

The Pontius Pilate Problem

What is the Pontius Pilate Problem?

An ancient problem surfaced.

“I was born for this, and I have come into the world for this: to testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice.”

“What is truth?” said Pilate. (John 18:37-38)

The Pontius Pilate Problem is simply the problem we face today in which we live in a culture that rejects absolute truth. Truth is relative to the individual.

You Have Heard It Before

Common slogans in our culture/church

- “Well that may be true for you, but that is not true for me.”
- “Live your truth.”
- “You do you.”
- “What does that verse mean to you?”
- Quick Story/ “Jesus Wept” does not mean “Jesus and got tacos.”

The Problem with the Pontius Pilate Problem

It is unbiblical

- “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me” (John 14:6)
- “You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free” (John 8:32)

If there is no such thing as absolute truth, the Jesus would be wrong. This, of course, is something that the Christian cannot accept.

The Problem with the Pontius Pilate Problem

It is illogical

- “There is no absolute truth” (Is that absolutely true?)
- “I do not know if anything is true” (Do you know if that is true?)
- “Everything is just a matter of opinion” (Is that a true statement or is that just your opinion?)

We want to have adult conversations.

The Problem with the Pontius Pilate Problem

It is unrealistic

- It cannot account for science (2+2=4, gravity)
- It cannot account for morality (torture)
- It cannot account for history (Twin Towers)
- It cannot account for religion (how many gods?)

None of the aforementioned things are just a matter of opinion. We are dealing with truth claims.

The Fruit of Relativism

- Facts are ignored in exchange for emotion/experience (“I do not care what the research says, my personal experience says otherwise”).
- The culture will become more morally obtuse (“You may think that is evil but it is actually okay for some people”).
- People will lose their critical thinking skills (“Well, according to your logic that may be true. But not my logic.”)

A Challenge to the Church

This is why people say things like...

- “Well, not everyone believes in your religion.”
(But something is either true or false regardless of your belief in it. [ex. gravity])
- “It is bigoted to claim that someone's lifestyle/religion is wrong.” (But then that would mean that your wrong, for telling me that I am wrong.”)
- “There are many paths to truth.” (Is that absolutely true?)