

In his final hours, Jesus revealed the purpose for which he came. He revealed his purpose not to his apostles, not to his family, but to his enemy, Pilate. Jesus reveals his purpose when Pilate asks him, "What have you done?" Pilate, like a parent scolding a child, like an employer seeking a reckoning, Pilate asks Jesus, "What have you done?"

Jesus says, "The reason why I was born, the reason why I came into the world is to testify to the truth. Anyone committed to the truth hears my voice." "Truth!" says Pilate, "What does that mean?"

If truth is the purpose for which Jesus came, certainly commitment to truth is a hallmark of Christianity. Most of us learned this as children and struggled with it. One of the sins most frequently confessed by children is lying. They recognize it as a habit they do, a habit they long to escape.

Still, the temptation away from truth remains in adulthood. It's especially bothersome when we see other adults lie. They lie and get away with it. And worse, they get away with it and prosper. You've seen co-workers advance by cheating. You've seen parents lie to children. You've seen the sacrifice of truth. And the result? The wicked prosper. It often happens that the good languish while the wicked prosper. Jesus, testifying to the truth, died; Pilate, indifferent to truth, lived.

But the question is not, "What is truth?" The real question is, "What is prosperity? What is it that really brings happiness?" We all want security, peaceful relationships, acknowledgment for what we do, but if we sacrifice honesty, at home or in the workplace, we have purchased false happiness.

There is nothing quite like the cross of Christ to illustrate this point. Even in the midst of the most terrifying pain, peace comes from commitment to the truth. Sacrifice is part of life, the cross reminds us. But God gives us freedom to choose what we want to sacrifice. Some will sacrifice truth in pursuit of another prosperity. But those who remain committed to the truth will hear the voice of Christ.