

Small Group Discussion Guide

“reLENTless” (pt. 2) – 3/30/2014

Scripture: John 18:12-40

Bottom Line: What is Truth? Jesus is the truth that sets us free.

INTRODUCTION:

In our world today, truth often seems to be elusive or relative. The water is muddy when it could be clear. It's important to know as we read this passage that John is contrasting the lies and deception of the people with the truth that Jesus represents. We study the truth so that we can embrace true freedom.

UNPACKING THE GOSPEL IN THE BIBLE:

Read John 18:12-27

Why did the Jews take Jesus to Annas, who wasn't even the High Priest at this time?

- They knew that they had no real evidence against Jesus so they developed a mock trial in order to gain false evidence. This revealed their hearts. They were so blinded by hatred at this point (as evidenced by their various attempts in the Gospels to stop Jesus) that they abandoned morality and truth and embraced lies in order to get what they wanted.

Peter denied Jesus three times and then wept bitterly. How did Jesus respond to Peter after Jesus rose from the dead (John 21:15-19)?

- Jesus showed grace to Peter and forgave him. In the midst of hard circumstances, Peter caved to pressure, joined the masses, and denied Jesus. Yet Jesus welcomed his repentance, forgave him of his trespasses, and used him in a mighty way to bless and strengthen his church. It is comforting to know that even though we may embrace lies at some point in our lives, Jesus stands ready to forgive and reconcile us to the truth.

Read John 18:28-40

What did Jesus mean when he said that his kingdom was not of this world?

- Certainly, it means that Jesus' kingdom doesn't have earthly borders like the USA. His kingdom transcends all earthly kingdoms. However, in another sense Jesus' kingdom is marked by the truth whereas worldly kingdoms in contrast to the Kingdom of God are marked by lies and deception. Could anyone argue that any worldly kingdom is not plagued by lies and deception?

According to this passage, what was the purpose that Jesus came to earth?

- He came to testify to the truth. This shows us two things: there is definitive truth out there (truth is not relative to each person), and we have believed lies. Jesus would not have come if we had believed the truth. Instead we as a society have been fooled into believing lies so much so that like Peter we sometimes choose to embrace lies because of pressure even when we know it's not the truth.

UNDERSTANDING HOW THE GOSPEL APPLIES TO MY LIFE:

Where does Truth come from?

- Truth comes from God. He is the embodiment of truth, so to know him and his will is to know the truth. Contrary to that, to not know God and his will is to not know truth. God created the heavens and earth and so truth is all around us. Yet, we as a world have lost this knowledge that God is the source of truth. Jesus came so that we might be reconciled to God.

How can you believe that Jesus is the Truth?

- There are many ways. But, the best way is to look at his death and resurrection. There is plenty of historical evidence to prove that Jesus did in fact rise from the dead. If he did that, then everything else he says suddenly has massive creditability.

LIVING OUT THE GOSPEL IN MY EVERYDAY LIFE:

What should we do in order to be set free by the truth?

- Seek the Truth – read scripture, look up the historical evidence
- Believe the Truth – trust that Jesus is who he says he is.
- Live the Truth- respond by living in light of what you believe.