

First Presbyterian Church – Charlotte, NC
November 23, 2014
Rev. Pen Peery

The Ruler of the Free World
John 18:33-37

Then Pilate entered the headquarters again, summoned Jesus, and asked him, 'Are you the King of the Jews?'

Jesus answered, 'Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?'

Pilate replied, 'I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?'

Jesus answered, 'My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the [Religious Leaders]. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here.'

Pilate asked him, 'So you are a king?' Jesus answered, 'You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice.'

Pilate asked him, 'What is truth?'

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Brooks: http://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/28/opinion/david-brooks-why-partyism-is-wrong.html?_r=0

The struggle is simply this – we allow our world to define truth and then we structure our lives and faith around it. The gospel demands the reverse, knowing that if we allowed Jesus to define truth and then structured our lives around that, we would find ourselves just as vulnerable as Jesus was in the court before Pilate.
(AFC)

“Like many moderns, Pilate assumes truth is a ‘what,’ that truth has a definite objective content that can be clearly stated. This is not the understanding of truth in the Fourth Gospel, where Jesus is never said to *teach* truth. He does not deliver the truth to his disciples, who are never said to ‘have’ the truth. Truth is not an object, a body of material that can be possessed. Jesus is not a great teacher who gives disciples ‘great truths’ to live by. He gives himself; he himself is God’s truth. Truth is a ‘who,’ not a ‘what.’” (Boring and Craddock)

Outline:

- I. Strange exchange between Jesus and Pilate
 - a. Passage is selected for today because it is Christ the King Sunday.
 - b. The set-up
 - c. What is truth – sounds like the beginning of a philosophy class.
 - d. Truth is not a what – it is a who.

- II. Joe Clifford – Sunday after a presidential election day – Grace and peace to you from Jesus Christ, the Ruler of the Free world!
 - a. Tillis – Hagan Senate race - \$111M (plus)

- III. David Brooks article – Partyism

- IV. Andrew Foster Connors quote

- V. Truth is not a what – it is a who

- VI. Where does our allegiance lie?