

## **Lighthouse Bible Church**

**September 21<sup>st</sup>, 2014**

**John 18: 28 – 38**     *Scripture Reading: Luke 23: 1 - 7*

**‘I find no fault in Him’**

### **Stand – Read – Pray**

Last week you remember that we saw Jesus in the garden with His disciples and Judas and around 1000 men came with swords and clubs to arrest Him. And the soldiers did arrest Him because He gave Himself willingly to them and they bound Him and took Him to Annas for His first questioning and mock trial.

And at the same time as that was going on, we got a preview of what Peter was doing. He had followed Jesus to the house of Annas and Caiaphas, along with another disciples, possible John. John spoke to the doorkeeper, who was a servant girl, and she let Peter in. When she let him in she asked him ‘you are not also one of this Man’s disciples, are you’? And of course, as Jesus had predicted, Peter denied that He was a disciple of Jesus.

So Peter gets inside the courtyard where he can see Jesus and begins warming himself by a fire along with many of the enemies of Christ who came to arrest Him in the garden.

Then the scene, you remember, changed back to Jesus being questioned by Anna’s and he asked Jesus about His teaching and His disciples. And you remember, they had already plotted to kill Jesus, now they were just looking for a legitimate way to do it. But Annas couldn’t trap Jesus in His words, as a matter of fact, Jesus trapped Annas in his own words showing that he did not have grounds to arrest or question Jesus because there were no witnesses.

After being struck in the face by one of the officers, Annas gives up and sends Him to Caiaphas. While that was going on we get back to Peter and we see that as he is warming Himself, someone says to him again ‘You are not also one of His disciples, are you’. And rather than saving face and doing the right thing, Peter again denies and says ‘I am not’.

Then the relative of Malchus, the man whose ear Peter cut off in the garden, asks Peter ‘did I not see you in the garden with Him?’ and Peter denied again, and as we saw last time, actually cursed and swore that He did not know Jesus.

And when Peter did that, the roost crowed, just as Jesus said it would, after denying Jesus 3 times. And Luke said that Peter and Jesus were in such a place that just as Peter denied Jesus, Jesus turned and looked right into his eyes. And as a result of that, we saw in the parallel passages that Peter remembered the words of Jesus, about denying Him 3 times went out and wept bitterly. And that takes us to Verse 28.

**Verse 28: then they led Jesus from Caiaphas to the Praetorium and it was early morning.**

John does not record any of the trial or questioning with Caiaphas. Jesus was taken to Caiaphas after being questioned by Annas. And what John doesn’t record, **Matthew 26: 57 – 67** does. They bring false witnesses to try to trap Him but none of them agree so Caiaphas finally asks the question ‘are you the Christ, the Son of God. And Jesus says ‘I am’, and with that statement, they said ‘what more do we need of witnesses, this man has blasphemed and is worthy of death’. So they beat Him and mock Him and spit on Him and strike Him and then take Him away to Pilate in the Praetorium.

And notice that it is **early morning**. Remember the rooster crowed at around 3:00 am and now it is around 6:00 am. They had to take Jesus to Pilate, the Roman governor, because the Jews, under Roman law, did not have the right to execution or capital punishment. *Explain*

Think about this! Had the Jews had the right to execution for the crime of blaspheme, which they accused Jesus of, how would they have killed Him, by stoning, according to the Old Testament law **Leviticus 24: 16**. How many Old Testament passages dealing with the death of Jesus by crucifixion and being ‘lifted up’ etc would be violated by Him being stoned to death instead of crucified. So God even orchestrated the timing of the law and the Roman rule to be in place for this to happen.

The **Praetorium** is another word for the governors courtroom or judgment hall within a portion of the governors palace or home. Then the rest of Verse 28 says **but they themselves did not go into the Praetorium lest they should be defiled, but that they might eat the Passover.**

So the Jewish leaders take Jesus to Pilate’s headquarters and into an interior area that the Jews would not go into for fear of **defilement. Leviticus 15: 10 – 11, Leviticus 22: 4 – 6** and other places forbid the Jews to come in contact with any unclean thing. In the time of Jesus, all Gentiles were considered unclean and to touch one of them or to walk where they had walked would be a defilement and require cleansing and not being able to eat anything holy, which includes the Passover meal.

But think about this! They are about to kill the Son of God, their Messiah, because of their hatred for Him. And they are doing it through these unjust, illegal trials and yet they are so legalistic that they can’t step into a gentiles home. That is the ultimate hypocrisy, in not wanting to defile yourself so you can eat the Passover meal by keeping these religious rules, when you, through your moral, spiritual and physical defilement, are about to kill the true Passover Lamb that can take away the sin of the world.

Jesus said of these same people in **Matthew 23: 23 – 24 who to you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!**

**For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cumin and have neglected the weightier matters of the law like justice and mercy and faith... He says blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel (*smallest and largest of all unclean animals*)**

That is what legalism does, it exalts the traditions of men over the commandments of God, it exalts ritual over reality, love rules and laws to keep to show piety. So Pilate has to come out to them, look at Verse 29.

**Verse 29: Pilate then went out to them and said ‘what accusation do you bring against this Man?’**

So it is **early in the morning** now, and Roman court began at sunrise and ended at sunset so they brought Jesus to Pilate first thing in the morning to his judgment hall at, probably, Fort Antonias, near the temple or some other Roman occupied building.

They are trying to get this done quickly and early before word gets out that Jesus has been arrested. They want Him turned over to the Romans for execution so that it could not be stopped by the crowd. They are ready for His execution but they are not ready for His trial.

Pilate asks **what accusation do you bring against this Man.** By the way, Pilate was the governor of Judea appointed by Emperor Tiberius in AD 26. He replaced a guy by the name of Archelaus, who was a terrible, vile, man that was removed by the request of the Jews.

Pilate had his main seat in Caesarea and would travel to Jerusalem to see how things were going. He was there for the Passover to keep rule in the city with all of the people coming for the Passover.

The first time Pilate came to Jerusalem to begin his rule, he brought a lot of Roman soldiers who were carrying the Roman standards or flags. On each standard was a sculpted image of the Roman Emperor. To the Jews, that was not acceptable and they were able to convince previous governors to remove theirs.

*Explain more history*

Not only that, but because water supplies were low in Jerusalem, Pilate ordered the building of an aquaduct to carry water into the city. The only problem was, he did not have enough money, so he went into the Jewish temple treasure and took the money from there.

The Jews rioted in the streets and Pilate had many of them killed to quell the rioting. Later Pilate brought some Roman shields to Herod's palace in Jerusalem that also had images of Tiberius on them and the Jews again got mad at him and told him to remove them and he wouldn't. So the Jews sent a message to Tiberius Caesar and he ordered Pilate to remove them to keep the peace.

So with all of this turmoil, the Jews bring Jesus to Pilate in hopes that he will do what they want or they will, again, go to Tiberius. Remember what they will say later in **John 19: 12 if you let this man go, you are no friend of Caesars**. Pilate was so concerned about his job and status as governor that he would cower to the Jews and eventually have Jesus killed.

So Pilate asks the Jews **what is the charge against this Man**. That is what a court trial does, it determines what crime has been committed and what the person is being accused of. The Jews, however didn't want a trial, they wanted an execution and they wanted Pilate to give the order, but he doesn't.

As a matter of fact, they are fulfilling what Jesus said would happen back in **Mark 10: 32 – 33 Read** Look how they answer him in Verse 30.

**Verse 30: they answered and said to him, ‘if He were not an evildoer, a criminal, we would not have delivered Him up to you’.**

They don’t answer Pilate as to an accusation or charge, because they don’t have one. They skirt the issue and insinuate to Pilate that they wouldn’t have brought Him if He wasn’t a criminal. How hypocritical they are. And by the way, His own enemies could not find any fault or accusation or anything about His life that is deserving of a trial, let alone death.

They made up some things, according to **Luke 23: 2** saying **we found Him perverting the nation, not true, and forbidding to pay taxes to Caesar, not true, and saying that He Himself is the Christ as King true.** So they hope Pilate will accept their lies and inferences about Jesus as enough to try Him. But look what Pilate says in Verse 31.

**Verses 31 - 32: Then Pilate said to them ‘You take Him and judge Him according to your law’. Therefore the Jews said to him ‘it is not lawful for us to put anyone to death’ that the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled which He spoke, signifying by what death He would die.**

They went to Pilate asking for the death sentence against Jesus because they tell Pilate **it is not lawful for us to put anyone to death**, and they wanted to because He had claimed to be the Messiah, king of the Jews. We can’t do it Pilate, you must be the one. So apparently they had discussed capital punishment against Jesus but Pilate, at this point, didn’t want anything to do with it. They hadn’t presented a case worthy of the death penalty.

But it appears that Pilate gives them permission to execute Him but they don’t do it, why? They could have taken Him out immediately, if Pilate said **judge Him according to your law**, and for the offense of blasphemy, they could have immediately stoned Him to death. So why didn’t they?

Verse 32 gives us the answer **that the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled which He spoke signifying by what death He would die.** Jesus had to die a certain way, a certain kind of death and He told His disciples that.

Your remember in **John 12: 32 – 33** Jesus said **if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself. This He said signifying by what death He would die.** He said back in **John 3: 14** as **Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up.** And of course these are talking about crucifixion

In **Matthew 20: 18 – 19** Jesus said **the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes and they will condemn Him to death and deliver Him to the Gentiles to mock and to scourge and to crucify..**

Had the Jews judged Him according to their law, they would have stoned Him to death and that would have contradicted what Jesus said and what the Old Testament predicted. So God, in His sovereignty, orchestrated the governmental system and laws to not allow the Jews to kill Him by stoning but the Romans, the Gentiles would kill Him by crucifixion. He is in control of everything.

**Verses 33 - 34:** **then Pilate entered the Praetorium again, called Jesus, and said to Him ‘are You the King of the Jews’?**

He is asking Jesus that because the Jews had told Pilate that that was His claim and the main reason they wanted Him dead, because He is blaspheming the true God. But it is not blasphemy if it is (what) true and it is. And if He claims to be a king, Pilate would believe that He is talking about an earthly kingdom and it would lend more credence to what the accusation of Him being against the Roman government was. If He says no, then He is denying what He truly is, the King of Israel.

Then look how Jesus answers him in Verse 34 by saying ‘**are you speaking for yourself about this or did others tell you this concerning Me**’? Jesus answers a question with a question, which He did many times. But this question was pinning Pilate down with why he is asking the question. Are you asking as a Roman soldier, afraid I am a king and a threat to Rome, or are you asking because someone told you I was a king.

**Verse 35: Pilate answered ‘am I a Jew? Your own nation and the chief priests have delivered You to me. What have You done?’**

Pilate says ‘I am not claiming that You are a king, **I am not a Jew**. I don’t believe the way **Your own nation** does, they are the ones who **delivered You to Me**, this has nothing to do with Rome, so **what have You done?** Pilate finally asks the right question of Him. **Matthew 27: 18** says that Pilate **knew that they had handed Jesus over because of envy**. They had no real reason and that is why Pilate asks Jesus ‘what have You done’.

**Verse 36: Jesus answered ‘My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews but now My kingdom is not from here’.**

Jesus doesn’t answer the self-incriminating question Pilate asks, because Roman law also did not allow such questions, just like the Jewish law didn’t. But what Jesus does do is tell Pilate about His kingdom and His servants. And He tells him that His kingdom (He uses **My kingdom** 3 times in one verse) is not of this world, or did not originate or come out of this world, its not an earthly kingdom, because if it was, He would not have allowed Himself to be so easily captured and **delivered to the Jews** because **His servants would fight** to see that that doesn’t happen.



The **kingdom** Jesus is referring to is a spiritual kingdom which He is Lord and King of and His kingdom resides in the hearts of men who have been born again.

**Verse 37: Pilate therefore said to Him ‘are You a king then? I can’t figure this out. Are You or are You not a king? If You are not a king of this world, are you even a king at all?’**

**Then Jesus answered ‘you say rightly 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 words’.**

Jesus says ‘you are right, I am a king’, but not of this world and no threat to Rome and no allegiance with the Jews. My purpose in coming here is to share the **truth**. Jesus says **for this cause ... to witness to the truth ... I was born and I came into the world.**

Jesus here shows us His humanness in being **born**, God incarnate, God in human form, taking on the form of a man from birth and also show us His deity in that He **came into the world**, meaning He came from God in heaven to earth, as He has shared many times and that we have seen is an affirmation of His pre-existent deity. Remember He said in **John 17: 5 Father, glorify Me together with Yourself with the glory which I had with You (when) before the world was.**

Jesus says ‘I came to proclaim and **witness to the truth**. In **Matthew 4: 23** It says **Jesus went all around preaching the GOSPEL of the kingdom**. He preached about God, man, sin, judgment, hell, heaven, forgiveness, everlasting life.

Remember what Jesus had said already in **John 14: 6: I am the way and the TRUTH and the life**. He said in **John 17: 17 sanctify them by Your truth...**

Jesus said earlier in **John 8: 31 – 32** **if you abide in My word you are My disciples indeed and you shall know the TRUTH and the truth shall set you free.** Jesus says ‘I came into the world to proclaim the truth **And Everyone who is of the truth hears His voice,** hears His message. Implied in that hearing is obeying. It is never enough to hear the truth, right, the evidence of hearing is obedience.

Isn't that what He said in **John 10: 27 - 28** **My sheep hear My voice and I know them and they follow Me and I give them eternal life.**

**Verse 38:** **Pilate said to Him ‘what is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again to the Jews and said to them ‘I find no fault in Him at all’.**

It is like Pilate is saying ‘what is truth, I have looked for it, I have heard others say what they think truth is, I have my own idea about what truth is...so what is truth. Not so unlike people today searching for truth and trying to find it from many different sources other than the only true source, Jesus and the Word of God.

Then Pilate, **after he said** what is truth, apparently in a indifferent way, left Jesus without waiting for nor was he interested in an answer. He goes to the Jews who had been waiting outside and said to them **I find no fault in Him at all.**

Jesus came in a condemned man by His own people and He is exonerated of all charges. He is declared innocent, no fault. Without spot or blemish because He will be the true lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

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Introduction and Review:

Verse 28:

Matthew 26: 57 – 67, Leviticus 24: 16  
Leviticus 15: 10 – 11, 22: 4 – 6  
Matthew 23: 23 – 24

Verse 29:

John 19: 12, Mark 10: 32 – 33

Verse 30:

Luke 23: 2

Verses 31 – 32:

John 12: 32 – 33, John 3: 14, Matthew 20: 18 – 19

Verses 33 – 35:

Matthew 27: 18

Verses 36 – 38:

John 17: 5, Matthew 4: 23, John 14: 6  
John 17: 17, John 8: 31 – 32, John 10: 27 – 28

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Verses 33 – 35:

Matthew 27: 18

Verses 36 – 38:

John 17: 5, Matthew 4: 23, John 14: 6  
John 17: 17, John 8: 31 – 32, John 10: 27 – 28