

Everyone who is of truth listens to my voice

The gospel for this coming Sunday (Last Sunday of the Church Year) is John 18:33-37. In John 18, Jesus is betrayed by Judas (vv 2, 5). Jesus accepts the Father's will, rebuking Peter's protection by the sword (v 11). Later, Peter denies his Lord. Annas and Caiaphas falsely accuse Jesus, handing him to Pilate and demanding crucifixion (vv 19–32).

In verse 33 Pilate asks Jesus "*are you the king of the Jews?*" Pilate's question revealed that he was aware of the Jewish leaders' real complaint - Jesus' messianic claims. Politically speaking, Pilate saw no threat posed to Rome by the pitiable, but not criminal, man before him. (TLSB)

In verse 35 Pilate displays irritation for being drawn into what he perceived as a Jewish squabble motivated by jealousy of Jesus' public ministry. (TLSB)

In verse 36 Jesus was rejecting any worldly political aspirations or rebellious intent. Although a King, His kingdom did not threaten the external rule of the Roman Empire. (TLSB)

In verse 37 Jesus says: "*You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world – to bear witness to the truth.*" This is a challenge to Pilate to assess the truth of the claim that Jesus presented. The person of Jesus and His revelation of divine truth are inseparable. (TLSB)

The Gospel is the truth. John 1:17 confirms this when it says: "*grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.*" The Gospel is His means, not force of arms.

When Jesus says "*everyone*" he is giving an open invitation to all, Jews, Gentiles and Pilate on this occasion. Jesus is inviting Pilate to listen to Him. Jesus is yearning for Pilate's conversion but Pilate resists. To be begotten of the truth goes hand in hand with listening to Jesus' voice.

In a world where there is so much lack of trust in so many matters, we can be certain of the truth of the gospel which promises eternal salvation. Jesus also gives us the privilege of inviting others to listen to the truth that will set them on the road to heaven.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, thank for bringing us into your kingdom through the truth of your gospel. Help us to be eager to hear more and more of your saving truth. Amen