

Scripture - John 18 Jesus Before Pilate Part 2 - Truth: Is Everything in the Bible True? (Inerrancy & Infallibility)

This fall for our Bible study we're asking - what is the Bible? So we're asking all these fun, hard questions about the Bible that the Bible asks and answers about itself. Why is the Bible so important to Christians? Why is there no other book like it? Can you understand it? Can you trust it?

The question today is about the truth of the Bible: **is everything in the Bible true?**

This morning we're going to read about Jesus being put on trial. This is at the end of Jesus' ministry. He's been arrested. He's been making these big claims that he's the king of the Jews, king of Israel, king of the world and so the Jewish religious leaders feel threatened by him. So they arrest him and take him to the Roman governor of Judea, a guy named Pontius Pilate and they say Jesus is guilty of treason: "He says he's king instead of Caesar." So Pilate questions Jesus, "Are you the king of the Jews?"

Let's read John 18:33-19:1

[Jn 18 Context] In this trial Pilate is trying to figure out what the big deal is with this Jesus and why he's got everyone so riled up. Pilate keeps asking Jesus, "Do you really think you're a king?" And Jesus says, "Yeah, you said it. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice." And all Pilate can come back with is, "Well, what is truth?"

Do you think Pilate is sincerely asking Jesus, what is truth? If he's not asking a sincere question then what is he doing?

Commentators agree that Pilate is not asking Jesus a question - he's making a claim. Pilate

asked that question, what is truth?, so he could say, "Nobody knows what truth is!"

Have you ever heard that claim before?

This idea was popular back then too! It's this idea that allows you to avoid facing your own sins and even allows you to doubt your own reality. It's a claim that truth is a relative thing. Truth is just something we make up SO we're right in doing whatever we feel like doing.

Problem: "Well, that may be true for you but it's not true for me. We both have our own truths on morality, right and wrong, God, eternity, heaven, hell but they don't have to be the same." "Don't tell me your truth is right and mine is wrong." The problem with you Christians is you think you have the truth and others don't, you think your religion is right and other religions are wrong - and that leads to exclusion and oppression and abuse. **Don't judge me.**"

[Parable] There's this famous Indian parable about the blind men and the elephant. There are a bunch of blind men who are trying to figure out what an elephant is like. Each blind man holds onto one part of the elephant. And each blind man mistakes his part for the whole thing. So the blind man who feels the trunk says, "I think the elephant is long and flexible like a snake." But the blind man feeling the leg says, "No the elephant is like a pillar and short and stumpy and thick." But the blind man who has the ear says, "No it's broad and thin." And the one feeling the tail says, "No, it's like a piece of rope." And the one with the body says, "No it's big and it's like a wall." And the one with the tusk says, "No it's sharp and smooth like a spear."

This is a picture of religions. All the world religions are the blind men trying to figure out

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what truth looks like but each religion only has a part of the truth that they mistake for the whole. So each religion is equally wrong = each religion only has part of the truth.

But there was a missionary to India who heard this all the time and so he thought about this Indian parable and then it hit him. *"Wait, the only person who could know that every blind man was only holding only part of the elephant would be somebody who could see the whole elephant. The parable is an arrogant claim to have the kind of knowledge which it insists is impossible. To any person who claims that no religion has all the truth we have to ask, 'What is the superior vantage ground from which you can make that claim? To know that "All religions only have part of the truth" = YOU must somehow know the whole truth. Aren't you just claiming the same knowledge that you just said no one else has?"*

TRUTH is a reality whether you believe it or not. If you drive with your eyes closed and say, *"OK I feel like turning left now because that'll be a good reality for me..."* - reality is going to catch up and smash you.

When we can all agree we're all being very exclusive - how do we know who's right and who is dead? The question is: "How do you KNOW what is true?"

Jesus said it, *"Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice."* Because Jesus is God he can only speak truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to God and his word. The church believes that everything in the Bible is true because it is the Word of God.

That's what Jesus believed too. Over and over Jesus talked about or quoted from the Old Testament and he always claimed it as

true. He never corrected it, criticized it, or said it was wrong. In John 10:35, Jesus said the Scriptures "cannot be broken" and in the chapter right before his trial in 17:17 Jesus said that God's "Word is truth."

But a lot of people in the world don't believe the Bible is true.

Problem: *The Bible must have mistakes because:*

- it's got all these miracles in it and I've never seen a miracle;
- it's the stuff of legends, fake news
- the Bible was passed along forever by word of mouth so it's like a really long game of telephone. No way the Bible hasn't been changed and modified over the years.

Answers:

- the stuff in the Bible was written down very close to when the stuff in the Bible happened;
- the stuff in the Bible is not the kind of stuff you would make up if you are trying to start a religion. The church leaders and witnesses were losers, women, murderers, thieves, liars. The HERO SAVIOR gets crucified.
- the apostles died for what they believed. You don't die for something you know is a lie.
- as far as history goes, the Bible has the best evidence that its writings are accurate.

Best Answer: We know the Bible is true because it's God's Word! It is **inerrant**.

[Inerrancy] The **inerrancy** of the Bible means it has no errors. The Bible has no mistakes. When the Bible tells us history it tells us what really happened. What the prophets and apostles wrote down under the divine inspiration of God - all of it is entirely truthful. There are no contradictions in the Bible between one passage and another.

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QUALIFIER - the Bible is not the only thing that can be inerrant. Can anyone here say an error free statement?

"I live in Houston." "I'm sitting inside a building." People make error-free statements all the time. Students score 100s on tests.

[Infallibility] BUT unlike human beings, the Bible is **infallible**! The **infallibility** of the Bible means the Bible is not ABLE to be wrong.

Is there anything God can't do?

Yes. God cannot lie. God cannot sin. God cannot not be God! There's plenty of stuff God can't do.

The **infallibility** of the Bible sets it apart as utterly unique because the Bible is incapable of making an error because it is the Word of God. Humans can make **inerrant** statements but it's still always possible for us to make an error when we're making those statements. Sally may make a 100 on a test but it was still possible she might miss one of the answers.

But when God inspired his prophets and apostles to write the Bible it was impossible for them to make an error and say something not true.

Problem: *SO, how do you know Christianity is true and every other religion is wrong?*

Answer: Because the Bible says so.

Problem: *How do you know the Bible is true?*

Answer: Because the Bible is the Word of God.

Problem: *But how do you know the Bible is the Word of God?*

Answer: You can only know the Bible is the Word of God by faith. Not because you're so

smart. If you know the Bible is God's Word it is because God has given you the faith to believe the Bible is his Word.

SO the gospel of the Bible that claims that Jesus Christ lived and died to save you from your sin and death - you know that is true by faith!

[By Faith] The apostle Paul says, in Titus 1:1-3: "I Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the sake of the faith of God's elect and their knowledge of the truth, which accords with godliness, ² in hope of eternal life, which **God, who never lies**, promised before the ages began ³ and at the proper time manifested in his word through the preaching with which I have been entrusted by the command of God our Savior."

We don't know that the Bible is **inerrant** and **infallible** because we've put it through all this text criticism OR because we've compared each passage with every other passage looking for contradictions OR because we've proven scientifically that miracles are possible OR because all the archaeology and historical evidence validate all the claims of the Bible. We can and we do do those things BUT it's not on the basis of our knowledge about the world that we conclude the Bible passes our human tests for divinity.

The **inerrancy** of the Bible and the **infallibility** of the Bible is not an established conclusion to a long argument, an empirical search for any errors and afterwards having found none we conclude it is all true.

The **inerrancy** and **infallibility** of the Scriptures are a claim of faith that because the Bible is divine speech it must be true.