

Good Friday

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Preacher: BK Smith

[0 : 00] Dear Lord, Heavenly Father, just as we come before you this night, some call it the day of messianic perfection, the most blessed day, yet the most cursed day in all of history.

Father, we just thank you for the good that you have brought to us, that in why we were yet sinners, you died for us.

We give you thanks in your most holy and precious name. Amen. Please be seated. If you are new or visiting, my name is BK.

I have the pleasure of serving as one of the pastors here. For the last year, we have been going through the life of Jesus Christ.

We've been examining his life from a cultural and historical perspective, using all four Gospels to come to a deeper understanding.

[1 : 05] We've had two goals for this sermon series. One is to be affirmed in our understanding of God's Word and how wonderful it fits together as a harmony of four men from their eyewitness testimonies.

And number two, to be affirmed in the humanity of Jesus Christ. There's a lot of talk today. We lift up righteously so that Jesus Christ was Lord and God.

Amen? He is the Son of God. But at the other hand, he was still fully human, still 100% human, yet 100% God. So this morning, what I've chose to do is to kind of a dramatic reading on the relationship between Jesus and Pilate.

Just how Jesus continued to be wonderfully Jesus, even in the most, let's just say, stressful of times.

The readings I will be taking are from all of the Gospels, but if you'd like, you can open up in your Gospels to John 18-19.

[2 : 27] That is kind of the controlling chapter. But through this reading, I want to bring you in to the drama. And that's one of the words I focused on throughout this series, that the Passion Week, this Easter weekend, that we come together to sell, it was an incredible drama.

All the events weren't by accident. The words that are shared in Scripture weren't by accident, but there was a purpose to them. So let me begin.

It was early Friday morning when Jesus was taken to see Pilate. Pilate was the one who ruled under or with Rome's authority.

It was that time in the morning when the sun had not yet risen. This gray sky before the sun finally breaks free. The Sanhedrin, that is the Jewish ruling authorities, had just declared Jesus guilty and deserved the death penalty.

His crime, they said, was for declaring himself to be the Son of God. The thing is, the Jews, by being a Roman vassal state, did not have the power of execution.

[3 : 53] So they needed Rome's help in killing Jesus. So before the people of Jerusalem could awaken and know what was going on, and knowing that the Sabbath was coming, Jesus was bound and rushed over to what is called the Praetorium, the courts where Pontius Pilate would rule.

This ruling Roman governor would have the power to declare Jesus either innocent or guilty of a crime worthy of death.

The hypocrisy of the Jews was apparent right from the very beginning. When they brought Jesus to the Praetorium, they refused to enter, for it violated the Jewish law of entering into a Gentile place for fear that they would be rendered unclean.

They did not believe that having Jesus, the most innocent man who ever lived, guilty of death, with a sham trial that broke almost all Jewish protocols regarding trials, yet their conscience did not seem to be bothered by committing this most awful crime in all of human history.

Pilate, like any good judge, asked the very simple question, what accusation do you bring against this man? Hoping to avoid any attempt of any judicial proceedings, the Jewish authorities simply stated, if he were not an evildoer, we would not have delivered him to you.

[5 : 51] Pilate seemingly had no interest in trying this case. He simply told them, take him and judge him according to your law.

However, they responded that Jesus' crime deserved death, and he was only the only person in Israel to have the authority to grant such a punishment.

You see, this was perfectly prophetic. If the Jews had their way, they most likely would have stoned him according to their customs. But the Roman custom, for a rebel, for a seditionist, was the cross. This prophecy is perfectly found within the pages of Scripture, in Elijah, and most notably in Psalm 22, where this is how Jesus would need to die.

They shouted out that Jesus was perverting the nation. Pilate didn't care. They shouted out that Jesus forbid taxes to be paid to Caesar.

[7 : 00] Pilate didn't care. They finally shouted an accusation that Pilate paid attention to. Jesus said that he himself is a Christ, which is a king.

Let us not forget what time of season these events are taking place under. It is the Passover. It is the time where Rome is the most skittish because of what this season represents to the Jews.

To the Jews, it's a celebration of God's deliverance of God's people from Egypt. So much was their fear that they actually reinforced the Roman authorities' army with more men during this time than any other celebration that the Jews celebrated.

So if there was an accusation of another king, the possibility of a rebel or a rebellion, it would seem right that Pilate would want to interview the accused.

Pilate, knowing he had both the right to judge this trial, especially one that the Jews stated deserved the death penalty, he made the decision to try Jesus for himself, much to the chagrin of the Jewish authorities.

[8 : 22] So Jesus was taken into the praetorium, the courts, for this private interview with Pilate. Before the court, Jesus was brought before Pilate, and Pilate asked him a simple question.

Are you the king of the Jews? You see, Jewish law forbid the asking of a question against one who is accused.

You had the right to not self-incriminate, but in Roman law, they had the right to ask the accused.

Are you the king of the Jews? Pilate's first question gets to the quick of it, doesn't it? Are you a king? Are you a threat to Rome?

What's interesting here is that Jesus is in his full humanity. he does not read Pilate's mind.

[9 : 28] He does not know his intentions, but Jesus simply asks a question in return and says, are you speaking for yourself about this?

Or did others tell you this concerning me? In other words, are you asking me if I am the long awaited Messiah?

Or are you asking me to judge me guilty of what I have been accused? Pilate responded, am I a Jew? Your own nation and chief priests have delivered you to me.

What have you done? Translation, your people say so. Tell me, what have you done?

and notice from Pilate's words are centered on the action. What have you done? Jesus simply responds, my kingdom is not of this world.

[10 : 35] If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would fight so that I should not be delivered to be delivered to the Jews.

but my kingdom is not from here. If this were my kingdom, I would fight for it.

The clear truth is, Jesus had walked these lands of Israel for over three and a half years. There had never been no hint of a scandal of rebellion. Not one of his disciples had raised a hand against Rome.

There was no outpouring of cries that Caesar should be overthrown. Pilate, who ruled this land, was very much aware of what transpired in his governing land.

He knew there was not a hint of sedition or rebellion and he knew that Jesus had never called on his followers to resist Rome. It's important for us to understand this point.

[11 : 45] Pilate knew that Jesus had never been a threat to Rome. Knowing this, we need to understand the context for his next question.

Pilate therefore said to him, are you a king then? You see, the motives for him asking the question are no longer political.

they're personal. He wants to know. Jesus answered, and the text tells us he answered forcefully, it is rightly as you say that I am a king.

For this cause I was born and for this cause I have come into the world that I should bear witness to the truth. everyone who is of the truth hears my voice.

Pilate responded, what is truth? What is this truth? And when he had said this he went out again to the Jews and said to the chief priests in the crowd, I find no fault in this man at all.

[13:06] You can imagine the shock, dare I say, horror of Pilate's statement. They thought they had the ironclad proof that would send Jesus to his death.

They rushed through three trials to get there before Pilate in the morning to have him crucified. It was a done deal. Those that waited with this anticipation of hatred towards Jesus before the crowds could arise would have their guilty plea and have Jesus dead before the end of the morning.

And here at this time they hear Pilate, the Roman authority, clearly state, I find no fault in this man. The uproar, the enraged hatred that would have arisen in these men. The harmonized text reads, but they were more fierce, saying, he stirs up the people, teaching through all the Judea, beginning with Galilee to this place.

And while he was being accused of many things by the chief priests and elders, Jesus answered nothing. Then Pilate asked him again, saying, do you answer nothing?

[14:27] Do you not hear the things that they testify against you? But Jesus answered him not one word, so that the governor marveled greatly.

The drama takes a quick turn when he hears that Jesus is from Galilee. I don't have to judge this anymore. I'm going to send him across the way to Herod. He sends Jesus to Herod, and Herod is, for lack of a better word, a bit of a clown.

He's looking for someone to show off, and he asks Jesus to do these miracles, so that he can be entertained. Jesus does not say anything to him at all, and Herod sends him back to Pilate, arrayed in a new gorgeous robe, to show his contempt.

Once again, the innocent king Jesus is before Pilate, a man who finds no fault in him. Now, Pilate is determined to have Jesus set free, and it's important to understand the drama is increasing.

The Jews who are hoping to have a quick confession are getting frantic. Pilate turns towards the crowds. Perhaps they will see reason. In Pilate's custody is a man named Barabbas, a man who is a rebel, a murderer, a seditionist, a man deserving death.

[16:04] Pilate answered them saying, you have a custom that I should release someone to you at the Passover. Whom do you want me to release to you? Barabbas or Jesus who is called Christ?

Do you want me to release to you the king of the Jews? For he knew that the chief priest had handed him over because of envy. Adding to Pilate's anxiety of the moment, his wife had approached him and shared with him that she had a dream that Pilate should have nothing to do with this man.

Pilate said to the crowd, you have brought this man to me as one who misleads the people, and indeed, having examined him in your presence, and for the second time, Pilate says, I have found no fault in this man concerning those things of which you accuse him.

No, neither did Herod, for I sent you back to him, and indeed nothing deserving a death has been done by him.

But the chief priests and elders stirred up the crowd so that they should ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus. The governor answered and said to them, Which of these two do you want me to release to you?

[17:22] And they all cried at once, saying, Away with this man, and release to us Barabbas. Not this man, but Barabbas. Pilate answered and said to them again, What then do you want me to do with Jesus, who is called Christ, whom you call the king of the Jews?

They all cried out again and said to him, let him be crucified. Pilate, therefore, wishing to release Jesus, again called out to them, but they shouted, saying, Crucify him, crucify him.

Then he said to them a third time, Why, what evil has he done? And for the third time, he says, I have found no reason for death in him.

I will therefore chastise him and let him go. In case you didn't know, this is the perhaps rarest form of kindness one would ever want to experience.

Pilate scourged Jesus. What that means is he brought him in and would have attached him to a pole, and he had his soldiers whip him.

[18 : 45] And the whip that he would have used would have been the whip that would have metal or bone at the very ends of it. It was like a short handle with long leather straps. And the basic goal of this whipping is to open up the flesh.

Pilate even had his soldiers make a crown of thorns and push them into the skull of Jesus. Pilate then placed a robe on Jesus, a purple robe.

Jesus was then struck, beaten by the soldiers with their hands. Why was it kindness? Because Pilate brought Jesus once again before the crowds.

He presented Jesus beaten, bloodied, with pain, before the crowd demonstrated how meek and weak he was, how lowly of stature stood the Son of God that morning, as a means of demonstrating to the crowd that Jesus is no threat.

Behold, I am bringing him out to you, Pilate said, that you may know that I find no fault in him. then Jesus came out wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe and Pilate said to him, below, behold, the man.

[20 : 21] He's a man. He is of no threat. Therefore, when the chief priests and officers saw him, they were insistent and cried out all the more, demanding with loud voices, saying, crucify him, crucify him.

The exasperated Pilate said to them, you take him and crucify him, for I find no fault in him. Then the most curious of things happened.

The Jews revealed the truth as to why they wanted Jesus dead. The Jews answered him, we have a law, and according to our law, Jesus ought to die, because Jesus made himself the son of God. Therefore, when Pilate heard that saying, he was the more afraid, and went again into the praetorium and said to Jesus, where are you from?

But Jesus gave him no answer. Then Pilate said to him, are you not speaking to me? Do you not know that I have the power to crucify you, and power to release to you?

[21 : 39] Now, one of these things we don't understand sometimes is there's so much into this conversation that is taking place. Remember, the Romans did not believe in just one God.

They believed in multiple gods. So as soon as the Jews had uttered that word that Jesus was the Son of God, that would have struck in fear in the Pilate.

Is he really a god? And for fear of offending this god, this superstitious man, needed to know.

So here, Pilate knew that Jesus was not so much a seditionist, but his true crime was that he was the Son of God. Now, remember, when Pilate asked Jesus, where is he from?

He knows he's from Galilee. Do you understand that question? Where do you originate from? This is a deep question.

[22 : 45] If you are a god, do you come from Mount Olympus, wherever the Greek or Roman gods, where do you hail from? Jesus says, nothing.

The drama itself lets us in on the turmoil that now exists in Pilate's heart. And Jesus is not answering the question he fears most.

And at the same time, Jesus knows that he must go to the cross. and Pilate's role is to play his part in sending Jesus to the cross.

At this point, it's been four times that Pilate has announced that he found no fault in Jesus. He now knows that Jesus has claimed to be the Son of God.

The crowd is not wavering. They want Jesus dead. Now, I want you to pay attention to what Jesus says here. He says, you could have no power at all against me unless it had been given you from above.

[24 : 01] Many people, when they're studying this passage, believe he's speaking of God's sovereignty, that in God's sovereignty, he therefore has that position. But I do not believe that is the right thing because it makes no sense given the next statement that Jesus makes.

Jesus simply states, therefore, the one who delivered me to you has the greater sin. The one who delivered Jesus that morning was Caiaphas, the high priest.

What do I think is going on? And you may disagree, but I am swayed to think that at this point in history.

Jesus, being Jesus, is trying to let Pilate off the hook. He's revealing to him.

Jesus is comforting Pilate. And this theme we will see on Sunday will continue when Jesus is hung on the cross. Jesus' concern is not for himself but for others.

[25 : 14] He never ceases to be God in the flesh, caring for his sheep. When Jesus needed comforting, Jesus comforted disciples.

When Jesus went to the garden, angels needed to comfort him because his men couldn't even stay awake. And now here he is before Pilate who is exasperated, fearful, frustrated, at a loss what to do that this could actually be the Son of God.

and Jesus simply tells him, you're not the one responsible for this. You did not lie about me.

You did not arrest me. You did not plot to have me killed. But make no mistake, I have to die. And I have to die on the cross.

And your role in this, Pilate, is to make sure this happens. It does not say that Pilate is without sin, but Jesus made it very clear that there was one who sinned greater.

[26 : 25] Pilate, I believe, was moved by Jesus' display of love towards him. The text reads, from then on, Pilate sought to release him.

but the crowd saying, if we let this man go, you are not Caesar's friend. Whoever makes himself a king speaks against Caesar.

When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus out and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called the pavement, but in Hebrew, Gabbatha.

Now it was the preparation day of the Passover and about the sixth hour. And he said to Jesus, behold your king. But they cried out, away with him, away with him, crucify him.

Pilate said to them, shall I crucify your king? The chief priest answered, we have no king but Caesar. And the voices of these men and of the chief priest prevailed.

[27 : 32] When Pilate saw that he could not prevail at all, but rather that a tumult was rising, he took water and washed his hands before the multitude saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person.

You see to it. And all the people answered and said, his blood be on us and our children. so much so was their hatred for Jesus, the Son of God.

So Pilate wanting to gratify the crowd, gave sentence that it should be as they requested and be released to them. Barabbas, the one they requested, who for rebellion and murder had been thrown into prison.

and we know sometime before 9 a.m. on a Friday, the day before Passover, Jesus was handed over to the mob to be crucified on a cross.

If you know your history, you would know that Pilate was no friend of the Jews. In fact, he mocked them on his standard, he would put the emperor name on in Israel.

[28 : 59] Jewish authorities would never do that because the name of the emperor, the emperor called himself a god and insulted them. Pilate didn't care, he did what he wanted. When he wanted to build aqueducts, he actually took money from the Jewish treasury to build the aqueducts.

So much was his disdain for the Jews. So we ask why in 33 A.D. does Pilate now threatened by this crowd.

Well, it's interesting, history also tells us that Pilate had a sponsor in Rome and his name was Sejanus. And this man was the head of the Praetorium Guard who ruled with the emperor.

And that sponsor of his was put to death for trying to kill the emperor Tiberius. And because of this, he now knew he couldn't upset Rome because he was so close to this man Tiberius.

It's interesting when you look at the whole story, even the events that happened in Rome are affecting what's going on in Jerusalem that fateful day.

[30 : 17] that God orchestrated this plan perfectly to have his son put to death on a cross on this day.

If you turn with me to John 19, it's a curious thing. And it was standard at the time to affix a banner on top of the victim's cross, which would identify the crime of the one who was found guilty.

Some people believe that Pilate took forward this action to cause one more offense against the Jewish leaders that he despised. I believe that maybe Pilate wrote these words because he was truly convinced on that day that he was before the true truth.

And that truth, was found in Jesus Christ. So they took Jesus and he went out bearing his own cross to the place called the place of a skull, which in Aramaic is called Golgotha.

There they crucified him and with him two others, one on either side and Jesus between them. Pilate also wrote an inscription and put it on the cross.

[31 : 51] It read Jesus of Nazareth, the king of the Jews. Many of the Jews read this inscription for the place where Jesus was crucified.

It was near the city and it was written in Aramaic, in Latin, and in Greek. So the chief priest of the Jews said to Pilate, do not write the king of the Jews, but rather this man said, I am the king of the Jews.

To which Pilate answered, what I have written, I have written. Jesus, king of the Jews.

Dear Lord, heavenly father. We read those that study this relationship between Jesus and Pilate, some have labeled him a coward for not fighting against the crowd.

Some have labeled him a cynic by stating what is truth. But I believe when we look at the context and the events that are going on, I believe we meet a man who finds himself before the son of God and marvels at how he responds and who he is.

[33 : 17] That he knows the story of this man's life in Israel, that there has been no sedition, there has been no rebellion, there has not been anything that would merit the death sentence for Jesus.

My prayer is that as we look at this story for what it is, my prayer is that there may be some here who are looking for true truth, and that they would indeed find it in Jesus.

My prayer is that they would continue to seek the answers in Scripture. Pilate had the Son of God before him and asked his questions.

I don't know if his soul was satisfied on this day, but the optimist in me leads me to hope that maybe one day we would see Pilate in heaven, a child of the King.

Thank you, Lord Jesus. I don't hate with me. I don't have a cosas or Fit to and to that has a good God?

[34 : 39] For blog has taken to Apparently he said I love the or Anh was 10 in a■■■■ 4thms Oh That was a■■■ Excuse