John 18:29-40 | Sunday November 17, 2024

Annas questioning Jesus was the first of His six trials. In the face of the scrutiny Jesus remained faithful, while Peter was outside denying Christ. Jesus was showing the depth of His perfect obedience and Peter was showing how weak we are as humans. What happened to Peter was not unique to Him but shows us our own sin nature. We are weak sinners who need to rest in our perfect Savior.

John 18:27-40 ESV

> (27) Peter again denied it, and at once a rooster crowed.
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> (28) Then they led Jesus from the house of **Caiaphas** to the governor's headquarters. **It was early morning.** They themselves **did not enter the governor's headquarters,** so that they would not be defiled, but could eat the Passover.
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> (29) So Pilate went outside to them and said, “What accusation do you bring against this man?”
> (30) They answered him, “If this man were not doing evil, we would not have delivered Him over to you.”
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> (31) Pilate said to them, “Take Him yourselves and judge Him by your own law.” The Jews said to him, “It is not lawful for us to put anyone to death.”
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> (32) This was to fulfill the word that Jesus had spoken to show by what kind of death He was going to die.
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> (33) So Pilate entered his headquarters again and called Jesus and said to Him, “Are you the King of the Jews?”
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> (34) Jesus answered, “Do you say this of your own accord, or did others say it to you about Me?”
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> (35) Pilate answered, “Am I a Jew? Your own nation and the chief priests have delivered you over to Me. What have You done?”
>
> (36) Jesus answered, “My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But My kingdom is not from the world.”
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> (37) Then Pilate said to Him, “So you are a king?” Jesus answered, “You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to My voice.”
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> (38) Pilate said to him, “What is truth?” After he had said this, he went back outside to the Jews and told them, “I find no guilt in Him.
>
> (39) But you have a custom that I should release one man for you at the Passover. So do you want me to release to you the King of the Jews?”
>
> (40) They cried out again, “Not this man, but Barabbas!” Now Barabbas was a robber.

After Annas, Jesus is then tried by Caiaphas (Mat 26:57-68), and then by what appears to be the whole Sanhedrin (Mat 27:1-2). John does not describe these trials. The Jewish leaders then brought Jesus to Pilate. If He were to die on a cross they needed Pilate. The hypocrisy is glaring, as this trial happens outside so they can remain ceremonially pure.

Pilate was the procurator meaning it was His job to ensure Romans law and Order in Israel. He normally lived up in the north at the coastal town of Caesarea because it had a beautiful climate. He would travel to Jerusalem for the Passover to make sure the Jews stayed in order. Pilate hated the Jews and had a history with them. One incident was during the first year of his reign when during the night He brought Roman flags and images into Jerusalem. The Jews rebelled and demanded they be removed. Pilate had a ambush waiting for the protestors and surrounded the Jewish leaders threatening to kill them if they did not back down. Josephus describes the Jews response "But they threw themselves upon the ground, and laid their necks bare, and said they would take their death very willingly, rather than the wisdom of their laws should be transgressed." (Antiq. 18.3.1). Pilate eventually relented. There are many stories like this. This was not the first time the Jewish leaders and Pilate had interacted. He had been in power less than 7 years before Jesus stood before Him.

John 18:29 ESV

> (29) So Pilate went outside to them and said, "**What accusation do you bring against this man?"**

Verse 28 mentioned it was early morning, this was at daybreak, **between 3-6 AM**. He is already disgruntled with them and wants to know what they want now, what did they have against this man? The Jewish leaders had to ask Pilate for the Roman guards they used in the garden. He knew they were going to arrest Jesus. He had tried to appease them by letting the soldiers go with them but the situation keeps snowballing.

John 18:30 ESV

> (30) They answered him, "If this man were not doing evil, **we would not have delivered Him over to you."**

They try to use their reputation and get Pilate to just go with the flow. They wanted Pilate to just trust Jesus needed to die and not ask many questions. Instead He opens His own trial and wants to know what the accusation is.

Matthew 27:18 ESV

> (18) For he knew that **it was out of envy** that they had delivered Him up.

Pilate knew these leaders hated Jesus. Yet he needed to be careful not to upset them.

John 18:31-32 ESV

> (31) Pilate said to them, "Take Him yourselves and judge Him by your own law." The Jews said to him, "**It is not lawful for us to put anyone to death."**
>
> (32) This was to fulfill the word that Jesus had spoken **to show by what kind of death He was going to die.**

The Jews had convicted Jesus of Blasphemy. In Jewish law this meant stoning a person. We see a Jewish mob carry this out in Acts 7 when they stoned Stephen. **The Jews wanted Pilate to execute Jesus so that He would be killed on a cross.** Even as evil men plotted and tried to do the worst things they could imagine to Jesus **everything was unfolding to God's plan. God can work through evil and is not responsible for the evil**. Jesus taught many times that He had to be killed on the cross. He was to be lifted up as the snake in the wilderness (John 3:14). None of His bones could be broken just like the Passover lamb, (Ex 12:46). The Jewish leaders wanted Jesus to

be cursed by God.

Deuteronomy 21:22-23 ESV

> (22) "And if a man has committed a crime punishable by death and he is put to death, **and you hang him on a tree,**
>
> (23) his body shall not remain all night on the tree, but you shall bury him the same day, **for a hanged man is cursed by God.** You shall not defile your land that the LORD your God is giving you for an inheritance.

Ancient governments would use impalement of criminals to serve as a gruesome billboard for how law and order worked in that city. Their death served as a warning. Being killed and displayed this way was a curse by God. Even this fulfilled God's purpose.

Galatians 3:13 ESV

> (13) Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law **by becoming a curse for us**—for it is written, **"Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree"—**

He became a curse, and accepted the wrath of God for sin. Each of these details fulfilled God's will. Not only did Jesus have to die, **but it all had to happen in specific, prophesized about ways. He had to become the curse.** The Jewish leaders knew the charge of blasphemy was not enough for Pilate to kill Jesus so instead they charge Him with being an insurrectionist, a threat to Rome.

John 18:33-35 ESV

> (33) So Pilate entered his headquarters again and called Jesus and said to Him, **"Are you the King of the Jews?"**
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> (34) Jesus answered, "Do you say this of your own accord, or did others say it to you about Me?"
>
> (35) Pilate answered, "**Am I a Jew?** Your own nation and the chief priests have delivered you over to Me. **What have You done?"**

The Jewish leaders told Pilot that Jesus was claiming to be a King therefore He was a threat to Rome. Jesus uses tremendous wisdom in answering Pilate's question. He does not lie or deny that He is a King but is careful not to incriminate Himself to Pilate. Pilate is tired of these ongoing Jewish problems and just wants this problem to go away.

John 18:35-36 ESV

> (36) Jesus answered, "**My kingdom is not of this world**. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But **My kingdom is not from the world."**

The fact is that Jesus is a King and has a very real kingdom. There are so many misunderstandings about what Jesus' kingdom will be like and how it will be accomplished. Pilate was no different He had assumptions the moment he heard Jesus talk about His kingdom. **Jesus declares that His kingdom is not of this world nor from this world.** It is not apart of the world system and **will not be accomplished through worldly means.** If it was He would not have stopped Peter from wielding the sword. There is a growing teaching that it is our job as Christians to usher in the kingdom. That we are to change this world and make it ready so Jesus can bring in His kingdom. This teaching directly violates, what Jesus just taught. **If this was true than His kingdom would be from the world and He clearly states it is not.** The kingdom is a huge concept in scripture.

As believers we have been made part of His kingdom.

Colossians 1:13-14 ESV

> (13) He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and **transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son,**
>
> (14) in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

When we trusted in Jesus we were delivered, rescued from the darkness and sin and were transferred into Jesus' Kingdom. This is true about us right now. Jesus offers us redemption and the forgiveness of sins. We are no longer defined by our sin and under the darkness judgment. We have new life in Jesus. This kingdom is not just spiritual. We must note that Jesus **does not say that His kingdom will not be in this world at all.** Jesus is in control and **He is ruling and reigning and eventually that reign will come to this earth.** His kingdom is not of/from the world but it will be in this physical world.

Daniel 7:13-14 ESV

> (13) "I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and He came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before Him.
>
> (14) And **to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom**, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him; **His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.**

God the Father, the Ancient of Days gave God the Son, Jesus the authority to rule this Kingdom. His dominion will not end and His kingdom will not be destroyed. Revelation 19:11-20:6 describes Jesus coming to usher that kingdom physically here on earth. His Kingdom is not from this world because **He brings it from heaven and makes this world submit to it.**

Revelation 20:6 ESV

> (6) Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and **they will reign with Him for a thousand years.**

Our future is so amazing! You and I as believers will ride on white horses behind our King who will establish His kingdom here on this earth. We will reign with Him for a thousand years. We make so many plans for our future, our next vacation, retirement, etc. **I want to encourage you to plan for the kingdom**. Live this life looking forward to reigning with Jesus on this earth. **His kingdom is not from the world, but for a 1,000 years it will be on this earth and Jesus is going to set every injustice right.**

1 Corinthians 15:24-26 ESV

> (24) Then comes the end, **when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power.**
>
> (25) For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet.
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> (26) **The last enemy to be destroyed is death.**

At the end of the thousand years Jesus will deliver the completed Kingdom to God the Father. At that moment Jesus has fully accomplished all He set out to do and every ruler, sin, and enemy has been fully defeated. **Death will be permanently destroyed.** Then God will set up the new heaven and new earth for us to enjoy **His kingdom, His presence for all eternity.**

John 18:37 ESV

> (37) Then Pilate said to Him, "**So you are a king?"** Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—**to bear witness to the truth**. **Everyone who is of the truth listens to My voice."**

Pilate has missed it entirely. The kingdom Jesus is talking about is grander and more magnificent than anything Pilate can imagine. Jesus came for this purpose, to bear witness to the truth. The truth about who God is and how to have a relationship with Him. The truth about how to be a part of His kingdom that the Father gave to the Son. Jesus came to share truth that He would die and His blood would let us be born again into this Kingdom. **Truth is based on God's character**. **All of this is only true if God is actually able to accomplish it.** These truths are spiritually understood. Only believers of the truth, who are in His kingdom are able to listen to His voice. This is why Pilate could not make sense of Jesus' answers. Pilate was not of the truth. He had not believed.

Matthew 13:43 ESV

> (43) Then **the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom** of their Father. **He who has ears, let him hear.**

I am so excited to find out what it means to shine like the sun! You must have a spiritual ear to hear these truths. The Holy Spirit has to teach us.

John 18:38 ESV

> (38) Pilate said to him**, "What is truth?"** After he had said this, he went back outside to the Jews and told them, "**I find no guilt in Him.**

Pilate asks one of the most profound questions in the Bible, "What is truth?" The tragic thing though is that **he does not wait for an answer**. Jesus who is the way, the truth and the life is standing in front of Pilate and he does not want to know what truth really is. This is how evil our human hearts are. **We do not want truth. We want our opinion**. We want to be the one to define the terms and how things work. **Accepting Jesus has in it a humility of accepting His truth.** Humanities issue is not that truth has not been revealed to us but that we would rather ask about it and leave before we get an answer.

Pilate declares Jesus innocent. He is a king but Pilate does not see Him as a threat to Rome. It was important that Pilate find Jesus not guilty, because the Passover lamb had to be without blemish.

Exodus 12:5 ESV

> (5) **Your lamb shall be without blemish**, a male a year old. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats,

Jesus was holy, perfect and even in these illegal trials **the perfect lamb was shown to be blemish free, ready to be offered as a sacrifice.**

John 18:39-40 ESV

> (39) But you have a custom that I should release one man for you at the Passover. **So do you want me to release to you the King of the Jews?"**
>
> (40) They cried out again, **"Not this man, but Barabbas!"** Now Barabbas was a robber.

Pilate looks for a way out and yet the Jewish leaders are relentless. They would rather have Barabbas released. Barabbas was a terrorist, murderer, an insurrectionist. Jesus was falsely

accused of being a threat to Rome, and the crowd wants a legitimate threat to Rome to be released instead. Barabbas means “son of a father.” It is a tragic that we as sinners want the **“son of a father”** released and not the true **“Son of the Father.” As sinners we run from truth, as believers let us rest in the one who reveals truth to us.**

Psalm 86:11-12 ESV

> (11) **Teach me Your way, O LORD, that I may walk in Your truth**; unite my heart to fear Your name. (12) I give thanks to You, O Lord my God, with my whole heart, and I will glorify Your name forever.
