

## ***John 19 – Behold the Man, Behold your King***

Setting: From the time Christ spent with his disciples in the upper room, to Judas' betrayal, to Peter's denial, to Jesus' Jewish trial, to him being delivered to Pilate, there has been so much going on in this short window in time. There was so much that happened to Jesus BEFORE the cross, that we probably naturally just skip to the crucifixion and resurrection without examining what went on to lead up to this.

Remember from last week in the trail of Jesus I said that the backdrop of everything that has been going on in the life of Christ is a bloody cross that awaits him. The anger that the Jews had for Christ is very evident leading up to tonight's text. Also, the cowardly act of a Pagan ruler is clear in tonight's text as well. Christ is charged as a blasphemer, and it is said that "he deserves to die". This really was the greatest miscarriage of justice in the history of humanity. Given the choice of Jesus or Barabbas, the crowd chooses the guilty Barabbas over the guiltless Christ.

### **John 19:1-16** - Read

Intro:

As we begin Chapter 19 of John's gospel, we begin to reach the pinnacle of the greatest story in the history of the world. Everything we know and have learned about Christianity rests on what is about to happen in Chapter 19. At the Fall in Genesis chapter 3 we saw the fall of man. Through willful disobedience Adam and Eve broke the law of God and the punishment as we all know, is death. So death came to all of us. God being gracious gave us the promise of Genesis 3:15 when speaking to the serpent "I **will put enmity between you and the women, and between your offspring and her offspring, he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.**" The problem of sin is very evident all throughout the Old Testament and we are constantly seeing the scriptures point to Christ! We read about the prophecies of the one who will come and save his people from their sins. Chapter 19 takes us into the culmination of what Christ endured leading to his cross at Calvary.

As this scene unfolds, we see the progression from bad to worse. Even though all these events were predetermined to happen we can't ignore that brutality that progresses here, and the evil that is in the hearts of those that bring forth these acts on our Savior. Steve Lawson said regarding this passage of scripture "Here we see mankind at its worst, and Jesus at his best." As with all other men and women we have read about, we see clearly that they all fall short of God's glory (as we all do), but this man was unlike

any other man, he was and is perfect and he heroically does not fall short of God's glory. Let's study,

## **1) PILATE'S DILEMA**

Pilate has already declared in John 18 "I find no guilt in him", yet here we see him still caring out the senseless abuse of Jesus. The crowd were thirsty for the blood of Christ and Pilate, who is likely confused, chooses to abuse Jesus anyways. He had given the option to release Jesus because he did not believe him to be guilty. The crown of thorns and the purple robe was placed on him. I think sometimes we can only picture the PG version of what Christ looked like as he is beaten and bloodied, but if we could really have saw, we would know it was much worse. As Jesus is brought out before the crowd Pilate declares "Behold the man!" as later he would say "Behold your King!". Would this beaten man they were beholding change their mind on what they wished to be done to him? No, we know that no one batted an eye to think otherwise.

Pilate's conscience is troubled. It is clear that he wants to be fair because he knows Jesus is innocent, but at the same time he wants to keep the peace. Thinking that this scourging of Jesus would maybe satisfy the Jewish crowd, Pilate goes before the crowd again and again states that he finds no guilt in him. They crowd still cries out to Crucify Him!

We have to be careful not to paint Pilate as some kind of guiltless noble man, and the Jews as the only bad guys here. Yes, Pilate knew Christ was no guilty and even appealed to the people for his release, but he still proceeds to be personally involved and oversee the beating of a man he knows is innocent. His conscience was no doubt condemning him, but he is very much a coward in his actions.

The Spirit of God opens the eyes and enables us to see Christ for who he truly is. Pilate's eyes had not been opened he is obviously unstable.

## **2) WE HAVE A LAW!**

**(LEV 24:16) Whoever blasphemes the name of the Lord shall surely be put to death. All the congregation shall stone him. The sojourner as well as the native, when he blasphemes the Name, shall be put to death.**

**(ROM 2:23) You who boast in the law dishonor God by breaking the law.**

- How fitting this scripture is in this situation. Christ didn't pretend to be the Son of God, which would have been worthy of the judgement, but HE IS the Son of God.

To have a real charge against Christ that would be worthy of punishment the Jewish leaders have to give a real reason for this judgement to actually stick. The charge of blasphemy was one worthy of death. Pilate recognizes from what they are saying that a charge could be brought against him which leads Pilate to turn to Christ again questioning and leads us into our 3<sup>rd</sup> part tonight

**3) PILATE'S AUTHORITY**

- **Will you not speak to me?**
  - i) Jesus's silence reminds us of the prophecy in Isaiah 53 the describes Jesus as a sheep before the shearers, yet he opened not his mouth.
- **Do you not know that I have authority to release you and authority to crucify you?**
  - i) Pilate was shocked that the Lord wouldn't even so much as oblige his questioning. Who did this man think he was? You can imagine Pilate saying something along the lines of "Come on man I've been trying to help you out here, and this is how you act?" You can sense the tension here from Pilate, it seems as if he is growing frustrated. How cowardly of a man he was, to know of Christ's clear innocence but continue to wrestle with what to do. Without the providence of God, Pilate would not have even been in the position he was in.
    - (a) Romans 13:1 tells us about governing authorities **"Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God."**
- (Yes- Good rulers, bad rulers, and everywhere in between, have been instituted by God.) Sometimes I personally sit and wonder, why in the world does this person have any authority at all? They can barely finish a sentence. But then I'm reminded that God's purposes are not always clear to me, and that His ways are higher than mine. His thoughts are higher than my thoughts. When looking at it in this light, we see that God had providentially allowed Pilate to be the person proceeding over this trial at

this place and at this time. Was it by accident or anything Pilate had done to bring himself to power? Nope! God's divine plan was playing out. We're left in awe when we think of God's power. He even uses those that seem destined to go against his will and purpose to bring about his perfect plan.

### Lets talk about pride for a few minutes

- What do we know about pride according to the scriptures?  
**Proverbs 16:18** says **“Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.”**

We have been given several good reminders of men in chapter 18 leading into this text in chapter 19 who were no doubt prideful men.

(Judas, Peter, Annas, Caiaphas, Pilate) These men all showed instances that they believed themselves to be wiser than God. As all of the men I just mentioned took things into their own hands we see that contrasted with Jesus who trusted in the Sovereign will of his father. As all of those men boasted and were puffed up, Christ – the only one who has literally anything to rightfully boast about, remains the humble servant who bows to his Father's will, washes his followers' feet, and dies for those that believe in him. Wow, that should knock the pride right out of any of us.

My prayer for me and for all of us as a congregation is “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord”. We all have the tendency to be prideful at times, but that is something we MUST keep in subjection. \*\*\*We cannot glorify God in our bodies if we boast at all in our “power” or “authority” of just how “good of job” we’ve done. \*\*\* God gives us the ability and puts us in the places and the positions we are in for one reason, and that is so that he may be glorified.

### What do we know about Jesus in this situation?

I'm reminded of **John 12:27** in reading about this exchange with Pilate. John 12 Jesus said **“Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? ‘Father, save me from this hour’? But for this purpose, I have come to this hour.”**

(b) Jesus would not speak up to try and overthrow the judgement against him, nor would he plead his innocence (although he could have, and

been completely correct – he was innocent), but that is not what he was there to do!

Wycliffe's commentary very simply but powerfully puts it like this "**Pilate was powerless to do anything other than carry out the will of God in this case**"!

Pilate, Annas, Caiaphas were, without a doubt, men that wielded power, but God is the giver of power and authority. Let those who serve in positions of power take heed lest they fall also.

Philippians 2:9-11 says "Therefore God has highly exalted **him** and bestowed on **him** the name that is above *every name*, so that at the name of **Jesus** every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that **Jesus Christ is Lord**, to the glory of God the Father."

**Therefore he who delivered me over to you has the greater sin.**

What does this mean?

- Pilate was making this judgement, yes, but those that delivered Christ were the experts in the law. They should know the things of God more than this pagan ruler would have. Those that have been given the knowledge of God's word up to this point.
  - Caiaphas was a student of the law, yet still delivered Christ to be crucified
  - Judas was with Christ and spent 3 years with him during his earthly ministry, yet betrayed him for 30 pieces of silver.
- So Pilate is a good man then right? After all he does seek to release Jesus.
  - The answer is no. Pilate is just as depraved as the chief priest and every other person who's will is bent against God. Jesus said the one who delivered him to Pilate had the "greater sin". He didn't say the one who delivered me to you had the greater sin, but you are good to go Pilate. No, by no means, does Christ absolve Pilate's guilty. Pilate is guilty and reading about him wrestling with this decision just clarifies that even more...His own conscience was condemning him.

#### 4) CEASAR OVER JESUS

- After Jesus made his statement about him that delivered him having the greater sin, scripture tells us that “From then on Pilate sought to release him”. BUT.....This is were any bit of “morality” Pilate was holding on to falls apart. The Jews said if you do this, you are not Caesar’s friend! If this man Jesus was really thought to be a king he could be a threat to Caesar, and Pilate, you don’t want to do that do you? Pilate was straddling the fence, wrestling with Jesus’ innocence, appeasing the Jews, and being Caesar’s friend.

It is crystal clear that to be in agreement with God, means that we will be in disagreement with the world. John wrote about the love for the “world system” in 1 John 2:15-17, he said:

**“Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life[a]—is not from the Father but is from the world. And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.”**

Caesar was very much a picture of the “world system”. But what does that scripture tell us?

##### **The world is passing away**

- Anna’s power passed away, Caiaphas’s power would pass away, yes even Caesar’s power would pass away, but God has not lost one ounce of his power. Not during this dark time in humanity we are studying, not in the trouble times that were ahead for Jesus’ disciples, not in the current messed up world that we live in, not ever!

I saw a picture not long ago that said:

**“Caesar is now a salad dressing, and Jesus is still the king.”** I laughed when I read that but then let out a big Baptist Amen!

#### 5) THE DELIVERED KING

Pilate had heard all that he was going to hear at this point. He brings Jesus out and says “Behold your King!” These Jews had been promised and prophesied to about this coming King Jesus, but as he stands before them beaten to a bloody pulp they, with blinded eyes and hardened hearts cry out “We have no king but Caesar”. What a shame that the only man that could bring salvation to them, and the whole reason this religion was rejected. How ironic but also beautiful is it that it was the “day of the preparation of the Passover”. Christ, who we know is the “Lamb of God” is slaughtered on this day, who, as scripture says takes away the sin of the world. Wow, only God could orchestrate such tragedy and such victory using the exact same means!

### **THOUGHTS IN CLOSING**

#### **What can we take away from reading this?**

- 1) Jesus is perfect and sinless. Pilate from his own mouth declared this on so many occasions in these scriptures that we would have just shut our bible to ignore it.
- 2) We do not boast in the Law. While the Law is good, we boast in Christ who didn't do away with the Law but fulfilled it.
- 3) Authority matters. Without it we would all be these self-governing crazies running around doing what is right in our own eyes. The point of Authority is to realize that Christ has all power and all authority and everything we do in our lives is in subjection to HIS authority.
- 4) Simply, Jesus is King. Not Caesar, Not anyone who has ever or will ever sit in a position of power, Christ Alone is King.
- 5) Christ was willing delivered on behalf of wicked sinners that hated him. Those of us who believe trust in His work alone for our salvation, praise him for this. Those who have not turned from their sins and trusted in him alone are still trusting in some other King. It may not be Caesar, or your local political party, or our President, but often have sat themselves on that throne, and are trusting in that. Please don't put your trust there. What will we see as we continue to study through the John's Gospel? The Love of God displayed in Jesus