

Truth on Trial

John 18:28-40 (page 87 in the black Bibles)

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Outline

I. Pilate & the Religious Leaders (18:28-32)

II. Pilate & Jesus (18:33-38a)

III. Pilate & the Religious Leaders (18:38b-40)

I. Pilate & the Religious Leaders (18:28-32)

The Setting (v.28)

Then they led Jesus from Caiaphas into the Praetorium, and it was early; and they themselves did not enter into the Praetorium so that they would not be defiled, but might eat the Passover.

Hypocrisy: They aren't afraid to break the Law by failing to prove that Jesus has broken the Law. Their only goal is to put Jesus to death, thus revealing their inward defilement, while trying to appear as though they are scrupulous in keeping the requirements of the Law by not entering into Pilate's quarters. (See Matthew 23)

Irony: Jesus is the true Passover Lamb. They want to be able to eat the Passover but they will not embrace the true Passover Lamb and thus bring condemnation on themselves.

John 1:29 "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world." (1:36 "Behold, the Lamb of God.")

1 Corinthians 5:6-8 ("For Christ our Passover Lamb also has been sacrificed." - 5:7b)

Pontius Pilate (Matthew 27:2; Mark 15:1; Luke 23:1; Acts 3:13)

"...suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried;" (Apostles' Creed)

"...was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate." (Nicene Creed)

Pilate, ruled as Roman Governor of Judea (Matt. 27:1-2, 11, 15) from 26-36 A.D., the second longest tenure of any first-century governor in Palestine.

Now on the same occasion there were some present who reported to Him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. (Luke 13:1)

Pilate & the Religious Leaders

²⁹Therefore Pilate went out to them and said, “What accusation do you bring against this Man?”

The Religious Leaders: “If this Man were not an evildoer, we would not have delivered Him to you.”

Pilate: “Take Him yourselves, and judge Him according to your law.”

Motive: The Jews said to him, “We are not permitted to put anyone to death,”

Matthew 27:18 - “For [Pilate] knew that because of envy they had handed Him over.

The Jews, by taking Jesus to Pilate are hoping that He will be crucified to show that He is cursed by God (Galatians 3:10-14), but in doing so are fulfilling the words of Jesus.

The apostle John: ³²to fulfill the word of Jesus which He spoke, signifying by what kind of death He was about to die.

John 3:14-15 – “As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; so that whoever believes will in Him have eternal life.”

John 12:32-33 – “And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself.” But He was saying this to indicate the kind of death by which He was to die.”

Pilate & Jesus (18:33-38a)

Pilate: “Are You the King of the Jews?”

A title used by Pilate a number of times about Jesus.

Jesus: “Are you saying this on your own initiative, or did others tell you about Me?”

Pilate: “I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests delivered You to me; what have You done?”

Jesus:

“My kingdom is not of this world.

If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting so that I would not be handed over to the Jews;

but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm.”

John 3:31 – “He who comes from above is above all, he who is of the earth is from the earth and speaks of the earth. He who comes from heaven is above all.”

John 8:23 – “And He was saying to them, “You are from below, I am from above; you are of this world, I am not of this world.”

Pilate: “So You are a king?”

Jesus: “You say *correctly* that I am a king.

For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world,

to testify to the truth.

To testify (John 5:30-40) to the Truth - John 4:23-24; 8:31-32

John 14:6 – “Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.”

John 17:17 – “Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth.”

Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.”

John 10:27 – “My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.”

Pilate’s Response: “What is truth?”

For Pilate truth was what was expedient and pragmatic.

When the truth is not founded upon God, Jesus Christ or His word people can look to justify whatever they want just like Pilate in vv. 32-33.

Pilate suppresses the truth – **Romans 1:18-23, 25**

Pilate & the Religious Leaders

Pilate: “I find no guilt in Him. (See also 19:4, 6)

³⁹“But you have a custom that I release someone for you at the Passover; do you wish then that I release for you the King of the Jews?”

The Jews: “Not this Man, but Barabbas.”

The Apostle John informs us that, “Barabbas was a robber.”

Matthew 27:16 “a notorious prisoner”

Mark 15:7 “committed murder and insurrection.”

Luke 23:18-19 “thrown into prison for an insurrection and for murder.”

Acts 3:14 “a murderer”

The Jesus, whom Pilate declares 3 times to innocent, is condemned and Barabbas, who is clearly guilty is set free.

Conclusion:

What is truth?

In God is where we find truth; in His word and most clearly in Jesus Christ. All searching for truth must begin with God as seen in Jesus Christ as revealed in His word.

2 Corinthians 4:3-6

If we are of the truth, Jesus said we will hear (and obey) his voice (i.e., God’s word).

The beauty of the Gospel is clearly seen in the releasing of Barabbas and the condemnation of Jesus. Christ Jesus died for guilty sinners.

2 Corinthians 5:21