**WOODLANDS CHURCH**

**July 29th 2018. Truth encounters**

**Discussion notes: Pilate. John 18:32-40**

In this final ‘truth encounter’ Jesus stands before the most powerful man in Jerusalem, the representative of the Roman Emperor himself, Pontius Pilate. Pilate is the furthest from the faith of Judaism too, and represents perhaps a view that corresponds to the contemporary distrust of absolutes. John’s gospel is concerned with Truth however. The Greek word for truth *Alethia* occurs 25 times and it has connotations of faithfulness and ‘unveiling’ as well as factual truth.

1. How does Pilate’s famous question ‘What is truth?’ sit with his role as an inquisitor, a judge and someone responsible for pronouncing a true verdict? How does scepticism about truth relate to moral authority?
2. The ‘fake news’ rhetoric of this last year invites all of us to question truth in the media and from our leaders? Is it possible to know objective truth? How can we express and defend it if so? What are the strengths and limitations of language and personal experience when it comes to knowing truth?
3. What do your friends and peers think about truth? Do they think it is ‘relative’ or ‘absolute’?
4. Jesus says he has come to ‘bear witness to the truth’ v 37. If Jesus is ‘the Truth’ is he bearing witness to himself before Pilate (14:6)? In a multi faith, post modern culture how do we bear witness to the truth about Jesus? Is it wrong for us to claim exclusive truth as opposed to followers of other religions?
5. What impression do you think Jesus made on Pilate?
6. Would you be willing to die for the truth? If so why? And how does that affect how you live?

Jesus stands in contrast to the Roman Emperor who took for himself the title’ son of god’ and Barabbas (v 40) ‘son of the father’ a violent robber and insurrectionist. Jesus doesn’t just speak truth, he IS truth incarnate and the light of his nature contrasts with these other false saviours.