

*Pilate and Jesus*  
Mark 15:01-15  
Series: Christ our Focus

1. Introduction:

- a. The other three gospel relate the trial and crucifixion in greater detail than Mark does.
- b. In this portion of Scripture, the responsibility of persecuting Jesus shifts from the Sanhedrin to Pontius Pilate.
- c. Jesus again is marked by silence and meekness.
- d. In Mark, the accent of the crucifixion does not fall on the cruelty and brutality but on the shame and mockery of the proceedings.
  - i. Just like Gethsemane, the inner suffering supersedes the physical suffering.

2. Verse 1 –Enter the Romans

- a. The Jewish Religious leaders did not have jurisdiction over capital cases so they bring Jesus to the Romans.
  - i. Here the charges shift from blasphemy to insurrection.
- b. By bringing Jesus to the Roman, the Jewish leaders also have effectively shifted the blame from themselves to their enemies.
- c. ‘Delivered Him,’ – important word
  - i. Jesus as a victim – betrayed by human wickedness.
  - ii. Means of redemption – delivered up according to God’s purpose.

3. Verses 2-5 – Pilate

- a. Pilate as governor
- b. “Are you the king of the Jews”
  - i. Wording, “You are the King of the Jews?”
    - 1. A claim to of being the Messiah carried political ramifications for Rome.
- c. “You have said so.”
  - i. You would be wise to consider the answer.
- d. Pilate amazed –
  - i. This is not a silence of defeat, but a silence of surrender to God’s sovereignty in the passion.
  - ii. **Isaiah 53:7** He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter,

and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth.

iii. However, amazement is not the same as faith.

#### 4. Verses 6-7 – Enter Barabbas

a. Pilate decides to scuttle the case against Jesus.

i. He attempts through the proposal of a prisoner release to use Jesus to gain political favor with the crowd.

ii. Pilate possessed authority to commute or pardon the sentence of any criminal he chose.

#### 5. Verses 8-11 – Barabbas over Christ

a. Pilate attempts the prisoner release because he understands that the whole proceeding has been inspired by envy.

b. To Pilate's surprise, the religious leaders have effectively turned the crowd against Jesus and the crowd chooses Barabbas instead of Christ.

i. Barabbas is an insurrectionist and convicted murderer.

ii. You would think the choice would be clear.

c. Barabbas means – son of Abba – son of the father.

i. Irony – a convicted murderer is set free, and in his place the innocent son of the Father is condemned to death. In this prisoner exchange we see a reflection of the substitutionary understanding of the atonement.

ii. **Romans 5:8** but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

iii. **1 Peter 3:18** For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit,

#### 6. Verses 12-14 – Political expediency

a. Although Pilate knows the innocence of Jesus, politically, it is not safe to release him.

i. Here we face the issue of cost.

ii. He is willing to sacrifice an innocent man for political expediency.

iii. Pilate bears an incredible responsibility in the presence of God because he knew that Christ was innocent and was unwilling to do the right thing.

b. Ironies are present here –

- i. Pilate who asks for amnesty for Jesus, seeks it himself by 'washing his hands'
- ii. The governor is governed.
- iii. Jesus as a silent prisoner has no control and yet remains true therefore being the only free person there.

7. Verses 15 – Scourging and Crucifixion

- a. The crowd plays a major role
- b. Scourging – flogging – was a cruel and merciless preparation for crucifixion.
  - i. The prisoner was stripped and bound to a post and beaten with a leather whip woven with bits of bone or metal.
  - ii. No maximum number of strokes was prescribed.
  - iii. The scourging lacerated and stripped the flesh, often exposing bones and entrails.
  - iv. Its purposes was to shorten the duration of crucifixion, but was so brutal that some prisoners died before reaching the cross.

8. Benediction –

- a. **Colossians 2:13-14** And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, (14) by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross.