



# HISTORY INTEGRITY TRUTH SCRIPTURE



[www.wittenbergcomo.com](http://www.wittenbergcomo.com)

## April 2019 Newsletter What Is Truth?

As we move to the end of the Lenten season and toward the season of Easter, our thoughts fairly naturally move to the Gospels, and specifically the narratives about the arrest, trial, execution, and resurrection of Jesus. It is in one of the trials of Jesus that we come across an important question, which is also one of the four foundational concepts that identifies Wittenberg Door Campus Ministry. In John 18:38, Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor, has just been told by Jesus that he testifies to the truth and that everyone who sides with the truth needs to hear Jesus' words. Pilate's response, almost seeming to represent a throwing up of his hands in frustration, is to ask, "What is truth?"



This is a fascinating question, fascinating because it has changed in its meaning over time. Pilate, and really everyone around at his time, was well aware of the implications of truth claims. Even though some things seemed to defy logic, even though some things were counter-intuitive, he recognized that there was truth. In the confrontation with Jesus, the question was whether there was a compelling reason that Pilate and his government should execute Jesus. His

alleged crimes were not clear to Pilate and when he had asked about the crimes, he was essentially told, "Trust us, he needs to die." That isn't exactly the kind of truth claim a governor wants to trust. Pilate would really have liked to hear testimony that he could evaluate and use to reach a wise decision. That kind of truth is out there.

The concept of truth being stable and definitive remained prevalent for centuries. However, in the late 20th century, with the advent of postmodern philosophy, it became more common for people to define truth in terms of their own personal preferences. We began hearing that something can be "true for me" or "true for you." Although this makes little logical sense and has dreadful implications, it has become fairly normal. A generation of young people has come to think of truth as something which can be individualized. By this pattern, Jesus might be innocent in his own eyes, that would be his truth, but Pilate might be rightly convinced that Jesus is guilty, and that would also be true, but it would be Pilate's truth. When the different truth claims run into one another they will necessarily cause conflict.

What is truth? Christianity has historically operated with the assertion that there is truth, that it is universal, and that it can be understood, at least insofar as it is necessary to understand it. Of all the world religions, Christianity is the one which is based on the truth claim that Jesus is at once man and God, that Jesus was executed in the setting described in the canonical Gospels, and that he was discovered to be risen from the dead a few days later, and that he appeared to individuals and groups of people for several weeks afterward. There's a thorough description of it written in 1

Corinthians 15, where the apostle Paul spoke to the fact that many of the eyewitnesses of the resurrection were still living and would be happy to tell about what they saw. Despite the fact that the Romans or the Jews could have ended the Christian religion right away by producing a dead body of Jesus, they were never able to do so. The truth claims of the resurrection are a foundational and factual basis for Christianity, something that other religions are simply lacking.

Based on these real, historical events, Christians will affirm that the other claims of Jesus seem almost certain to be true. After all, he said he would rise from the dead, something patently impossible, then he did rise from the dead. So what will be too difficult for Jesus to accomplish? Nothing. We trust that if he promised to do something, he is able and willing to do it.

Christianity claims that there is truth, that it can be understood, and that the truth of the resurrection of Jesus is good news for every human ever born. Jesus says that all who look to him in faith will be forgiven of their sins and have new life. We take Jesus at his word. May the truth be done in our lives.

**15** Now, brothers and sisters, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. **2** By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain.

**3** For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance<sup>[a]</sup>: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, **4** that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, **5** and that he appeared to Cephas,<sup>[b]</sup> and then to the Twelve. **6** After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. **7** Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, **8** and last of all he appeared to me also, as to one abnormally born.

**9** For I am the least of the apostles and do not even deserve to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. **10** But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them—yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me. **11** Whether, then, it is I or they, this is what we preach, and this is what you believed.

### The Resurrection of the Dead

**12** But if it is preached that Christ has been raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? **13** If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. **14** And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith. **15** More than that, we are then found to be false witnesses about God, for we have testified about God that he raised Christ from the dead. But he did not raise him if in fact the dead are not raised. **16** For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised either. **17** And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins. **18** Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost. **19** If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied.

## You're Invited!

Who: You, Your Friends, and Your Family  
What: Dinner and Conversation  
When: Alternating Fridays 6-8 pm starting Feb. 15  
Where: 6610 South Old Village Road, Columbia

Try plain, traditional American foods in a low-risk environment. Practice speaking English and learning about people from around the world.

As a Christian ministry we have a brief time of prayer and Bible reading as well. Everyone is welcome. Bring a friend, make a friend. Please let us know by Wednesday evening if you plan to come on Friday.

<https://www.wittenbergcomo.com/events/february-01st-2019>



See you there!  
Dave Spotts, Pastor  
wittenbergcomo@gmail.com  
(573) 355-0347



## Bible Discussion Thursdays @ 12:00

We at Wittenberg Door Campus Ministry are very glad you are here in Columbia. The college life is a great adventure. While we live and work around the University we learn about our academic subjects and about ourselves. It's a challenge to be faced and enjoyed.

Part of learning about our world and life is how our spiritual life is important to understanding all that we are doing. Christians believe the Bible will speak to all areas of life. Join with us to see how!

<https://www.wittenbergcomo.com/events/bible-discussions-thursdays-1200>

See you there!  
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## Real God Real Answers

What: Food, Drink, and Biblical Q&A  
When: Tuesdays 5:30 pm  
Where: The Heidelberg, 410 South 9<sup>th</sup> Street

Ask questions about Christianity or follow along with biblical topics presented.

Learn in a give and take atmosphere.

Half price appetizers!

See you there!

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## Wittenberg Door Financial Update



<https://www.gofundme.com/manage/wittenberg-door-campus-ministry-2019>

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Search



# Wittenberg Door Campus Ministry 2019

Edit View

\$6,898 raised

Wittenberg Door Campus Ministry is entirely funded by the generosity of individuals and groups who want to help us bring on-site pastoral care to our campuses. This year we are asking for help with housing and medical care expenses, aside from the regular operating expenses of the ministry. For that reason we're asking for about \$60,000.00 from our supporters. So far, we've brought in almost \$7,000. This is up considerably from last month's update. But there's still a long way to go. Giving is easy! Simply visit our website at

[www.wittenbergcomo.com](http://www.wittenbergcomo.com) or our fundraising site at <https://www.gofundme.com/wittenberg-door-campus-ministry-2019> . I've got some upcoming opportunities to tell local churches about this ministry. Is yours on the list? Let's get it moving! I'm always glad to tell church groups about what we do to make a difference on our local campuses and around the world.

## Uganda Update:

Our friend Alice in Uganda seems to be doing very well. I had an opportunity to speak with her and with her husband, Simon Peter, recently. As I am writing this, she is on her monthly trip to Nairobi to see her physician and have the remains of her brain tumor evaluated. The doctor hopes that she might be released from treatment by the end of this calendar year. If you wish to contribute to her care, it costs about \$2,200 per month. A link to give follows. <https://www.gofundme.com/alice-waako-brain-surgery>



Alice's husband, Simon Peter, is a pastor and a leader of other Lutheran pastors in the rural area around in the Kaliro district. He formerly worked with a thriving church congregation in the area of Jinja, but has moved to more of a pioneering work. Last month I gave you some of what he has told me about the work of planting a church and schools. This month I have something very exciting to tell you. In partnership with our friends at Love, Uganda, I'll have the opportunity to go and see Simon Peter's work up close and personally in January of 2020. With a team of about eight people, we'll visit the orphans in the community, make sure that Love, Uganda has as accurate information about the people they are supporting as possible, bring some clothing, school supplies, and other helpful things to the community, and engage in some education and training. One member of our team has experience in subsistence farming and goat husbandry, so we plan to purchase a herd of goats and train their new owners how to care for them, providing milk for their families. I have also been asked to teach a 20 hour course on Lutheran Christian distinctives for some of the people Simon Peter is training in ministry, as well as pastors of other churches in the region. This will be a great opportunity to build bridges with our brothers and sisters in Christ in another part of the world. Please pray for this work and remember the trip as you consider giving. I'll be sure to provide more information in upcoming newsletters.



## Upcoming Activities:

Tuesdays at 5:30pm – Real God, Real Answers - at The Heidelberg Restaurant

Thursdays at 12:00 – Bible Discussion at Mizzou Student Center

Alternating Fridays from 6-8 pm – Dinner and Conversation Night

Sunday, April 7 – Hold the Line Conference, Chetek, WI

Friday, April 12 – 6-8 pm Dinner and Conversation at Spotts House

Thursday, April 18, Friday, April 19, Sunday April 21 – special church services for the end of Lent and the beginning of Easter

Friday, April 26 – 6-8 pm Dinner and Conversation at Spotts House

Sunday, April 28 – Special church service 10 a.m. followed by Brazilian Barbecue at St. John's Lutheran Church, Mexico, Missouri. Special Guest Robert Kolb, a distinguished Lutheran scholar.

Friday, May 10 – 6-8 pm Dinner and Conversation on the tailgate at Rock Bridge State Park

Sunday, May 12 – Pastor Ben Baker Ordination and Installation, Traer, IA

Sunday, May 19 – Pastor Spotts at St. John's Lutheran Church, Stringtown, MO

**We always have something new at the website, the blog, and the activities calendar.**

**Please be a friend on Facebook and follow us on Twitter. If you're in Columbia, let's get together on or near campus. Go to <https://www.wittenbergcomo.com/support-us.html> to provide financial support. The Wittenberg Door 300 needs you!**