

TALKS FOR GROWING CHRISTIANS TRANSCRIPT

John 19: 1-16: The Lord's Trial Continues

1 "So then Pilate took Jesus and scourged Him. 2 And the soldiers twisted a crown of thorns and put it on His head, and they put on Him a purple robe. 3 Then they said, "Hail, King of the Jews!" And they struck Him with their hands. 4 Pilate then went out again, and said to them, "Behold, I am bringing Him out to you, that you may know that I find no fault in Him." 5 Then Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. And Pilate said to them, "Behold the Man!" 6 Therefore, when the chief priests and officers saw Him, they cried out, saying, "Crucify Him, crucify Him!" Pilate said to them, "You take Him and crucify Him, for I find no fault in Him." 7 The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and according to our law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God." 8 Therefore, when Pilate heard that saying, he was the more afraid, 9 and went again into the Praetorium, and said to Jesus, "Where are You from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. 10 Then Pilate said to Him, "Are You not speaking to me? Do You not know that I have power to crucify You, and power to release You?" 11 Jesus answered, "You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above. Therefore the one who delivered Me to you has the greater sin." 12 From then on Pilate sought to release Him, but the Jews cried out, saying, "If you let this Man go, you are not Caesar's friend. Whoever makes himself a king speaks against Caesar." 13 When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus out and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called The Pavement, but in Hebrew, Gabbatha. 14 Now it was the Preparation Day of the Passover, and about the sixth hour. And he said to the Jews, "Behold your King!" 15 But they cried out, "Away with Him, away with Him! Crucify Him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar!" 16 Then he delivered Him to them to be crucified. Then they took Jesus and led Him away.

Background Notes

In verse 1 we read that Pilate, the Roman Procurator, took Jesus and scourged Him. A Roman scourging or flogging was carried out using a whip of multiple leather thongs, with pieces of metal or bone embedded in the ends of the leather thongs. Men were known to have died after being scourged. Beatings administered by the Jews were limited to 39 strikes, but Roman floggings were not. Pilate hoped to appease the Jews by having Jesus scourged, and then he planned to release Him. But the Jews wanted no compromise -- they wanted Jesus crucified.

The Roman soldiers mocked and made fun of Jesus Christ as the King of the Jews. They were not only mocking Him personally, but showing their contempt for the Jews in general. Little did they realize, when they placed the crown of thorns on our Lord's head, it was

symbolic of our Lord taking upon Himself the curse for sin. The thorn symbolized the curse, and our Lord wore a crown of thorns so that we might someday wear a crown of glory! In verse 13 we read that this trial took place at the pavement, or Gabbatha. This may have been part of the Fortress of Antonia, which was located at the northwest corner of the Temple complex. A Roman pavement can be seen today at the site of the Fortress. In fact, inscribed on this pavement is a Roman game called the "Game of the King." The soldiers may have been playing this game as they mocked the Lord as King of the Jews, as they twisted a crown of thorns and put it on His head, and as they put a purple robe on Him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!"

Twice we see that Pilate declared Jesus Christ was innocent: "*I find no fault in Him...*"(v4) and "*I find no fault in Him*"(v6). When the Jews saw that they couldn't get the Lord crucified for being a threat to Rome, they reverted to the religious charge. "*The Jews answered him, 'We have a law, and according to our law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God'*"(v7). In verse 8 we read that this statement made Pilate even more afraid. Why? Maybe he was troubled about Jesus' true nature – remember that Pilate's wife had a dream about Jesus, and she had warned her husband to have nothing to do with this just or righteous man. "*While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent to him, saying, 'Have nothing to do with that just Man, for I have suffered many things today in a dream because of Him'*"(Matthew 27:19). As a result, Pilate wanted to release Jesus (v12), but he capitulated to the pressure of the Jews when they cried out: "*If you let this Man go, you are not Caesar's friend. Whoever makes himself a king speaks against Caesar*"(v12). Pilate couldn't handle this political threat. Pilate knew that if he couldn't handle the Jews, that he would be removed from power by the Emperor Tiberius. So Pilate delivered Jesus over to be crucified.

In verse 11, the Lord Jesus said to Pilate "*You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above. Therefore the one who delivered Me to you has the greater sin.*" To whom was the Lord referring when He said "the one who delivered Me to you"? Most likely He meant Caiaphas, the Jewish high priest who delivered Jesus over to Pilate. Caiaphas' sin was greater because, as the Jewish high priest, he knew the Messianic predictions in the Hebrew Scriptures -- but he still refused to recognize the possibility that Jesus was the Messiah. Jesus had claimed to be the Messiah, and backed up those claims with His miraculous works, but Caiaphas, the nation's high priest and leader, refused to acknowledge and recognize the possibility that Jesus was the Messiah. The rest of the religious leaders followed him.

Doctrinal/Teaching Points

1. Pilate did not realize the profound truth of his statement, "Behold the Man!"

Verse 5: "*Then Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. And Pilate said to them, 'Behold the Man!'*"

In the old city of Jerusalem today there is an arch called the "Ecce Homo" arch, meaning "Behold the Man!" arch. This arch is located near the spot where the Fortress of Antonia stood, and supposedly marks the spot where Pilate made this statement. We can't be sure whether or not this is the actual site, but we **can** be sure that Pilate didn't realize the profound truth of his statement, "Behold the Man!" Pilate probably made this statement with sarcasm and contempt toward Jesus, as well as toward the Jews.

Little did Pilate realize that a profound truth was expressed in that statement, "Behold the Man!" Here was **the** "Man amongst men." Here was the **perfect** Man, the only perfect Human ever in history. The Jews accused Jesus of being a mere man who claimed to be God. The truth is that Jesus is the eternal Son of God who had become Man -- the perfect Man. He never ceased to be God, but He became Man in order to die. The penalty of sin

was death. The Redeemer had to be human in order to die, but He had to be the perfect, sinless human to be able to pay the penalty for sin. Jesus was the perfect Man. Pilate didn't realize the profound truth of his statement, "Behold the Man!" Have you realized the profound truth of that statement, "Behold the Man!" Have you accepted Jesus Christ as the Son of God who became Man to die for your sins? Have you beheld The Man?

2. Pilate did not realize the profound truth of his statement, "Behold your King!"

Verse 14: *"Now it was the Preparation Day of the Passover, and about the sixth hour. And he said to the Jews, "Behold your King!"*

Again, Pilate probably made this statement with sarcasm and contempt toward Jesus, and especially toward the Jews. Remember, the Lord was standing there with a crown of thorns on His head and the purple robe on His bleeding body. Pilate certainly would not have seen Jesus as a threat to Rome -- but Pilate didn't realize the profound truth of His statement, "Behold your King!" Standing before him was not only the true King of the Jews, but the **King of Kings, the King of the Universe!**

One day Pilate will be forced to recognize that fact, and bow his knee to Christ. And what about those people who cried out, *"Crucify Him!"* and *"We have no king but Caesar!"*? They, too, will be forced bow the knee and recognize Christ as the King. Philippians 2:10-11 says that *"at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."*

Have you realized the truth of that statement, "Behold your King?" Is Jesus Christ your King? Have you yet bowed your knee to Jesus Christ as King?

Practical Application

Don't play politics with the truth.

Pilate knew that truth. He knew that Jesus was innocent -- he emphatically declared, "I find no fault in Him." But Pilate played politics with the truth.

No wonder we read in verse 19 that Jesus gave Him no answer. The Lord doesn't answer those who compromise the truth for their own selfish reasons. Pilate lacked the moral courage to release an innocent man. When the Jews cried out, *"If you let this Man go, you are not Caesar's friend. Whoever makes himself a king speaks against Caesar"* Pilate capitulated to the political pressure, and delivered Jesus up to be crucified. Pilate played politics with the truth.

Recently our president made a terrible decision because he played politics with the truth. He vetoed the bill that Congress had overwhelmingly passed to ban partial birth abortions. The president certainly knows the truth about this horrible procedure, in which a viable baby is delivered except for its head, and then it is killed before it can be fully delivered. The president certainly knows that all this talk about the health of the mother is not a true factor. He knows that this procedure is infanticide. But the president played politics with the truth. His terrible decision was made for votes. How awful! How horrible! How sad!

Do we play politics with the truth? All of us would probably say that we would never play politics with the truth -- and let's hope we wouldn't! But what about the "politics" that we might play in our church or in our fellowship or at our workplace? Is some innocent person being hurt right now because you are "playing politics" with the truth? Don't play politics with the truth!

