

Outline

Lesson 1 - Veritology: What is Truth?

- I. Introduction – A Worldview Tour
 - A. Comprehensive – The worldview compass directs us to God's design in all areas of life
 - B. Systematic – Temple structure explains the foundations and framework of course topics
 - C. Purpose of tour – To gaze upon the face of God
- II. Why was Jesus Born? Why did He come into the World?
 - A. To testify to the Truth – John 18:37
 - B. Scriptural emphasis on Truth – Sanctification and salvation connection to Truth
 - C. Man's sinful nature will suppress, distort, reject, and exchange God's truth for lies
- III. The Cosmic Battle – Spirit of Truth vs. Spirit of Falsehood – Reality vs. Illusion
 - A. Scene in heaven between God and Satan - Job 1 & 2 - "Did God really say?"
 - B. Link between salvation and truth - 2 Thessalonians 2 - "... God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the spirit and the belief in the truth."
 - C. Two Fathers – John 8:44 – "You belong to your father, the devil"
 - D. Connection between sin, lies and deceit – Every sin that besets us can be traced to a belief in a lie – Our sins take us captive to the lies of the world
 - E. Dealing with outsiders - 2 Timothy 2 and Colossians 4:5-6 – They have been taken captive and we must "gently instruct them" and let our "speech be seasoned with salt"
 - F. Battle of Worldviews – Opposition between God's truth claims and the lies of the world, the flesh, and the devil
- IV. What is Truth? - Truth as it relates to Reality
 - A. Webster's 1828 definition – "Conformity to fact or reality"
 - B. Equating an idol to a lie - Isaiah 44 – Lies are powerful and lead us to insane notions
 - C. What is Insanity? – We all suffer from "Common Insanity" - losing touch with reality
 - 1. Our actions reflect what we believe to be *really real* : Jesus' example in Matthew 6 asking "Why do you worry?...will He not care for you, O you of little faith?"
 - 2. Connecting faith with our actions and emotions: God is the object of our faith and our hope – Our actions are the most reliable indicator of our belief
 - D. God is the ultimate source of Truth - Colossians 2:2-3
- V. Conclusion – "Do you *really* believe, that what you believe is *really real*?"

Key Terms Lesson 1

Antithesis: The complete or exact opposite of something. The truth claims of God in direct opposition to the lies of the world, the flesh and the devil.

Bifurcation: To divide or separate into two parts; to split or branch off into two parts

Common Insanity: A sickness we all suffer from. We have bought into the lies of the world, the flesh, and the devil and therefore we live as if the lie is true, denying reality.

Compass illustration: looking at life from a 360 degree perspective. A graphic means to illustrate that there is no area in life that God has not spoken.

Comprehensive: Covering a wide area, all inclusive, large in scope.

Cosmic Battle: Battle between God's Truth and the lies and illusions of the world, the flesh and the devil. The arguments and pretensions that set themselves up against the knowledge of God, against His nature and His word.

Delude: To lead from God's truth into false beliefs; persuade somebody to believe in something that is untrue or unreal.

Idol: A false source of salvation, sustenance, or power. Isaiah 44 equates an idol to a lie. These lies lead us into insane notions.

Insanity: Losing touch with reality; believing the lie is real. Extreme foolishness or an act that demonstrates it.

Jewels in the Cave: Dr. Tackett often refers to specific topics or truth claims that are of particular interest as "jewels in the cave."

Pathology: Any condition that is a departure or deviation from the true design. Dr. Tackett uses "pathology" to describe areas of distortion within the social spheres.

Pell-mell: In a disorderly frantic rush; confused, jumbled or messy manner.

Pernicious Lie: The lie that man is basically good and that his greatest need is to self-actualize and get in touch with his inner desires.

Spheres: Social institutions or systems that we live and interact in (family, church, state, labor, community, and the intimate relationship between God and man). Each sphere has distinct members with unique roles and responsibilities.

Systematic: Carried out in a methodical and organized manner; deliberate and regular system of organization.

Tour: Dr. Tackett likes to refer to each lesson as a tour in which he is our guide.

Truth temple illustration: a logical and graphic framework to organize Truth Project topics.

Truth: Correspondence to reality. Truth is that which is really real. Our actions reflect what we believe to be really real.

Veritology: The study of Truth; particularly the study of God's character and His Word as it relates to reality.

Worldview: A comprehensive set of truth claims that purports to paint a picture of reality; the framework from which we view reality and make sense of life and the world.

In-Depth Notes: The Truth Project: Lesson One Veritology – What Is Truth?

Why did Jesus come into the world?

Possible answers: To save us, to fulfill prophecy, to redeem us, to bind the broken hearted & set the captive free.

Jesus supplied a specific answer to this question in John 18

Jesus: "...for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to _____.

John 18:33 - 38 ¶ Therefore Pilate entered again into the Praetorium, and summoned Jesus and said to Him, "Are You 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 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 so that I would not be handed over to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm." Therefore Pilate 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 testify to the truth**. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice."

Pilate *said to Him, "What is truth?" ¶ And when he had said this, he went out again to the Jews and *said to them, "I find no guilt in Him.

Does this make truth important? – YES

What was on trial? – The Truth

The phrase "I tell you the truth" used by Jesus 75 times.

The phrase "truly, truly, I say unto you" used by Jesus 25 times.

The Greek word for truly = amen

Verses on truth in John

1:17 – Grace and truth came through Jesus

14:6 – I am the way and the truth and the life

17:17 - We are sanctified by truth

4:24 – We are to worship Him in spirit and truth

8:32 – Truth is what sets us free. By the way, what takes us captive? – Lies.

14: 16-17 - The Holy Spirit, our helper is called the Spirit of Truth

16:13 – The Spirit will guide us in all truth

There exists a close/strong link between salvation and truth:

1 Timothy 2:3-4 This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

In Ephesians 6 what is the first piece of armor the Christian is to put on?

Eph 6:14 Stand firm therefore, HAVING GIRDED YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH (belt of truth)

The Old Testament is filled with the issue of lack of truth.

Prophet's Lament

Isa 59:14 "...Truth has stumbled in the streets..."

Jer 7:28 "Truth has perished; it has vanished from their lips..."

Isa 59:15 "Truth is nowhere to be found..."

The Good Confession

1 Tim 6:13 "... Jesus who while testifying before Pontus Pilate made the good confession..."
Paul writing to Timothy about the "confession of truth" before Pilate:

How Does Mankind React To Truth?

2 Tim 4:3-4 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but {wanting} to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires,
and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths (lies)

Romans 1:18 – we suppress the truth

Acts 20:30 – we distort the truth

Romans 2:8 – We reject the truth – follow evil

Romans 1:25 – We exchange the truth for a lie

The Real Trial: Truth vs. Lie

John 18:37 – "...and for this I have come into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice." (listens to me)

Implication: There are sides!

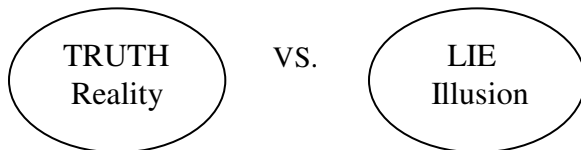
Bifurcate: to cause to divide into two branches or parts.

Everyone on the side of truth listens to Me.

Spirit		Spirit
of		of
Truth		Lies (Falsehood)

1 John 4:6 We are from God; he who knows God listens to us; he who is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error (falsehood)

COSMIC BATTLE



2 Thessalonians 2:9-13

...{that is,} the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved. For this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they will believe what is false, in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness. But we should always give

thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth.

Deceived: they refused to love the truth and so be saved.

Another link to salvation: salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith (or belief) in the truth.

Two Fathers – John 8:34 – 47

	Jews	Jesus
Verse 39	Abraham is our father	No, you have another father
Verse 41	Well, God is our father	No, God is not your father
Verse 44		You belong to your father, the devil

John 8:44-46: "You are of {your} father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own {nature,} for he is a liar and the father of lies. "But because I speak the truth, you do not believe Me. "Which one of you convicts Me of sin? If I speak truth, why do you not believe Me?"

Jesus is describing our sinful nature – why we find our nature wanting to do the lies of the world, flesh, and the devil.

The lies are not that clever – We do them because our nature wants to do them.

Connecting Sin, Lies & Deceit

Romans 7:11 for sin, taking an opportunity through the commandment, deceived me and through it killed me.

2 Thess 2:10 and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved.

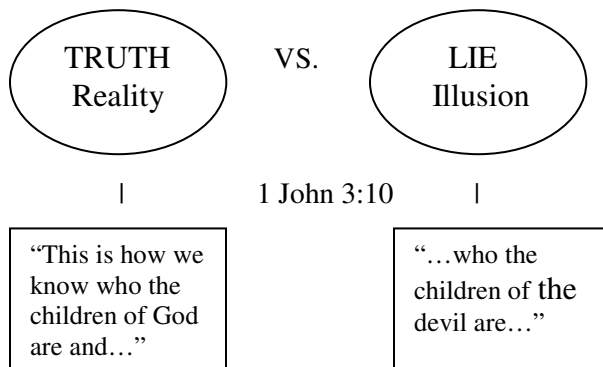
Eph 4:22 that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit,

Heb 3:13 But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is {still} called "Today," so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.

Every sin that besets us can be traced back fundamentally to belief in a lie. That’s why this battle is so huge!

1 John 3:10 By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious: anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor the one who does not love his brother.

COSMIC BATTLE



Who we were but for the grace of God

Captives

2 Tim 2:24- 26 The Lord's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged, with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth, and they may come to their senses {and escape} from the snare of the devil, having been held **captive** by him to do his will.

Outsiders are CAPTIVES

Our Response: Dealing With Outsiders

Col 4:5-6 Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity.

Let your speech always be with grace, {as though} seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person

(Pernicious :highly injurious or destructive: deadly)

Antithesis

Truth Claims of God		Lies-Illusions of the World
Unity		Division
Diversity		Unification
Roles		Jealousy
Responsibility	vs.	Blame
Authority		Rebellion
Delegation		Tyranny
Freedom		Bondage

Battle of Worldviews – a battle between the truth claims of God and the lies and illusions of the world, the flesh, and the devil.

<p>The Truth Claims of God</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - consistency, logic - make sense - they work - even in a “fallen” world lead to peace, prosperity, and happiness 	<p>Web of Lies of the World</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - illogical, has holes in it - inconsistent - lead to weeping, disorder, death
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Example: anthropology – man

God’s claims (Biblical Worldview)

Man – created in God’s image
Man is sinful

What the world promotes

Product of random evolution
Man is basically good

What is Truth?

If Jesus came to testify to it this question could well be the most important question we and our culture must answer.

Ravi Zacharias – Apologist

“ Truth is that which affirms, propositionally, the nature of reality as it is.”

R.C. Sproul – Theologian

“Truth is defined as that which corresponds to reality as perceived by God. Because God’s perception of reality is never distorted. It is a perfect perception of reality.”

So...What is Truth?

Noah Webster, 1828

“conforming to fact or reality; exact accordance with that which is, or has been, or shall be... We rely upon truth of the scriptural prophecies.”

Truth is reality.

Hint of Divine Sarcasm: What is wrong with this picture?

Is 44:17 – 20 But the rest of it he makes into a god, his graven image. He falls down before it and worships; he also prays to it and says, "Deliver me, for you are my god." They do not know, nor do they understand, for He has smeared over their eyes so that they cannot see and their hearts so that they cannot comprehend. No one recalls, nor is there knowledge or understanding to say, "I have burned half of it in the fire and also have baked bread over its coals. I roast meat and eat {it.} Then I make the rest of it into an abomination, I fall down before a block of wood!" He feeds on ashes; a deceived heart has turned him aside. And he cannot deliver himself, nor say, "Is there not **a lie** in my right hand?"

Idol = Lie

A deluded heart will mislead!

R.C. Sproul

Paul explains our situation in Romans 1: Paul give us the reason for universal repression or suppression of God's revelation

“we exchange the truth of God for a lie in order to serve the creature rather than the creator.”

That has been the swap or trade: “trading the majesty of God to worship a bamboo tree or a totem pole, or a lizard.” “How foolish”

Lies are powerful – powerful enough to lead us to do the most insane things.

What is insanity? Losing touch with reality – believing that the lie is real.

Our actions reflect what we believe to be really real.

Common Insanity

Matthew 6:25 – 34 Worry & Anxiety.

Jesus tells us not to worry or be anxious.

What is Jesus trying to get us to believe?

Oz Guinness

“The notion of truth is not philosophical or abstract or theoretical. Truth is fundamentally about who God is.”

R.C. Sproul

“He knows the truth, He is the truth, He is the fountainhead of all truth. All truth comes from Him and that's why we have to start there with His perfect being and understand who God is so we have some reference point to determine what's true and what isn't true.”

-- The ultimate source of truth itself is God. “will he not care for you, oh you of little faith?”

Col 2:2-3 that their hearts may be encouraged, having been knit together in love, and {attaining} to all the wealth that comes from the full assurance of understanding, {resulting} in a true knowledge of God's mystery, {that is,} Christ {Himself,} in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

Behind every truth claim of God is the very character nature and being of God.

Truth is a reflection of His character and nature.

Col 2:4 I say this so that no one will delude you with persuasive argument. – back to the cosmic battle

What is Jesus getting at?

Out Faith, Trust and Hope must rest in the true claims of God

Faith like a child – child on a diving board jumping off into his mother's arms in the pool.

Faith and hope are not our feelings
Faith and hope overcome our feelings

Jesus is tying our faith with our actions and emotions

A Haunting Question: Do you really believe that what you believe is really real?

If we really, really believed the Bible is real, it would take just a few of us to turn the whole world upside down.

Small Group Information

Lesson Guide: Lesson 1: Veritology: What Is Truth?

Introduction



In this initial episode, students receive a general introduction to the overall scope and purpose of *The Truth Project*. This series is designed to take participants on a guided *worldview tour*, following the points of the *worldview compass*, a tool designed to direct our thinking with regard to four fundamental issues: Truth, God, Man, and the Social Order. Along the way, we will attempt to build a logical, systematic framework of ideas by which to organize and evaluate the various truth claims to be encountered during the course of our tour. Our ultimate goal is not simply to gain knowledge, but to look upon the face of God – and to be *transformed* in the process.

Themes

Our destination in Lesson 1 lies due North. The focal point for this first hour of discussion is the concept of *Truth* itself. What is truth? Why is it important? What role does it play in the biblical view of the world, God's purpose for the cosmos, His will for mankind, His plan of salvation, and the way we live our personal lives? In his comments on this subject, Dr. Del Tackett will demonstrate how *truth* was fundamental to the mission of Jesus Christ in the world; how it forms the heart of the *Cosmic Battle* that has been raging since the beginning; how this battle has divided the world into two opposing camps or sides; how lies, the antithesis of Truth, take human hearts and minds captive by the power of deception; and how every man and woman now stands in the position of having to choose between God's truth claims and the opposing perspective of the world, the flesh, and the devil. To answer the question "what is truth?" Dr. Tackett consults the 1828 edition of Webster's Dictionary which defines truth "Conformity to fact or reality ..." We will also see how popular notions of truth (represented by man on the street interviews) contrast sharply with the biblical concept (as articulated by Ravi Zacharias, Os Guinness, and R. C. Sproul).

Points to Watch for

Dr. Tackett concludes that, in almost every case, the perspective of contemporary culture stands in direct opposition to the Truth-centered worldview presented in the Bible. In the process of making this case, he advances the bold

claim that our culture is not only filled with lies but is actually heading in the direction of social insanity. As a result, he proposes that Pilate's query – "What is truth?" – is *the* most important question facing our society today. He ends Lesson 1 by challenging his audience with this all-important question: "*Do you really believe that what you believe is really real?*"

Topical Video Transcripts

Gazing On the Face of God

Every once in a while one of my seminary students will raise the question: "Can we actually 'gaze' upon the face of God?" After all, don't we remember the Scripture saying somewhere that no man has seen God? And isn't God a Spirit? So how can anyone actually "see" Him?

Good questions. Let's attempt to answer them.

But first, let me give the short answer. When we are talking about gazing upon the face of God, we are not talking about physically "seeing" Him. We are talking about looking at the glory of His attributes, His character, His nature. These are the primary "jewels" that we will gaze upon during our tours. In our first tour, for example, we explore the idea that He is Truth and the ultimate source of all Truth. In our second tour, we will ponder His very nature and character as the basis of all ethics. Later, we will look at His goodness and kindness, His sovereignty and His providence. Every tour will bring us face to face with the reality of who He really is. "Gazing upon the face of God," then, is a call for us to "look" at Who He is. It is the essential part of "knowing Him" that should be our number one objective in life. In other words, it is important to remember that when we speak of "gazing" upon His face, we are only speaking figuratively.

With that in mind, let's proceed to take a closer look at what *might* seem to be a contradiction in Scripture and try to clear away any remaining confusion.

Scripture does in fact say that no one can "see" God and live. This assertion is initially found in Exodus 33:20. Let me quote the passage from my Hebrew Interlinear:

*18 And he [Moses] said, I pray, let me see Your glory.
19 And He said, I will cause all My goodness to pass before your face, and I will proclaim by the name of Jehovah before you; and I will show favor to whom I will show favor, will have mercy on whom I will have mercy. 20 And He said, You are not able to see My face; for no man can see Me and live.*

So, Moses asked to see God's glory and God told him that he was "unable" to see his face – that, as a matter of fact, no one could see Him and live.

However, in Genesis 32, Jacob states, after having wrestled with God, that he "saw God face to face, and yet my life was spared." Jacob even named the place "Peniel" which means "face of God."

In John Chapter 1, John says:

18 No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known. [ESV]

Jesus Himself speaks of this idea of not "seeing" God, but qualifies His meaning by restricting the concept specifically to the Father:

46 No one has seen the Father except the one who is from God; only he has seen the Father. [NIV]

Both of these passages use the Greek word "horao." When Paul gives an intervening benediction in 1 Timothy 1:17, he says:

To the King of ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen. [ESV]

Here, Paul uses the same word, 'horao' but negates it with the prefix "a," just as we do in English when we speak of an "a-theist." Paul is saying that God is "not-seeable." We translate that as *invisible*.

And yet we still have the powerful passage in Isaiah, where the prophet states that his eyes have "seen" the King, the Lord of hosts (Isaiah 6:5).

How do we resolve this? God tells Moses that he is unable to see his face, but Jacob says that he saw God face to face. God tells Moses that no one can see him and live and Jesus says that no one has ever seen the Father, yet Isaiah claims that his eyes have seen the King. Do we have an irreconcilable problem here? After all, Philip was told that if he had seen Jesus, he had "seen" the Father. Moses spoke with God "face to face" (Exodus 33:11). In Exodus 24:9-10, we read that Moses, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu and seventy elders of Israel "went up and they saw the God of Israel ... they beheld God, and ate and drank." Similarly, Job, in the midst of his suffering, consoles himself with the thought that one day he will "see God" in the flesh (Job 19:26). And this is only a sampling of the many scriptural passages that describe men and women as actually *beholding* the One who truly does reveal himself to man – a theme which may be said to culminate in the awe-inspiring declaration of Christ: "Blessed are the pure in heart, *for they shall see God*" (Matthew 5:8).

So the answer is *no*. There is no contradiction here.

In one case, we are being told that it is impossible for us to "see" the "unseeable" God in the fullness of His glory, and that even if we were able to, that sight would be too much for mortal man to bear. Yet God has graciously given us glimpses of Himself, as He did with Moses, and as He has done with Isaiah and others. Through the Incarnation, He has allowed man to see the glory of God revealed in the flesh – indeed, it is possible to argue that it is only through Jesus Christ that man can behold the Father and live. In the midst of this, we must contend with the glorious mystery of the Trinity: one God, single in essence, yet existing in three persons.

Obviously, a more lengthy discussion is required; one in which we could dissect the relevant words and speak of the various "theophanies" narrated in the Bible. Hopefully, some day, we will post that discourse in the Library of Worldview Thought.

But, for our purpose here, it is vital to understand that our call to "gaze upon the face of God" does not amount to some wild claim that we are physically going to "see" the "eternal, invisible" God of all creation. Again, we are only using this phrase in a *figurative* sense.

Why Did Jesus Come?

"But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons." Gal 4:4

For years, I have been asking my students the question: "Why was Jesus born? For what reason did He come into the world?" My first objective is to get people to think, which we unfortunately don't engage in much today. I have been amazed to see the look on people's faces when this question first confronts them. I can see they haven't really thought about it before. The second reason is that it affords the opportunity to ponder one of the most astounding events in all of history. Paul, in 1 Timothy 3, spoke of it this way:

*16 And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness:
God was manifested in the flesh,
Justified in the Spirit,
Seen by angels,
Preached among the Gentiles,
Believed on in the world,
Received up in glory.*

John, in John 1, spoke of it this way:

14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

I don't suppose we can properly grasp the full essence of what it meant for the infinite, holy, omnipotent God of the universe to put on the form of finite man and dwell among the living dead. The reasons for Him doing this are probably deeper than we could possibly contemplate. However, it is not as if we have to guess about this thing. God has given us clear testimony in His Word concerning the reasons why He humbled Himself and "*made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.*" (Philippians 2:7)

Here are a few of them:

- *Matt 5:17 "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.*
- *Matt 10:34 "Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to turn "'a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law--a man's enemies will be the members of his own household.'*
- *Luke 12:51 Do you think I came to bring peace on earth? No, I tell you, but division.*
- *Luke 12:49 "I have come to bring fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled!*
- *Matt 20:28 just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."*
- *Mark 10:45 For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."*
- *Luke 19:10 For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost."*
- *John 12:47 "As for the person who hears my words but does not keep them, I do not judge him. For I did not come to judge the world, but to save it.*
- *1 Tim 1:15 Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners--of whom I am the worst.*
- *1 John 3:5 But you know that he appeared so that he might take away our sins. And in him is no sin.*
- *Mark 1:38 Jesus replied, "Let us go somewhere else--to the nearby villages--so I can preach there also. That is why I have come."*
- *John 9:39 Jesus said, "For judgment I have come into this world, so that the blind will see and those who see will become blind."*
- *John 12:46 I have come into the world as a light, so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness.*
- *Luke 5:32 I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."*
- *Matt 9:13 But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners."*
- *Mark 2:17 On hearing this, Jesus said to them, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners."*
- *John 10:10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.*
- *John 6:38 For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me.*
- *Heb 10:7 Then I said, 'Here I am--it is written about me in the scroll-- I have come to do your will, O God.'"*
- *John 12:27 "Now my heart is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour.*
- *John 15:22 If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not be guilty of sin. Now, however, they have no excuse for their sin.*
- *1 John 3:5 But you know that he appeared so that he might take away our sins.*

- *1 John 3:8 He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work.*
- *1 John 4:10 This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.*
- *1 John 5:20 We know also that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true. And we are in him who is true--even in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.*

But the final reason I ask this question is to focus on the very specific words of Jesus as He was giving the "good confession" before Pilate (1 Timothy 6:13):

John 18:37 "You are a king, then!" said Pilate. Jesus answered, "You are right in saying I am a king. In fact, for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me."

Here is one of the clearest and most objective statements that Jesus made about the reason He came into the world. This statement doesn't override the others, in fact, I think it helps to clarify many of them. For example, in 1 John 3:8, we are told that Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil. What is the devil? A liar. When Jesus said that He didn't come to bring peace, but a sword, we understand that it is not a worldly sword that He is referring to. The Scripture makes reference over and over again to the sword being the Word of God (Eph 6:17), which in Hebrews 4:12 reiterates that it divides ("*For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.*") This reinforces what Jesus said about coming for judgment that the blind should see (John 9:39), coming as a light (John 12:46), came to preach (Mark 1:38), came to give us understanding so that we would know him who is true (1 John 5:20), and so on.

Now, so there be no misunderstanding. This does not, in any way, diminish the great, grand and glorious purpose of Jesus to give His life as a ransom (Matt 20:28), that he appeared to take away our sins (1 John 3:5), that He came to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins (1 John 4:10). That is another of those astounding things that are beyond comprehension—that God would, Himself, take the penalty and wrath that was due us. Absolutely breathtaking.

So, our focus upon the words of Jesus to Pilate that He was born and came into the world to testify to the truth, should not be seen as diminishing the work of Christ upon the cross nor the power of the resurrection. But, it is evident that the life of Jesus was dedicated to this task of testifying to the truth. And, in a world that is dead set against truth, it is time for us to elevate it to its proper place. And, as we briefly mentioned in Tour 1, there is a great Scriptural link between the issue of truth and salvation.

Amen and Amen.