

The Question I Must Answer

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- [0 : 0 0] Let us now turn to the New Testament, to the Gospel according to Matthew chapter 27.
- The Gospel according to Matthew chapter 27, reading out verse 11. And Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor asked him, saying, Art thou the king of the Jews?
- And Jesus said unto him, Thou sayest. And when he was accused of the chief priests and elders, he answered nothing. Then Pilate said unto him, Hearest thou not how many things they witness against thee?
- And he answered him, To never a word, insomuch that the governor marveled greatly. Now at that feast the governor was wont to release unto the people a prisoner, whom they would.
- And they had then a notable prisoner called Barabbas. Therefore when they were gathered together, Pilate said unto them, Whom will ye that I release unto you?
- [1 : 3 2] Barabbas, or Jesus, which is called Christ. For he knew that for envy they had delivered him. When he was sat down on the judgment seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man?
- For I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him. But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask Barabbas and destroy Jesus.
- The governor answered and said unto them, Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you? They said, Barabbas.
- Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do then with Jesus, which is called Christ? They all say unto him, Let him be crucified.
- And the governor said, Why? What evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, saying, Let him be crucified. When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but rather that rather a tumult was made, he took water and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person.
- [2 : 5 7] See ye to it. Then answered all the people and said, His blood be on us and on our children. Amen. And may God bless to us that reading from his truth.
- Let us again sing to his praise from Psalm 89 at verse 25. Psalm 89 verse 25. God bless.
- His hand and power shall reach afar. I'll set it in the sea. To his right hand established shall in the rivers be.
- Thou art my Father, he shall cry. Thou art my God alone. And he shall say, Thou art the rock of my salvation. I'll make him my firstborn.
- more high than kings of any land. My love I'll ever keep for him. My covenant fast shall stand. His seed I by my power will make forever to endure.
- [4 : 0 7] And as the days of heaven, his throne shall stable be on shore. These verses in Psalm 89, verse 25, sinners will never know where gdzie we haveibi ily sp direito.
- The■■■ie Christian Christian Christian. Holy cow, a song of the earth over theriver.

In the planets, I seize forsaken ne Diego's land, And just my child, His dafür shall fill my primeiro dream.

The researchers and bi Brady The dark my God now Lord And He shall see the dark the broad From my salvation A naked eye Firstborn, O God Thine feet is so pain he loves My love I'll never keep

For Him my covenant Shall sound The sea by light My blood will be Forever to enter And as the lips of heaven Is good just ever be And sure Let us now turn to the passage that we read The Gospel according to Matthew

[7 : 05] Chapter 27 And we may read again at verse 22 Pilate saith unto them What shall I do then with Jesus Which is called Christ What shall I do then with Jesus Which is called Christ This chapter sets before us the events Preceding the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ Matthew tells us In the very opening verse of this chapter How the Jewish Sanhedrin, the Council Formalized their earlier decision By meeting in the morning To confirm the decision Recorded by Matthew

In chapter 26 And at verse 66 What think ye? They answered and said He is guilty of death And we are told that in that context The high priest tore his robes Saying He hath spoken blasphemy What further need have we of witnesses?

Behold now ye have heard his blasphemy And so the decision was Of the Sanhedrin That Jesus deserved to die And so Matthew tells us In verse 2 of this chapter Of which we read part When they had bound him They led him away And delivered him to Pontius Pilate The governor Matthew's record is then interrupted By his account Of Judas Iscariot's Final moments in life And the trial narrative of Jesus Is resumed in verse 11 And Jesus stood before the governor You find that Matthew's account Is more condensed Than the account that is given

By the gospel writer John Where there is a fuller account Given Of the more formal hearing In the presence of the Roman governor Pilate Who acts as the presiding magistrate So we have Pilate Asking of the people this question What shall I do then With Jesus Who is called Christ And I'd like just to highlight Three thoughts From our text today First of all The person in question Christ Secondly The problem highlighted What shall I do then With the person Who is called Christ And thirdly

The plan pursued To decide how to deal With the problem That is highlighted Firstly then The person in question And the question What shall I do with Jesus Who is called Christ In the You may remember In the very first chapter Of this gospel We are introduced To the birth Of this person You remember How a man called Joseph Wrestled with the information That his betrothed Mary That she was pregnant When His mother Mary Had been betrothed To Joseph Before they came together She was found To be with child From the Holy Spirit And Matthew goes on To tell us How Joseph Was unwilling To put her to shame

[11 : 38] And he resolved To divorce her quietly But as he pondered These things And wrestled With the problem In his mind We are told An angel of the Lord Appeared to him In a dream And gave him Advice And Joseph Accepted the advice Because he was told That Mary Would bear a son And you shall call His name Jesus For he will save His people From their sins And it says much About the character Of Joseph That he stood By Mary At that time It says much About his relationship With the Lord Himself And how he trusted Implicitly In the advice That came to him Directly from the Lord Via the angel The name Jesus Means the Lord

Is salvation And by coming Into the world Jesus came As Joseph Was informed To save his people From their sins He saves And he delivers And during His short lifetime He displayed His marvelous care He gave food To the hungry He healed the sick He comforted The broken hearted And at the root Of all Disorders in life Is sin And the greatest Disorder Of all Is to be at Enmity with God And Jesus saves Even from that How does he do it?

By he himself Suffering In the room And place Of sinners That's why The psalmist Can write O Israel Hope in the Lord What was the basis For hope in the Lord?

For with the Lord There is Steadfast Or unfailing love And with him Is plenteous Or full Redemption And he will Redeem Israel From all His iniquities The name Christ Means Messiah The promised Messenger That God Was to send The anointed One of God Literally Set apart By anointing And empowered By God For a task To which He was appointed Namely The salvation Of his people In the Old Testament In Israel Prophets And priests And kings Were anointed And when they were Anointed It indicated That they were Being set apart For service To God And from the Bible

It is evident That this person Christ Is also Anointed As one Who exercises The office Of prophet Priest And king Christ As the Anointed One Sets Before us That he is Divinely Chosen Divinely Empowered Therefore God Your God The psalmist Writes Psalm 45 God Has anointed You With the Oil of Gladness Beyond Your companions He was Anointed To deliver His people Anointed To bring Victory Not by Military Strength Or power He is the Prophet Anointed To speak The truth About God To reveal God But also To speak The truth About humanity And about

[15 : 49] Himself He is the Priest Anointed To offer A sacrifice To remove The guilt Of sin He is King Anointed To defeat The greatest Foe Sin And death And the Greatest Truth Is that He defeated Sin For no Man Is able To conquer Or defeat Sin He offered Himself To remove The guilt Of sin Because we Cannot Atone Or compensate For our Sin Jesus The Saviour Christ Is divinely The divinely Commissioned God Man That's the Person in Question That is set Before us Today Who is Jesus Christ He alone Is the Saviour Of sinners Christ He is God's Anointed One Did Pilate

Understand This It is Extremely Doubtful That he Did Secondly Then The problem Highlighted It comes In the Form Of a Question I don't Think anyone Could deny But that This is a Very Pointed Question Nor do I think That we Can put it To one Side And say That this Question Has not Been asked Of us I think It is Very True That every Person Here today Is answering This question In a Practical Way Every day Perhaps You are not Aware that You are Doing so But let me Put it To you That whether

We are Conscious of Answering The question Or even Thinking about It Because it's A very Pointed issue Every day Our behavior In thought Word and Deed Is in Itself An answer To the Question As to What we Are doing With God's Anointed Son The Christ Of the Gospels Now You may Be Very Indignant At being Portrayed In this Way But let Me put It like This We are Either Rejecting Him Banishing Him From our Heart Putting Him Out Of our Thoughts Not having Him In our Lives Or We are Daily Honoring Him Bowing Down Before Him In Humble Worship And Adoration Acknowledging Him To be The Lord

Of our Life Well Which Is it You can Answer the Question In the Secrecy Of your Own Heart Because You know Whether You are Honoring Him On a Daily Basis Or Whether You are Putting Him Out of Your Life And out Of your Thoughts On a Daily Basis You alone Are able To answer The question This man Pilate Is placed On the Spot But he Is not Alone And been Placed On the Spot All of Us Today Are also Been Placed On the Spot Let's Look a Little More Closely At the Problem That is Highlighted Stated In the Form Of a Question Here Is Pilate And like All Politicians He has Been Subjected To the Forces Of Lobbying You know How Lobbyists Some are

Professional Some may Be Amateur But they Are involved In trying To influence Politicians In making A decision And here You have Lobbyists Lobbying Pilate The Leading Jewish Voices Of the Day Are Clamoring For the Death Sentence For this Person Christ And Pilate Can either Give in To the Jewish Lobby And Condemn The Bound Accused Prisoner Whom They So Obviously Hate Or he Can Dismiss The Charges As Been Without Foundation And Set The Prisoner Free And this Is the Dilemma Should he Capitulate To the Siren Voices Of the Activists Very often The Activists They Shout The Loudest

[20 : 51] Should he Do as They Wish Or should He Listen To other Voices Perhaps Not Quite So First For Loud But Just As Insistent And Have Nothing To Do With The Condemnation Of This Just Man You Could Say That In This Instance On The One Hand There Was The Voice Of The World A Loud Strident Voice That Insisted That Christ Be Put To Death A Voice That Would Be Satisfied With Nothing Less Than The Death Sentence Being Passed Upon This Innocent Person You Could Say That's The Voice Of The Power Of Sin It Wishes Every Other Rival To The Heart Of Man To Be Erased It Is Absolutely

Intolerant Of Any Other View And On The Other Hand There Is The Voice Of God Through The Truth And Grace And You Know These Voices Are Here Today And They Are Clamoring For A Hearing In Your Life Many Are Of The View That A Decision Is Not Required And Certainly Not Now And Many Might Be Reasoning Like This I'm Not Opposed To Christ But I'm Not Committed To Christ Well Do You Think That It Is Possible To Perform Such A Balancing Act And To Sit On The Fence As It Were It's An Impossibility The Bible The Bible is Very Clear On That Point No One Can Serve Two Masters For Either He Will Hate The One And Love The Other Or He'll Be Devoted To

The One And Despise The Other So Here Is Pilate And He Is Behaving Like Most Politicians He's Trying To Avoid Alienating Either Side He's Trying To Carry Out A Delicate Balancing Act Well That May Be Done In Some Political Situations I Don't Know But It Cannot Be Done With Regard To This Question The Problem Highlighted What Shall I Do With Jesus Who Is Called Christ The Person In Question And Finally The Plan Pursued And There A Three Fold Action Plan And The First One The First Solution That Is Highlighted Is This Pilot

Tries To Avoid Making A Decision And You Know I Cannot But Wonder Whether That Is True Of Someone Here Today Avoiding Making A Decision With Regard To This Very Pointed Question You've Been Avoiding Doing So For Many A Year Now When You Have Heard Sermons That Are Burned Into Your Mind And Pierced Right Into The Very Core Of Your Being Bringing You Face To Face With The Very Challenging Demands Of The Truth You Would Do Anything Rather Than Come To A Decision Didn't Matter How Trivial It Might Be But Anything To Escape The Pressure That You Felt Building

Up Anything To Get Away From The Condemnation Of Your Conscience And The Whispering Of Your Heart You Would Rather Do The Most Mundane Things Than Face Up To The Issues That Really Matter The Issues Of Life And Death The Issue Of The Salvation Of Your Immortal Soul And Do You See How Pilate Reacted Initially To Avoid Coming To A Decision He Thought He Had Found The Ideal Solution Luke Tells Us Then Pilate Said To The Chief Priests And The Crowds I Find No Guilt In This Man But They Were Urgent Saying He Stares Up The People Teaching Throughout All Judea From Galilee Even To This Place And When Pilate He He Asked Whether The Man Was A Galilean And When He

[25 : 52] Learned That He Belonged To Herod's Jurisdiction He Sent Him Over To Herod Who Was Himself In Jerusalem At That Time Don't You See The Reasoning Of Pilate Jesus Is Not My Responsibility I Don't Have To Deal With Him Herod Is Responsible Now What Was That But The Classic Evasive Tactic Pilate Was The Roman Governor He Was The Guy With The Real Power And Authority On Most Issues He Would Never Have Deferred To Herod For A Decision It Was A Cop Out Here Was God Forcing The Issue Jesus Was The One Who Had Him We Had To Decide On Now Is That You Today How

Many Times Have You Adopted The Classic Cop Out Tactic Or Perhaps You Become Really Adept At Practicing This Tactic You Try To Evade The Claims Of Christ Over Your Own Life You Do All In Your Power To Turn The Arrow Of Truth Away From Yourself To Get Away From The Direct Influence Of Truth On Your Own Life The Birds Of The Earth You Remember The Parable Of The Sower And How Christ In The Parable Of The Sower Tells How The Birds Of The Earth How They Remove The Seed And The Birds Of The Earth In Whatever Form They Come Are Your Friends Removing The Seed From Your Heart You Are Conscious Of The Striving Of The Spirit But You Do All You Can To Suppress His Influence You

Are Recoiling From Commitment To Christ It Is For Others But Not For You All The Excuses May Be Most Ingenious At Times But They Are Just That Excuses And You Know That They Are Just Excuses You Are Too Old Or You Are Too Young Are You Too Busy Are You Like Felix Remember Him In The Book Of Acts When The Word Of God Was So Eloquently And Powerfully Proclaimed By The Apostle Paul And When It Began To Break Through The Prejudice And The Barriers That The Human Mind Is So Adept At Creating Remember His Reaction And What He Said And As Paul Reasoned About Righteousness Self Control And

The Coming Judgment Felix Was Alarmed And Said Go Away For The Present When I Get An Opportunity I Will Summon You Classic Evasive Tactic When I Have More Time When It Is More Convenient And More Appropriate But Not Now And For Felix Sadly It Became Not Ever Not Ever Is That My Friend What You Really Want But You Know This Plan Of Evasion It Didn't Work Out For Pilate Herod Sent Christ Back To Pilate The Bible Tells Us That Herod Didn't Take Jesus Seriously At All He And His Men Treated Jesus With

Total Disdain And Derision Herod With His Soldiers Treated Him With Contempt And Mocked Him In Our First Psalm Today We Read What The Bible Has To Say About Those Who Treat God's Anointed In This Way The Kings Of The Earth Set Themselves And The Rulers Take Counsel Together Against The Lord And His Anointed Saying Let Us Burst Their Bonds Apart And Cast Away Their Cards From Us He Who Sits In The Heavens Laughs The Lord Holds Them In Derision Then He Will Speak To Them In Wrath And Terrify Them In His Fury Saying Of His Son You Shall Break Them With A Rod Of Iron And Dash Them In Pieces Like A Potter's Vessel Note The Contrast Between

[30 : 56] The Uprove And The Ceaseless Motion Of The Large Gathering Of Those Opposed To The Lord And His Anointed And The Image Of Perfect Tranquility Of The Unmoved God They Gather In Uprove But He Sits They Gather In Ceaseless Motion But He Sits And He Laughs The Laugh Of Derision At The Foolish Enmity Of Grass Upper Man And You Know Those Who Remain In Perpetual Opposition Ultimately Find Themselves In The Misery Of A Lost Eternity The Folly Of Disregarding The Sovereign Lord And

We Are Told By Luke Herod Aranium And Splendid Clothing Sent Him Back To Pilate And Herod And Pilate Became Friends With Each Other That Very Day For Before This They Had Been At Enmity With Each Other They Had Found A Common Cause And In Your Attempt To Practice Evasion Have You Become Joined To The Disbelieving Who Scorn The Claims Of Christ Are You Happy To Continue In That Way Joined To Those Who Mock The Christ Of God That Was The First Part Of The Plan And The Part Of Pilate But That

Strategy Didn't Work And So Another Strategy Had To Be Devised He Remembers A Jewish Custom Maybe This Would Be The Solution To The Problem Perhaps He Thinks I Can Shift The Responsibility Away From Myself In This Way Verse Fifteen At That Feast The Governor Was Want To Release Unto The People A Prisoner Whom They Wought Anyone Of Their Choosing Any Prisoner Whom They Wanted And The Release Of The Prisoner Was Viewed As A Token Of Goodwill On The Part Of The Governor And At That Time Matthew Tells Us There Was A Very Prominent Prisoner In Captivity His Name Was Barabbas A Notable Or A Notorious Prisoner Called Barabbas

He Was Well Known He Had Committed Murder During An Insurrection In The City Of Jerusalem It Is More Than Likely That This Man Was A Candidate For One Of The Three Crosses Along With Those Two Who Were Crucified With Jesus And His Name Interestingly Just Think Of It Remember How The Bible Uses The Name Abba For Father Bar Abba Son Of The Father And Since The Father Was A Title Given To Prominent Teachers This Man May Have Been The Son Of A Renowned Teacher And That Along With The Crime Of Murder Could Account For His Prominence For His

Notoriety Here Is A Man Pilate Invested With Authority And Power By The Roman Empire And Yet He Lets The People Decide Whom They Wish To Choose For Release Another Example Of Evasion Surely In This Instance The People Would Choose Jesus He Believed In His Heart Of Hearts That Jesus Was Innocent He Knew That It Was Out Of Envy They Had Delivered Him Up I Have Found In Him No Guilty Serving Death He Gave Them Time To To Reflect On Their Choice And They Were Not Left To Deliver It Independently Their Leaders Were Working Assiduously To Ensure That Christ Would Not Be Released The Chief Priests And The Soldiers Persuaded The Crown To Ask For Barabbas And

[35 : 58] Destroy Jesus Obviously Obviously The Arguments They Used Were Very Persuasive Their Influence Was Significant In The Decision Of The People So That The Crowd Rather Than Be Persuaded To Have Christ Released Demanded The Release Of This Prominent Insurrectionist And You See The Outcome Of The Process Of Consultation Was That Responsibility Came Back To Pilate You Know When You And I Come To Stand Before Jesus As Our Judge As We Inevitably Must We Have To Account For Our Response To The Christ Who Is Freely Offered In The Gospel

He Is Offered To Us As The Savior Of Sinners The Responsibility Is Ours And No One Else's No Other Person Can Refuse The Free Offer Of The Gospel On Your Behalf It Is Your Decision And Yours Alone Every Person Who Arrives In A Lost Eternity Is There Because Of Their Own Actions And You Know Perhaps You Are Here Today And You Can't Even Count The Number Of Opportunities He's Given You In His Infinite Mercy And Grace And If You Haven't Used These Opportunities The Fault On The Responsibility Is No

One Else's But Yours Alone But There's A Third Part To This Plan So Far It Hadn't Been Very Successful We Saw How Pilate Sent Him To Herod How He Seeks To Dodge The Issue Hoping To Evade His Responsibility And When That Didn't Go To Plan He Gives An Opportunity For Decision To The People And That Failed Miserably And Now He Tries A Third Approach Because He Knows In His Heart Of Hearts That This Person Is Innocent Of The Trumped Up Charges He Seeks To Avoid The Voice Of Conscience His Voice Added Her His Wife Added Her Voice To The Voice Of Conscience For She Had A Troubling Dream And She Sent Him A Message I Have Nothing To Do With This Righteous Man

For I Have Suffered Much Because Of Him Today In A Dream He Would Suppress These Voices And Blame The Mob He Knew What Was Right He Knew What Was Right And You Are Here Today And You Too Know What Is Right But Is It True That You Are Trampling The Truth Under Your Feet I Would Go As Far As To Say That There Is No One Here Today Who Does Not Know What Is Right But It Is One Thing To Know What Is Right It Is Another Thing To Act Upon It Do You Not Have Voices And Memories Telling You What Is Truth Could

Be The Memory Of One No Longer In This Life But Who Spoke To You Earnestly And Sincerely About These Matters And You Said Not Yet It May It May be Praying Friends Or Family Members Who Spoke To You Or About The Influence Of Upbringing And Environment It Raising Its Voice In Your Heart And Conscience Pleading With You Are You Still Intent On Trampling Under Foot And Ignoring And Suppressing Those Vices That You Have Tried To Suppress Over The Years And Still Continue To Rise

[41 : 00] In Your Heart And Mind Because If You Reject Them If You Reject Jesus That's Precisely What You Are Doing You See Jesus Himself Was Before Pilate And Jesus Is Before You Too In The Gospel Are You Going To Reject Him Again And If You Do What Guarantee Do You Have That He Will Ever Plead With You Again You Know You Just Don't Have That Guarantee And As Pilate Reflected On The Problem He Asked The Question Let's Remind Ourselves Of It Again What Shall I Do With Jesus Who Is Called Christ And So We Read

That This Man Gave Up The Quest For Justice He Was Manipulated By The Jewish Leaders Because They Knew His Weakness His Desire For Power Robbed Him Of The Power To Do Anything Constructive With The Power That He Possessed His Love Of Power Rendered Him Powerless Already He Had Several Conflicts With The Jews Any More Perhaps Could Spell An End To His Political Career Political Power Was His God He Didn't Wish To Lose His Precious God He Was Afraid To Take The Risk That Might Endanger His Position You See False Gods They Don't Make Us Strong They Make Us Weak By

Enslaving Us To The Fear Of Losing Them Let Me Ask You Friend What Is It In Your Life Today That Has Such A Hold Over You That You Are Enslaved For Fear Of Losing It Oh My Friend Is It Worth The Loss Of Your Soul What Shall It Proffer A Man Though He Gain The Whole World And Lose His Own Soul The Jewish Leaders They Renounce Jesus They Are Serving Caesar We Have No King But Caesar Oh My Friend What Are You Afraid Of Losing What Is It Do You Feel What Others Will Think Of You And

So You Have This Vivid Picture Depicted For Us By The Gospel Writer When Pilate Saw That He Could Prevail Nothing He Wasn't Gaining Anything But That A Riot A Tumult Was Beginning To Assemble He Took Water And Washed His Hands Before The Crowd I Am I Am Innocent I Am Innocent Of The Blood Of This Just Person See Ye To It And He Released Barabbas And Having Jesus Whipped Or Scourged He Delivered Him To Be Crucified Do You Believe That Pilate Was Innocent Do You Believe That Pilate Was Innocent And The Answer Must Surely Be No But Here He Is Again Trying To Deflect Attention

From Himself In The Panacea That He Adopts Blame The Jews It's Not My Fault I Really Did What I Could But My Friend Is That Not Precisely What You Are Doing Today Pretending That You Are Innocent For The Loss Of Your Soul In Rejecting Christ As Lord And Saviour Seeking To Justify Your Actions It's Not My Fault While Just As Pilate Could Not Justify His Actions Neither My Friend Can You Neither My Friend Can You If In Spite Of Every Voice Every Sermon Every Word Of Counsel Every Prayer Of Family Members Every Loving Word Of Scripture From Friends If In Spite Of All Of That You Continue To

[46 : 03] Reject The Christ Of God Your Joining Hands With The Pilate With The Herods With The Jewish Leaders Of The World Who Care More For Their Gods Than They Do For The Salvation Of Their Souls Let Me Repeat The Question What Shall I Do With Jesus Who Is Called Christ What My Friend Is Your Answer Accept Accept And Know The Power Of An Endless Life The Blessing Of Eternal Life Fellowship And Sweet Communion With Christ Reject And Know The Desolation The Darkness Of A Lost Eternity That's The Stark Alternative To Accepting The Person In Question Jesus

Christ God's Anointed Messiah The Problem Highlighted What Shall I Do What Shall I Do With Jesus Who Is Called Christ The Plan Pursued Evade Pass The Back Wash My Hands Engage In The Blame Game Oh Surely Not Will You Not Take Him Today As Your Lord And Saviour Let Us Pray Oh Eternal God You Have Asked The Question Frequently Down Through The Centuries Ever Since It Was First Posed The Question Has Been Asked Of Congregation After Congregation Of

Individual After Individual Oh May It Please Thee To Bless It Today To Even One Individual Who May Come To Receive The Lord Jesus Christ To Serve Him With A Heart Filled Devotion And The Glory Shall Be Thine In Jesus Name We Ask It Amen Amen