

Truth on Trial: The Power of a Question
John 18:37-38

Recently I listened to a sermon where the preacher said, “What is the most powerful stroke of the pen?” To which he answered, “The question mark (?).” Have you considered the power of a question? (See what I did there?) (I did it again!)

The Bible is filled with many probing and searching questions. Consider just a few.

- **“Did God really say?” Genesis 3:1 (The serpent to Eve)**
- **“Where are you?” Genesis 3:9 (God to Adam)**
- **“What have you done?” Genesis 3:13 (God to Eve)**
- **“Am I my brother’s keeper?” Genesis 4:9 (Cain to the Lord)**
- **“Will not the Judge of all the earth do right?” Genesis 18:25 (Abraham to the Lord)**
- **“If a man die, shall he live again?” Job 14:14 (Job to God)**

Pilate is interrogating Jesus, which involves a formal examination involving questions of the accused.

Pilate’s seven questions to Jesus reinforce and affirm His identity as God’s only Son, the incarnate Lord. The first three questions deal with Jesus’ identity: “Are you the King of the Jews?” (John 18:33) “What have you done?” (John 18:35) “So you are a King?” (John 18:37)

Pilates’ last three questions to Jesus come after John tells us Pilate is “more afraid than ever” (John 19:8) because the Jews have told him Jesus has claimed to be the Son of God. “Where are you from?” (John 19:9) “Do you refuse to speak to me?” (John 19:10) “Do you not know that I have the power to release you and power to crucify you?” (John 19:10)

In the middle of these seven questions we find, perhaps, the most famous, “What is truth?”

- **Two models of truth.** Much of our post-modern, post-Christian world either redefines truth or rejects the notion that truth exists altogether.
 - **Model #1** – Truth is defined by God, for everyone: objective and absolute.
 - **Model #2** – Truth is defined by man, for the individual: subjective and situational.
- **Truth is a Person.** (John 8:32, John 8:40, John 8:45, and John 14:6) Jesus spoke the Truth because He is the Truth! He is the embodiment of Truth because God is Truth!
- **Truth is knowable.** (John 8:31-32) Scripture clearly communicates Truth in a manner that is comprehensible, understandable, and knowable. We can, we should, we are able to know Truth! (John 14:15-17, John 15:26, John 16:13, and John 17:17)
- **Truth is liberating.** (John 8:32b-36) Jesus was speaking Truth and this Truth is necessary for our spiritual deliverance. Jesus speaks the Truth concerning sin and the slavery that it possesses.

The Gospel is God’s Truth concerning man’s sin and God’s only remedy:

“We have all sinned and come short of the glory of God.” Romans 3:23

“The wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Romans 6:23

**“But God demonstrated His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”
Romans 5:8**

“But what does it say? ‘The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart’ (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.” Romans 10:8-10)

“For ‘everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.’” Romans 10:13