

The Truth About the Truth

John 18 | Hope City Church

CENTRAL QUESTION

Are you living by what God says is true, or by what feels true to you?

I. Worship Sets the Stage

- Paul and Silas sang praises in prison. When they worshiped, their chains broke, and so did the chains of everyone else in the prison.
- In the Old Testament, Israel put worshipers in front of the army instead of fighters. They marched around Jericho, shouted, and the walls fell.
- Worship brings the presence of God and breaks strongholds.

II. Jesus Stands Before Pilate

Key Text: John 18:33-38

- Pilate asks Jesus directly, “Art thou the King of the Jews?”
- Jesus answers that his kingdom is not of this world.
- Jesus says he was born and came into the world to testify to the truth, and that everyone who is of the truth hears his voice.
- Pilate responds, “What is truth?”

III. Two Kinds of Truth

- Objective truth is defined outside of ourselves. It’s absolute and true for everyone, no matter who you are, the same way a speed limit applies to everyone on the road.
- Examples given: God made us male and female. God made us to serve and worship him.
- Subjective truth is “my truth,” shaped by feelings and situation rather than by what God says.
- Warning against “follow your heart,” because the heart can lead you into trouble rather than toward God.

IV. Subjective Truth in Real Life

- Example: someone justifies dating or marrying a person who isn’t living for God by saying “I’ll change them.” Pastor Bruce is direct: you won’t change them. Only God can.
- Example: a lighthearted bit about food and aging, used to show how easily people excuse what they already want to do by calling it “their truth.”

V. The Danger of Not Knowing the Truth

Key Text: Judges 2:7-10

- Israel served the Lord throughout Joshua's life and the lives of the elders who had seen what God had done.
- After that generation died, a new generation arose that did not know the Lord or the works he had done for Israel.
- Pastor Bruce applies this personally: if the next generation doesn't know Jesus, it's on us for not presenting him to them.

VI. Know the Truth, Then Live It

- Jesus came to testify to the truth, and those who are of the truth hear his voice.
- Knowing the truth isn't enough. It has to be lived out, not just heard or agreed with.
- Invitation: if you're struggling right now, with oppression, depression, or anything else, give it to Jesus and don't be the generation that doesn't know him.

FOR FURTHER REFLECTION

1. Where in your life are you calling something “my truth” instead of accepting what God says is true?
2. Are you trying to change someone instead of trusting God to do that work?
3. What has God shown you is true, even when it's hard to accept?
4. Who in your life needs you to pass on the truth about Jesus, the way Joshua's generation passed it down?
5. What would it look like to actually live out the truth you already know, instead of just agreeing with it?

Scripture References: John 18:33-38 | Judges 2:7-10