



# grow. pray. serve.

Reveille UMC Weekly Guide

September 28-October 4, 2020

Sermon by Lead Pastor Pete Moon

Sermon Series: “2020: What Have We Learned?”

Sermon Title: “Part IV: *What is Truth?*”

Notes from sermon on 9/27:

Things to Pray For This Week:

### Family Focus Question:

What do you think Jesus meant when he said, “Everyone on the side of truth listens to me”?

### Questions for Small Groups

1. How do you know if something is true? Can you think of a time you have or an organization has, like Pilate, sacrificed truth for expediency?
2. What have the Richmond monuments meant to you in the past?  
What do they mean for you now?
3. We are told in our reading from Romans that God will judge without favoritism. What does that mean? (Hint note Romans 2:6). Does that encourage you or cause concern for you?

### Monday, September 28: Read John 18:28-38a

“What is truth?” This hauntingly modern question was asked by Pilate to Jesus over 2000 years ago, as Pilate weighed politics over truth in his decision to wash his hands of any responsibility for Christ’s execution. There hardly can be a more relevant question to the situation we find ourselves in today, in which we are both guilty of and witness to the creation of one’s own narrative to serve the purpose we desire. Facts and truth seem completely relative; history can be rewritten. Leaders can say one thing one day, then completely deny it the next. We don’t know which voices to trust. Moreover, we are being forced to examine the own voices in our head that may have harbored untruths. Where do we turn?

This week, we will be called by scripture to turn to the God of truth – to gain confidence and peace that God is still God and the truth will be revealed. We will read of a God who shows no favoritism, does not rewrite history, and can see into the hearts of all. We are all children of a God who is unchanged, all-knowing, and all-loving to all God’s people. Our sense of truth does not have to revolve around the narratives we have been given, but the unchanging narrative of love, inclusivity, justice, accountability, and eternal hope we have been given by our Creator and our Redeemer.

**Tuesday, September 29: Read Romans 2:5-11**

People have been bending the truth to suit their needs from the beginning of time. In Paul's day, many factions claimed to have the truth while actually seeking power above all else. Today's powerfully worded scripture declares that truth still matters to God, and those who seek it and spread it will be rewarded. Conversely, those who are self-seeking and reject the truth will ultimately be judged harshly. Today's words call on all of us to seek, then hold onto truth, taking special care that we are never the spreaders of untruth, either consciously or subconsciously. Are we ever rewriting the narrative for self-seeking purposes? Are we ever accepting one version of the facts because they favor us? 2000 years ago, we were warned against this behavior. In 2020, we see it everywhere.

**Wednesday, September 30: Read John 8:31-38**

How incredibly relevant it is that Jesus's famous words, "Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free," are immediately followed by a discussion of race, slavery, and privilege. Even Christ's closest followers struggled with a sense of privilege for being descendants of Abraham, and obviously lived in a culture where slavery ranked people in order of importance and inheritance. Yet Jesus said something amazing – that everyone was a slave...a slave to sin...yet all could be set free through truth. Are we looking at ourselves and one another this same way today? Instead of having an "us" and "them" mentality, can we recognize all of our brothers and sisters of every race and political party as slaves to sin, yet able to be set free by God's truth? Instead of claiming to personally have all the answers to dole out to those more "ignorant" than ourselves, can we instead partner with our fellow slaves to seek the truth, together, as mutual children and heirs to God's kingdom?

**Thursday, October 1: Read Ecclesiastes 7:10-12**

When we get overwhelmed by the complexities of today, we long for the good old days. What are we actually seeking in our desire to go back in time, however? Are we hoping to be able to ignore truths that have been revealed to us, ones that have given us the opportunity to become wiser...better knowing the difference between right and wrong? The writer of Ecclesiastes warns against longing for the good old days, and praises wisdom as the inheritance we should all seek. What wisdom have we gained in the past few months? How can we move forward, not crawl backwards, in the future because of it?

**Friday, October 2: Read Exodus 20:1-17**

We end our readings this week with the moral code upon which our society was founded – the Ten Commandments. It's hard to imagine our culture or our country without them, yet we cannot read a single one without thinking of every way they are being broken every day. We worship the gods of power, self-image, and money, while making monuments to ourselves in the process. We misuse God's name for our own purposes. We have allowed distractions and work to steal away from our time of worship. We see young people flagrantly disregarding the safety of their parents and grandparents during the pandemic. We cheat, kill, covet, and lie. Let us read these commandments carefully today, and find both peace and strength and conviction in their eternal truth and moral compass.

**Saturday, October 3: Scripture Memorization: John 8:31b-32**

"If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples.  
Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

**Sunday, October 4: Let us prepare our hearts and minds for worship in praying our Prayer of**

**Common Confession:** *Almighty God, we confess that we all too easily could be just like Pontius Pilate. We so easily compromise truth for expediency. We like to do our best to make things true so that our lives will fall into easier and more comfortable places. You have told us that those on the side of truth will listen to you and we humbly ask for your grace to enable us to do exactly that. When the temptations arise to swallow the most popular or easiest narrative, let us stop and listen to you. Help us to remember that the loudest voices are not always the right ones. Give us your grace in this complicated age, for we ask it in Jesus' name.*