

FOCUS ON FAITH

WHAT IS TRUTH?

Lord Hutton is asking the same question of the people who have been summoned to his Inquiry into Dr. David Kelly's death and the Iraq Dossier as Pontius Pilate asked of Jesus – **"What is truth?"** But having heard and read so much about the proceedings I still don't know who said what to whom and when.

- Was David Kelly the first person to raise Alistair Campbell's name?
- Were the Intelligence reports right about the 45 minutes theory and was the document "sexed up"?
- Did Andrew Gilligan subsequently amend his interview notes
- Was too much pressure put on Dr. Kelly by the MoD tipping him over the edge and leading to his suicide?
- Did Saddam Hussein even have weapons of mass destruction in the first place? Hans Blix the former chief UN weapons expert seems to think it's unlikely now anyway.

And whether Lord Hutton will ever find out the *"truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth"* is also debatable as probably too many people have too much to lose. Reputations, credibility, positions and status considerations are likely to mean some of those involved will feel the need to obfuscate the events and timing of what happened.

Illusive

Truth appears to be such an illusive entity these days. In the boardroom *"creative accountancy"* means major companies doctor their books to manipulate their Stock

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Price for as long as they can; in Industrial Relations both sides try and get one over on the other by not revealing their true intentions during *"negotiations"*; countless politicians of all hues when put on the spot about their policies (or lack of them) evade answering truthfully the questions put them. Even investigative journalists seeking to highlight particular causes of concern use deception to obtain jobs that allow them to act as *"whistle-blowers"*. And then we wonder why

our children are economical with the truth when the cricket ball goes through the kitchen window. Perhaps it's a case of the *"sins of the parents"* visiting subsequent generations!

Conscience

But why is any of it important? None of us likes to be misled and lied to and if we're really being honest we don't really like misleading or lying to others. We know when we've done it and we get that uncomfortable feeling inside – it's called *"conscience"*. Even the so-called *"little white lies"* cause twinges of guilt. It's often the case that we misrepresent what happened in order to *"cover our backs"* or to avoid responsibility or blame for things that have gone wrong. The problem is that not telling the truth has a habit of rebounding on us and one little lie leads to another in order to keep up appearances.

Integrity

Jesus said, ***"If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free"*** – Gospel of John 8: 31-32.

But what's that got to with anything?

The Bible encourages us to be trustworthy, honest and people of integrity. The ninth of the Ten Commandments specifically tells us not to lie – ***"Don't bear false witness"*** – and the Apostle Paul told the Ephesian church that because they were Christians they should always ***"speak the truth in love"***. I

In Psalm 51 – his great petition for forgiveness – King David said, ***"Surely you (God) desire truth in the inner parts; you teach me wisdom in the inmost place."***

When we are truthful and honest, admitting our faults and mistakes, we won't suffer those pangs of guilt and conscience because the truth really does set us free. Free from having to look over our shoulders in case the past catches up on us; free from having to remember how we avoided the problem last time; free from condemnation and worry.

Choose freedom; choose to be honest and truthful even when it hurts; make a difference and see the difference it makes.

If you'd like to find out more about the real, radical Christian faith, log on to **www.lifting-jesus-higher.org.uk** which has details of local Christian Churches and contact details.



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