in this section. It is a vital part of this discussion on Truth. God desires that His children worship Him in Spirit and Truth, and the text says that He seeks those who do... obviously this is a good reason to know what it is and then to do it! Here is an explanation of what is going on:

- a. **The gift of the Spirit ignites Spiritual life in God. This is what it means to be born again. This is Life we cannot generate by ourselves... it is eternal life that Jesus alone can grant. God is Spirit...**

to worship in Spirit involves the inward nature of our character, rather than merely outward practices. It is having our inner life transformed into an ever-increasing clearer reflection of Jesus.

- b. The Truth is the power of the Gospel of Grace... it is the Scripture where God has revealed Himself to humanity and it is Jesus who is the Living Word. God wants to be known and desires to be found... but we must approach Him on His terms. This we learn in the Scripture and it forms the foundation of Christian life illuminated by the Spirit within.
- c. Worshipping – is giving back to God that which He deserves. We speak of giving God “Glory and honor and praise”... these responses are the result of a heart that loves God and a transformed life that knows who Messiah is and what He has done for us personally. We as Jesus’ disciples live in obedience and gratitude knowing how lost we were without Jesus. Worshipping is a picture of a holistic life that includes three things... Mind, Heart, and a Missional Life:
 - i. “A mind” that knows the Truth of Scripture and is both conformed to and transformed by it. Scripture necessarily masters each disciple... it is never the other way around. When we think we have mastered the Scripture we actually are in danger of becoming like the Pharisees... proud and hard-hearted. This is not what God is looking for.
 - ii. “A heart” that is ignited by faith, hope, and love... that rejoices and praises God for His undeserved favor [Grace] given personally by God to me. The Spiritual gift of Living Water is for all disciples throughout the Church age, and it progressively transforms us from the inside out... loving God, ourselves and each other.
 - iii. “A missional life” where we do naturally the things that please God in obedience and service to others... when you know the Truth that we have been set free from the burdens of sin and death as well as from the burdens of life we carry, we cannot help but rejoice first, then to tell and teach others. Christian discipleship flows out of “The Great Commandment” to love God and others; and “The Great Commission” the Go of evangelism, and the teaching and training of discipleship. It is why we are here right now in a community of faith; it is what Christian discipleship and our personal Faith Journey is all about.

F. CONCLUDING THOUGHTS:

One cannot be a proper student of Scripture without understanding that character matters to God – He holds people responsible for their actions and their motives. Christians are convinced that God’s Character is revealed in Scripture and Truth thereby revealed. This Truth is the tether that has held Western Culture together for two-thousand years. The concepts of “my truth” and “your truth” so prevalent in our post-modern subculture would be a ridiculous oxymoron for serious thinkers through the ages; because Truth was fixed, absolute discoverable and seeking it is desirable.

Pilot's immortal question "What is Truth" in John 18:28 was not a rhetorical question but rather a condemnation of the Jew's duplicity and falseness in their charges against Jesus. Pilot heard the Jew's charges and after interviewing Jesus, plainly told them that he found "no basis of a charge against Him." Truth is real, and Truth matters. Truth is the tether that anchors humanity and upon which all of humanity will be judged. We denigrate it to our own peril.