



# TRANSFORMED

DEVOTIONS CONNECTING TEENS TO CHRIST

**Pilate then went back inside the palace, summoned Jesus and asked him, “Are you the king of the Jews?”**

**Jesus said, “My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jewish leaders. But now my kingdom is from another place.”**

**“You are a king, then!” said Pilate.**

**Jesus answered, “You say that I am a king. In fact, the reason I was born and came into the world is to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me.”**

**“What is truth?” retorted Pilate.**

*John 18:33, 36-38a*

## What is truth?

“What’s 2+2?” Remember way back when questions like *that* were your weekly homework? And if you penciled in “5” as your answer, your teacher would lovingly get out her red pen and circle that question. Because *your answer was wrong*. Same thing for the more creative student who literally put ‘2’ and ‘2’ together and wrote “22”. Both answers are wrong. The answer is “4”.

The question posed by Pontius Pilate in John 18:38 isn’t all that different. “What is truth?” It’s a question people are *still* asking today. When it comes to questions of identity, meaning, purpose, and destiny, many people answer, “All worldviews and beliefs are true.” What’s true for one can be true for them, and what’s true for another can be true for them. After all, why can’t *everyone* be right? But that’s just as silly as responding to the question “What is the answer to 2+2?” with “22” or “5.”

There is no shortage of systems that strive to answer those questions: Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Christianity, Atheism, and so many more it’ll make your head spin! But they cannot *all* be true. Such answers to life’s questions could (in theory) all be false, but they can’t all be true. The Christian apologist (and once atheist) C.S. Lewis compares it to grade school math: “As in arithmetic—there is only one right answer to a sum, and all other answers are wrong; but some of the wrong answers are much nearer being right than others.”<sup>1</sup> To the question “What is the answer to 2+2?” “5” is certainly closer to “4” than “22,” but they’re both wrong—no more correct than leaving the question completely blank.

But there was another question Pontius Pilate asked Jesus—a question Jesus himself asked his disciples—*who is Jesus of Nazareth?* Many today say Jesus was just a moral guru. Others say he was a radical, social activist. Still others insist that Jesus was just a good person, but he wasn’t God. The Jewish mob before Pilate labeled Jesus a liar. Others labeled him a lunatic. But who does *Jesus* say he is?



## What is truth? - continued

"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me," Jesus says. The same Jesus who stood before Pontius Pilate had claimed to be not just a bearer of truth, *but the embodiment of truth itself*—God in the flesh. "You are right in saying I am a king. In fact, for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me." Pilate sided with the mob, not the truth. And the Truth was hung on a cross.

"Who is Jesus of Nazareth?" is a question to which the world *must* provide an answer. The historic evidence for life, the ministry, the death, *and (yes) the resurrection* of Jesus of Nazareth *demand*s a verdict. As C.S. Lewis put it, Jesus is either 1) a liar, 2) a lunatic, 3) or he is who he said he is: the LORD. And if God has raised this Jesus from the dead, the question is answered by God for us.

When you're asked the question "Who is Jesus of Nazareth?" don't leave the question blank—because you know the answer. He is your God and Savior who died on a cross to save you from sin and death. When you're asked questions about identity, say with confidence "I am a redeemed child of God." When you wonder if your life has meaning, look to Jesus, who tells you that you were graciously set apart to be his own. When you wrestle with questions of origin, your God reminds you that you are fearfully and wonderfully made *by him and for him*. And when you wonder about your eternal resting place, rest your worried mind in the blood-bought promises of Jesus that your eternal resting place is heaven.

His tomb is *still* empty. And because his tomb is empty, you can trust your Savior speaks the truth.

**Prayer: Lord Jesus, you are amazing! You make everything new. Thank you for the gift of baptism that washes my sins away and gives me a new and holy life. Amen.**

<sup>1</sup>C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, page 35