

A Wrong Headline

On this day in 1948, the *Chicago Daily Tribune* published a mistake in big, bold letters. In the weeks before the 1948 presidential election, early Gallup polls predicted incumbent Harry Truman's defeat by Thomas Dewey. The Democrats were badly split, and Truman had little money backing him. So Truman went directly to the people, traveling thousands of miles in his "whistle stop" campaign. Still, when Truman went to bed on November 2, he was losing the election.

Meanwhile at the *Tribune*, returns were coming in slowly, the printing deadline was approaching, and inexperienced workers were filling in for regular staff members out on strike. After delivery of their early edition bearing the headline, **Dewey Defeats Truman**, it became obvious that Truman would win after all. Although workers retrieved thousands of the papers, many more newspapers with the wrong headline remained with the customers. On his way to Washington, D.C., later that day, Truman posed for his photo with a paper bearing the erroneous headline.

We live in an information age, and it's hard to know what to believe sometimes. Rumors and speculation are often presented as truth. The "facts" in textbooks change over time. Newspapers, magazines and the electronic media often distort events to fit their political bias. The Internet spreads hoaxes and urban legends day and night.

Long ago, Pilate asked Jesus, "What is truth?" Jesus had answered the question earlier in the evening when He prayed for the disciples and for all who would ever believe in Him, asking God to "teach them Your word, which is truth." (John 17:17)

We should always carefully consider the source of any information. Can we trust the origin? No book, newspaper, magazine, television program or person is infallible. The Word of God is the only source 100 percent reliable for pure, unadulterated truth. If something contradicts the Bible, we can be sure that it's as wrong as the first headline on the November 3, 1948, edition of the *Chicago Daily Tribune*.

--Beecher Hunter