

## **For This Reason I Was Born**

Pastor Andrew Brunson was the pastor of an evangelical church in the ancient city of Smyrna, Turkey (now Izmir). *“To the angel of the church in Smyrna write...do not be afraid to what you are about to suffer. I tell you, the devil will put some of you in prison to test you...be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life.” Revelation 2:8-10.*

In 2016, Brunson was arrested and imprisoned in Turkey, with his only offense being a preacher of the Gospel. On October 12, 2018, he went to trial. After eleven hours of accusations, he was suddenly released and within 24 hours, Andrew found himself in the White House. He prayed for our president. “I ask that you give him perseverance and endurance and courage to stand for truth.”

### **Three Claims Jesus Made About Truth:**

- 1. There Is Such a Thing as \_\_\_\_\_ (Absolute Truth).**
  - a. *“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” (Jesus to Pilate, John 18:37).* There is unchanging, absolute truth binding on everyone, a worldview widely held until the late 1900s. Today not only has our culture taken the Christ out of Christ, they have also taken the truth out of reality!
  - b. *“There is one thing a professor can be absolutely certain of: almost every student entering the university believes, or says he believes, that truth is relative” (Alan Bloom, *The Closing of the American Mind*).*
  - c. The Bible maintains that the Christian truth claim hinges on whether Jesus actually rose from the dead. *“If Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith.” I Corinthians 15:14.*
  
- 2. Truth Is Personified in \_\_\_\_\_ (Jesus).**
  - a. *“Everyone on the side of truth listens to me.” John 18:37.* Jesus is absolutely unique, contending that he is the very embodiment of truth (John 14:6). How do we put this to the test? Find a quiet place and read (or listen to) the Gospel of John. If you have time, read Matthew, Mark, and Luke also. Then ask, “Is there something distinctively different about Jesus that makes him unique?”
  - b. *“I felt like an electrician rewiring an ancient house without being able to turn the mains off.” J.B. Phillips, after translating the New Testament into modern English. “These words bear the seal of the Son of Man and God. And they’re the Magna Carta of the human spirit.” (Bible translator Dr. E.V. Rieu).*
  - c. *“They will call him Immanuel, which means, ‘God with us’” (Matthew 1:23).*
  
- 3. Everyone Has to \_\_\_\_\_ (Choose A Side).**

- a. *“Everyone on the side of truth listens to me.” John 18:37.* Pilate tried to straddle the fence as he declared Jesus to be innocent three times. His wife was haunted by nightmares. In desperation, he washed his hands. *“I am innocent of this man’s blood.” Matthew 27:24.*
- b. It is impossible to stay neutral about Jesus. *“He who is not for me is against me.” Matthew 12:30.* Jesus introduced the kingdom of heaven to us, teaching us to pray, *“Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.” Matthew 6:10.*
- c. We must be decisive for Jesus said, *“He who does not gather with me scatters.” Matthew 12:30.* The metaphor of gathering is used regarding sheep (a shepherd gathers the flock, the wolf scatters it), and regarding the harvest (wheat is gathered while the wind scatters it). Either we are living lives that draw people to God, or drive them away!

**In the summer of 1741, Charles Jennens was upset by those who denied the authority of Scripture. So, he wrote a text about Jesus that was completely faithful to the Bible, then handed it to his friend, Georg Friedrich Handel, who wrote the musical score in 24 days. *Messiah*, first performed in Dublin, Ireland, was widely hailed as a masterpiece and has been impacting the world ever since. Is Jesus your Messiah?**