

John 18:28-40 Jesus Before Pilate

Vs. 28 – The Sanhedrin have already set aside due process violating seven of their own laws that were designed to protect the one being charged with a crime. They are keeping petty observances, while committing terrible crimes.

Vs. 29-30 – They were irritated that Pilate would even question them. They wanted the Roman procurator to simply nod approval and thus put into place the process that led to crucifixion.

Vs. 31 – Pilate was literally giving them the right to kill Jesus under their religious laws. Old Testament *Leviticus 24:16a*, “... *the one who blasphemes the name of the Lord shall surely be put to death; all the congregation shall certainly stone him.*”

1. The First Reason was the fulfillment of Christ’s own Words

The first reason is Christ was crucified for the fulfillment of His own words, vs. 32 – “... *that the word of Jesus might be fulfilled, which He spoke, signifying by what kind of death He was about to die. John 12:32* “... *if I be lifted up . . .*” Jesus prophesied that He must be crucified, not stoned; therefore, Jesus had to die a Roman death, not Jewish.

2. The Second Reason was for the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy

Psalm 22:1, 6-8, 14-15, ⁶⁻⁸“*My God my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*” “... *I am . . . a reproach of men and despised by the people.*” “*All who see me sneer at me, they wag the head, saying, ‘Commit yourself to the Lord; let Him deliver [you] . . .*” ¹⁴⁻¹⁸“*I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue cleaves to my jaws. They divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots.*”

3. Thirdly, the crucifixion would combine the Jewish and Gentile worlds in a conspiracy of death

The responsibility and guilt for the death of Jesus was placed upon the world. In *Acts 4:27*, Peter says that the crucifixion of Jesus was the responsibility of Herod, Pilate, the Jews, and the Gentiles (the nations).

4. The fulfillment of the typology of an Old Testament event

Moses fashioned a serpent out of bronze and put it up on a pole. The children of Israel were to look at that serpent on the pole and they would live. *John 3:14-15*, “*And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up that whoever believes may in Him have eternal life.*” The serpent caused death, so the Son of God became sin, the very cause of our death. *Galatians 3:13*, “*Christ . . . having become a curse for us – for it is written ‘Cursed is everyone who hangs upon a tree.’*” Jesus Christ would become a curse; He would become the serpent, or sin, the cause of death for every member of the human race. And those who look to Him will be saved (*2 Cor. 5:21*.)

The Predicament of Pilate

The Jews have a problem: they cannot stone Jesus (i.e. don’t have two witnesses with the exact testimony of Jesus blaspheming God. So they create an accusation that is tailor-made to rile a politician like Pilate. *Luke 23:2*, “*We found this man misleading our nation and forbidding paying taxes to Caesar, “... and saying that He Himself is Christ, a King.*” Their tactic worked! It caused Pilate to re-examine Jesus (vs. 33-34.)

Vs. 35-36 – Pilate changes the subject away from who Christ is to what Christ had been accused of doing. Jesus is refusing to change the subject. Three times, in His answer, He has repeated the phrase, “*My Kingdom ... My Kingdom ... My Kingdom!*”

You and I will never be able to understand what Jesus has done for us until we believe who He really is. He is Jesus, the Messiah, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world!

Vs. 38 – Pilate said to Him, “*What is truth?*” Pilate had never been closer to the truth in his entire life. The problem was, Pilate did not really want an answer. * Because that world, like ours, was already inundated with philosophical disillusionment. His cynical cry is the cry of our age, and every age.

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Plato once wrote, "It may be that someday there will come forth from God a "logos," or Word, Who will reveal all mysteries and make everything plain." John answered that in his opening lines of **John 1:1**, "In the beginning was the [logos] Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." **John 1:9**, "[He] was the true light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man." Are you searching for spiritual truth? **John 14:6**, Jesus said . . ., "I am the way, and the truth . . ."

1. Pilate declares the verdict for Jesus – Innocent!

This is important: before a lamb could be sacrificed during the Passover, it had to be without blemish! Three times Pilate declares the verdict for Jesus of, "Innocent!"

- **John 18:38b**, where Pilate said, "I find no guilt in Him."
- **John 19:4**, where Pilate again said, "I find no guilt in Him."
- After having Jesus flogged hoping to elicit sympathy from the enraged Jews, Pilate declared again, in **John 19:6**, "I find no guilt in Him."

2. Pilate knew the true motive of the Jewish leaders – envy!

In **Matthew 27:18** we read. "For he [Pilate] knew that because of envy they had delivered Him up."

3. Pilate had received a message from his wife to leave Jesus alone – disturbing!

Matthew 27:19, "And while [Pilate] was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent to him, saying, 'Have nothing to do with that righteous Man; for last night I suffered greatly in a dream because of Him.'" The Romans were particularly superstitious where dreams were concerned.

John 19:1-6 – Pilate says they can go ahead and crucify Jesus which will fulfill Scripture.

Vs. 8-9 – If Jesus had answered Pilate with some statement or miracle He could have been released! * But, Jesus did not come to earth to be released, He came to redeem, by His death on the cross.

Vs. 10-12 – Nothing can coerce Pilate to condemn this man, except this final threat by the Jews.

Seven witnesses agree – Jesus is innocent!

- Pilate declared, three times, ". . . I find no guilt in Him."
- Herod, found Him blameless, **Luke 23:15**, saying, "... nothing deserving death has been done by Him."
- Pilate's wife said, "Have nothing to do with that righteous Man ..."
- The dying thief said, in **Luke 23:41**, "... we indeed [are dying] justly, for we are receiving what we deserve for our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong."
- The centurion in charge of the crucifixion said, according to **Luke 23:47b** "Certainly this man was innocent."
- The crowd, who had come to sneer and mock, after seeing the darkness and feeling the tremors of the earthquake, said, ". . . Truly this was the Son of God!" **Matthew 27:54b**
- Judas, earlier, took his thirty pieces of blood money to betray Jesus, then later threw them on the floor before the religious leaders, and said, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood." **Matthew 27:4**

Pilate dipped his hands in water, and then said, "I am innocent of this man's blood ..." (**Matthew 27:24**) People around the world are guilty of being externally clean in their own eyes, but inwardly guilty.

The Scriptures teach us we deny guilt and sin, but are guilty, **Proverbs 12:15**, "The way of a fool is right in his own eyes" **Proverbs 14:9**, "Fools mock at sin [guilt]." **Proverbs 16:2**, "All the ways of a man are pure in his own eyes, but the Lord weighs the spirit." **Proverbs 16:25**, "There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death."

The truth is, no matter how religious we are; no matter how we choose to wash our hands, we are all sinners. We are all guilty of sin for which the Lamb of God died on the cross. Jesus stands in the courtroom of your heart--what will you decide. What is your verdict? The Bible says that His blood is either on your hands (guilty) or His blood covers your heart (guilty, yet forgiven).