

*What is truth?* Pilate famously responds to Jesus' statement at his trial that *Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice* (Jn.18: 37,38). When John Fisher and Thomas More stand, or sit, before their accusers in the sixteenth century, truth is the issue once again and both men realise that what is on trial is not only the issue of an objective truth 'out there' but their very own identities, who they are. For this belonging to the truth could be said to define us as human beings, uniquely fitted to both discern truth and to deny it. This is not an easy process for we are beset by 'untruth' and only 'come to ourselves' through the practice of truth. It's a search, a struggle. We celebrate their example today, not necessarily because of the truth of this doctrine or that, 'out there', which they fought so strenuously to defend, but because they were tempted in every way that we are in their search to discover and defend that truth, whatever it might be, that makes us who we are. They could not ultimately go against their 'conscience'. It's this lack of 'informed conscience' that is so alarming today. We do not know where to turn to find any certain truth, and does it matter? Isn't the anarchy of the web the better option, the greater freedom?

At the risk of John Fisher and Thomas More turning in their graves, let's hear the renowned Protestant theologian Jurgen Moltmann in defence of 'truth'.

*In its subjective sense, truth is the correspondence of intention and statement. Subjectively speaking, truth is the equivalence of word and deed. These correlations are deeply rooted in a person's relationship to their self: those who are in accord with themselves are not prone to lie to themselves and others. Those who accept themselves because they know themselves to be accepted gain self-confidence. Those who do not know themselves, those who are in conflict with themselves, are mistrusted by others. Subjectivity is the truth: always be in accord with yourself.*

(p163 *The Spirit of Truth* The Ecumenical Review April 2020)

It's this deeply interior sense of self which Jesus is urging his disciples to develop in order to sustain them when he is no longer physically with them, and trouble comes. But it's not an isolated self we are being called to defend, for the deeper truth still is that, in finding ourselves we find Christ, and realise ourselves as part of a universal web which goes far beyond anything, or anyone, we can construct for ourselves. This is grace, or God, at work drawing us into the greater truth of what we might call 'total relatedness', that is the truth that all creation is ultimately one in God.

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