

## **The Warrior Faces Satan's Ally, the World**

### **John 18:38**

*“What is truth?” Pilate said to him. After he said this, he went out again to the Jews and told them, “I find no basis for a charge against him.” (John 18:38, EHV)*

Dear friends in Jesus Christ, the one crucified to redeem us from all sin:

Most wars are fought not one-on-one, but with allies. World War II featured the Allied forces of the United States, Britain and the Soviet Union, along with other countries, versus the Axis powers of Nazi Germany, Japan and Italy. In the first Gulf War in 1991, the United States had dozens of allies to fight against Iraq. In the second Gulf War in 2003, the United States had just a few allies, and while Saddam Hussein was dethroned, the objective of a peaceful Iraq eluded us.

When the Son of God went forth to war for us, he had to fight the devil single-handedly to win our salvation. However, Satan had allies who also warred against our Savior Jesus. Tonight we look at how **The Warrior Faces Satan's Ally, the World.**

It was early Friday morning when the Sanhedrin, the council of the Jews, brought Jesus to the Roman governor Pontius Pilate, charging Jesus with crimes, including “He claims to be Christ, a king.” Pilate interrogated the defendant privately, “Are you the king of the Jews?” In the inquiry Jesus witnessed to Pilate, pointing out how he certainly wasn't a king in an earthly sense—where was his army to defend him?—but his kingdom was from another place, from heaven. Jesus gave his testimony, “I am, as you say, a king. For this reason I was born, and for this reason I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice.”

What a great opening Jesus gave to Pilate! It was an invitation for him to listen to what the truth was, and how he could be saved from sin. But Pilate was a sophisticated man of the world, a cynical politician. He was a skeptic of anything that claimed to be truth. And so he spurned Jesus. With a sneer, a dismissive tone, Pilate replied to Jesus, “What is truth?”

“What is truth?” That’s the attitude of the world today. You may have heard of the word “postmodernism.” Postmodernism is the philosophy that there’s no such thing as absolute truth, that what might be real or true for one person might not be for another. They’ll say, “If Christ works for you, fine; but don’t claim he’s the only truth—other religions have their own truth, if you really want to call it that.” Tolerance, not truth, is what they look for.

“What is truth?” The world attacks the truth of the Bible. They deny the words of the Bible that God created the world in six days and they put their trust in evolutionary theory instead. You find that everywhere in the world: in a public high school or secular college classroom, in a library and a museum--evolution permeates worldly thought. The changeless laws of God are under attack, too. Modern morality tries to redefine marriage, label things like fornication and homosexuality as harmless lifestyles. They call abortion a “choice” instead of sin, and they oppose God’s will directly.

We feel those attacks of the world too. Satan’s ally, the world, has an ally within all of us. It’s called our sinful nature, the Old Adam. We too face a daily struggle with our own sinful inclinations. There’s a part of us that also doesn’t want Jesus, that wants to replace God’s truth with our own so-called “truth.” You hear it inside of us, “Yeah, the Bible says not to lie, but I’ve got to do what’s right for me,” placing our will ahead of God’s will. Our own sinful nature joins Pilate in sneering, “What is truth?”

But Jesus, God’s own Son, came to be our warrior to single-handedly fight against Satan’s ally, the world, and to rescue us from our own sinfulness. “What is truth?” Pilate was looking right at him. Jesus is the truth!

Even Pilate recognized truth in what Jesus said. After interrogating the defendant, the governor returned to the leaders of the Jews to tell them, “I find no basis for a charge against him.” But Jesus’ truth went further than that. The evening before this, Jesus told his disciples, “I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through me” [Jn. 14:6]. Do you want the truth? Do you want to make sense of life? Look to Jesus. He has the answers to our questions, “Who am I? Why am I here? Where am I going?” Jesus knows the truth. Jesus is the truth.

Jesus revealed the truth of how we sinners can get back to God. John records, “To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, ‘If you remain in my Word, you are really my disciples. You will also know the truth, and the truth will set you free’” [Jn. 8:31,32]. Jesus’ word reveals the truth. His Word on the cross, “It is finished” as he was dying, sets us free from our sins. The Bible’s true Word at the empty grave, “He is risen!” sets us free from death and hell. His Word, his truth, sets us free from Satan’s snares, and it also defends us from the world’s attacks and opposition of Jesus. Jesus is the truth, the truth that sets us free.

The evening before he was placed on trial, Jesus warned his disciples, “Because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of it, for that very reason the world hates you”[Jn. 15:18,19]. If they hated Jesus and demanded his crucifixion—which Pilate sanctioned, since he cared nothing about the truth—we can expect the world to hate us believers also. We’ll face persecution, rejection from those who sneer at us for holding to what the Bible says, when we say that Jesus is the only way to heaven. Jesus tells us what he told the disciples, “In this world you are going to have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.” Jesus, the Truth, faced Satan and his ally, the world, fought, and won the war!

While Jesus single-handedly fought and won the war against Satan and the world for us, we are not passive participants of this war. We also are active at war, as Paul told the Corinthians, “Even though we walk in the flesh, we do not wage war in the way the sinful flesh does. Certainly, the weapons of our warfare are not those of the flesh, but weapons made powerful by God for tearing down strongholds” [2 Co. 10:3,4]. The weapon at our disposal is God’s true Word. That Word that we live by, is the Word we can use to proclaim the truth, to proclaim Jesus in this world that needs the truth. Remember, God so loved the *world* that he gave his one and only Son. Proclaim the word, and let the Holy Spirit work in that Word to win over those God has chosen.

Yes, there will still be those like Pilate who will scoff and shrug, “What is truth?”, refusing to believe. But take heart! They will not overcome. Jesus overcame the world with his truth and grace. And Jesus is still praying for us while we’re in this world, “My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth” [Jn. 17:15-17]. Amen.