

Pentecost 19, Proper 21 September 30, 2018 St. Augustine's in-the-Woods Episcopal Church, Freeland WA Nigel Taber-Hamilton. Numbers 11:4-6,10-16,24-29; Psalm 19:7-14 James 5:13-20; Mark 9:38-50

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Her story – and the one playing out in the other Washington right now– reminded me of an age-old question - asked by Pilate to Jesus: "what is truth?" I think Pilate was asking a rhetorical question: "Who gets to say what truth is?" he was saying, with the answer, of course, being this: "Rome. Rome gets to be the definer and arbiter of truth." Empires always do. Authoritarian regimes always do.

But that was a long time ago. On the other hand, we keep seeing the rise of this way of seeking control – that old saw that the price of freedom is eternal vigilance is really true, isn't it? We have always lived in a world where truth is often defined by institutional stamps of approval that make things – true or not in an objective sense – official; officially "true." And those same institutional stamps can pronounce something 'untrue' as well.

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