

### Truth on Trial — John 18:28–40

**Big Idea:** When the world attacks Truth with lies, power, and evil, Jesus stands unshaken, speaks unashamed, and substitutes Himself for the guilty.

#### I. Truth's Response to Worthless Accusations

(John 18:28–32)

**Key Word:** κατηγορέω (katēgoreō) – to accuse publicly, to bring charges.

The religious leaders bring accusations but avoid entering the Praetorium to remain “clean.” Their concern is ceremonial purity, not moral integrity.

#### Discussion:

1. Why does Jesus not defend Himself against every charge?

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2. What does silence communicate about trust in God?

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3. When does defending yourself reveal fear rather than faith?

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#### Application:

Where are you tempted to react defensively?

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What would “restful restraint” look like in your situation?

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## II. Truth's Response to Worldly Authority

*(John 18:33–38a)*

### Key Words:

**ἐξουσία (exousia)** – delegated authority

**βασιλεία (basileia)** – kingdom, rule, reign

**ἀλήθεια (alētheia)** – truth, ultimate reality

Jesus does not deny being a king. He clarifies the source of His kingdom. “My kingdom is not of this world.”

Not derived from it. Not sustained by it. Not dependent upon it.

### Discussion:

1. How does understanding exousia change the way we view political power?

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2. What does it mean that Christ's basileia is “not of this world”?

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3. Why does Pilate ask, “What is truth?” What does that reveal about his heart?

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### Application:

Has politics shaped your tone more than the Gospel?

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Are you more animated by elections or evangelism?

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### III. Truth's Response to Wicked Preference

(John 18:38b–40)

#### Key Word:

ληστής (lēstēs) – violent rebel, insurrectionist.

Barabbas represents the kind of savior people often prefer — forceful, immediate, militant. Jesus represents surrender, substitution, redemption.

The crowd chooses power over purity.

#### Discussion:

1. Why would the crowd prefer Barabbas?

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2. What does this reveal about human nature?

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3. How does this moment foreshadow substitutionary atonement?

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#### Theological Anchor:

Substitution is central to the Gospel. The innocent condemned so the guilty go free.

#### Cross-Reference for Spiritual Warfare

*“For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this darkness, against evil, spiritual forces in the heavens.” — Ephesians 6:12 (CSB)*

#### Reflection Questions:

- Are you fighting the wrong enemy?
- Is your battle spiritual — or merely political?
- Are you standing in truth with grace and firmness?