

Jesus Before Pilate

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[0 : 0 0] Please open your Bibles to the Gospel of Matthew, chapter 27. Matthew 27, we're going to read verses 11 through 26.

Matthew 27, 11 through 26. Now Jesus stood before the governor.

And the governor asked him, Are you the king of the Jews? Jesus said, You have said so. But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he gave no answer.

Then Pilate said to him, Do you not hear how many things they testify against you? But he gave him no answer, not even to a single charge. So the governor was greatly amazed.

Now at the feast, the governor was accustomed to release for the crowd any one prisoner whom they wanted. And they had then a notorious prisoner called Barabbas. So when they had gathered, Pilate said to them, Whom do you want me to release for you, Barabbas or Jesus, who is called Christ?

[1 : 2 4] For he knew that it was out of envy that they had delivered him up. Besides, while he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent word to him, Have nothing to do with that righteous man, for I have suffered much because of him today in a dream.

Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowd to ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus. The governor again said to them, Which of the two do you want me to release for you?

And they said, Barabbas. Pilate said to them, Then what shall I do with Jesus, who is called Christ? They all said, Let him be crucified.

And he said, Why? What evil has he done? But they shouted all the more, Let him be crucified. So when Pilate saw that he was gaining nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, I am innocent of this man's blood.

See to it yourselves. And all the people answered, His blood be on us and on our children. Then he released for them Barabbas.

[2 : 3 5] And having scourged Jesus, delivered him to be crucified. Let's pray together. Oh Lord, we again ask for your help as your word is open to us, and as we near the death of Jesus, as we read through Matthew.

Lord, we pray that you would help us to fully grasp what's happened, that this would not be some abstract reading, that we would not read this as we do a fiction book, that we give thought to, but that we would understand that this truly happened, that our Savior came, and that he suffered these things.

And Lord, we pray that as we look today at the crowd and Pilate, that we would make neither of their errors, but that our faith and trust would be in Christ.

We pray this in his name. Amen. Amen. You remember I had said previously that there were two trials for Jesus. We had a religious trial, which we looked at previously, and today we come to the civil trial, the government trial that Jesus had to face.

And I want you to remember that as we look at this, and as we continue looking all the way to the cross, that this is what God had planned. This is what God intended.

[3 : 53] God's goal from before the foundation of the earth was to send his son to die for our sins. And so Jesus is coming to this day, not trying to get out of it.

He's coming to redeem a people for himself. We've seen already how Jesus proclaimed, the hour has come. Now is the time that the Son of Man should be lifted up on the cross. And so we're coming to this understanding that this is the sovereign will of God, that Jesus is in full agreement with the Father, that he's determined to go to the cross and to die for our sins.

And so much as we did previously, what I want us to do today is almost a character study. Let's look at the characters that were involved in this. So I want to spend some time looking at Pilate, and then look at the crowd, and then finally contrast that and look at the person of Jesus.

And then we'll make some application at the end, some along the way as well. So first let's look at the person of Pilate. Now when we looked at the religious trial, the issue that was the concern was really Jesus' claim to deity.

Is he really the Christ, the Son of God? And when we come to the civil trial, we understand that there are different requirements, there are different concerns here.

[5 : 16] Pilate doesn't care at all whether or not he proclaims to be a god. Pilate's concern, or the concern of the government if there's to be a trial is, is he opposing Rome?

Is he in opposition to the reigning government? Governments don't like opposition. Right? So if he's opposing Rome, then Rome has an issue with Jesus and may have to do something about it.

Which is why we see really the question there in verse 11, are you the king of the Jews? That's probably because this is the primary charge, maybe the exclusive charge initially brought to Pilate.

He's going around, he's claiming, and we see this really in some of the other gospels, he's proclaiming himself to be the king of the Jews. I said we see this in the other gospels. Here's an example, Luke 23, verses 1 through 3.

Then the whole company of them arose and brought him, Jesus, before Pilate. And they began to accuse him, saying, we found this man misleading our nation and forbidding us to give tribute to Caesar and saying that he himself is the Christ, a king.

[6 : 26] And Pilate asked him, are you the king of the Jews? So Pilate's question is preceded by the accusations by the Sanhedrin as they bring Jesus to Pilate. And we see a few charges here.

He was forbidding us, well, I'm sorry, he's misleading our nation. So again, instead of it being a religious issue, he's teaching certain things that we disagree with, he's misleading the nation, which is a concern for the Roman government.

He's forbidding us to give tribute to Caesar. Now this obviously speaking back to when they came to him and asked him about, should we pay taxes to Caesar? And Jesus' answer was, render to Caesar the things that are Caesar and to man the things that are man, or to God the things that are God.

And so he really never forbid tribute to Caesar. In fact, he kind of encouraged it. And yet they bring this charge against him. And finally, that he himself is Christ, a king.

So they bring up the messianic term that's a religious term. He's Christ. But they define what that means for Pilate. What it means for him to be Christ is for him to be king. And we understand that's a right interpretation in some ways, because the Christ is going to be the Davidic king who will reign on the throne forever.

[7 : 41] But they don't focus on all the religious implications. They want Pilate to understand for him to say he's Christ means that he thinks himself to be the king. And so again, the charges are really political, government charges.

And then we also see that Pilate's wife has a dream that warns them not to convict them, her, Pilate, not to convict Jesus.

Look at verse 19. Besides, while he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent word to him, have nothing to do with that righteous man, for I have suffered much because of him today in a dream.

So we don't know exactly what happened. My guess is that this is probably the first time that Pilate's wife ever had any kind of revelatory dream of sorts. And we don't know what was told, but whatever she saw, whatever was communicated, she understood him to be righteous, innocent of the charges, holy before God.

And what's remarkable is even this won't stop Pilate. Right? It doesn't actually stop him from proceeding with things. He receives a message from his wife. She's had a dream. She's suffered much.

[8 : 57] Don't mess with this guy. He's righteous. He's innocent. And yet it doesn't stop Pilate from proceeding. Part of me questioned, why a dream?

Go back to what I said previously. God's intention and purpose is that Jesus die on the cross. So why send a message to Pilate's wife not to crucify him?

And again, assuming that this is a message from God, the fact that he's portrayed as righteous would indicate that. And again, God in his sovereignty, I think, understood that even this isn't enough to stop Pilate.

That the crucifixion will continue. And in many ways, I feel as though God's provision of this actually heaps on greater judgment upon Pilate. It actually brings greater judgment on him because there's some acknowledgement from God that Jesus is innocent.

And yet he still proceeds. So in many ways, it multiplied Pilate's guilt. Secondly, I see this as a means of testifying to who Jesus is.

[10 : 04] One of the things we've seen all along and I think we'll see again as we look at the person Jesus is that he's innocent, that he's undeserving of this, that he's holy, that he's sinless. And so further vindication of this further proof that this is true, it's shown by the fact that she has this dream.

God the Father testifies to her that Jesus is righteous. And because of that and maybe because of the trial itself, Pilate's actually persuaded that Jesus is innocent.

He believes Jesus to be innocent. We see even in the beginning, all these charges are brought against him. Jesus doesn't answer at all. And Pilate's amazed by this.

That is not the kind of thing that a guilty person does. Right? A guilty person has every excuse in the world of why that is the case and they blame it on someone else and Jesus just sits and listens to the charges.

And so already we see from the very beginning that Pilate is amazed. But we see, look at verse 23. He questions the crowd, why? What evil has he done?

[11 : 13] But they shouted, all the more, let him be crucified. So from Matthew, we can conclude Pilate's conclusion is that Jesus is innocent. Why? What has he done? It's a rhetorical question.

What he implies is he's done nothing wrong to deserve this. But we also see in the other Gospels further proof of Pilate's verdict on the trial. Again in Luke 23, verse 4, then Pilate said to the chief priests in the crowds, I find no guilt in this man.

And again in John 19, verse 6, Pilate said to them, take him yourselves and crucify him for I find no guilt in him. And in fact, we actually see in John 19, he repeats three times, I find no guilt in him, which in many ways is a form of proclamation of a judgment.

The judge seated on the judgment seat says, I find no guilt in him. That would really be the equivalent of in our day, the judge proclaiming, I find you innocent. So three times he finds him innocent in a trial, and yet Jesus somehow still ends up being crucified.

Now why is that? Well, I think as we look at Pilate, the reality is this, that he doesn't stand for the innocent. Though he knows Jesus to be innocent, he doesn't stand up for that. He doesn't stand behind it.

[12 : 30] He doesn't really enforce a judgment of innocence. whether he caves into the crowd's demands. I think as we look at Pilate and his behavior, his actions in this account, what we see is a number of feeble attempts to free Jesus in various ways.

And the primary way he does that is by contrasting him with Barabbas. And so we see that there's this custom, this isn't a biblical custom, but in that day there's this custom that the Roman governor, here Pilate, would release for them a prisoner of their choosing.

And it seems further the case that the governor got to choose two choices. I'm going to give you two choices. We're having an election for who we're going to free from prison. Here are your two choices.

And so, him believing Jesus to be innocent figures, I can avoid the question. I won't have to proclaim him to be innocent. I won't have to set him free.

I'll let the people do that and it completely gets me off the hook. I mean, I think what we see Pilate to be is a politician. Right? I mean, this is a politician's kind of judgment. Instead of me taking a stand against the Sanhedrin and against the crowds, instead I'll just let them choose who they want to free.

[13 : 45] What if I pick the worst criminal we have in prison? Who do we have? Well, we got Barabbas. Oh, Barabbas. And so he picks Barabbas to put Barabbas up against Jesus. And we see the description of Barabbas both here.

He's called a notorious prisoner. Elsewhere we're told he's a murderer and an insurrectionist. So in some way he had raised up some opposition to overthrow the government of sorts.

But he was a murderer. And just consider for a second that decision if it's maybe in Hazleton. Maybe in Hazleton we decide we're going to free one prisoner. Your choice is Jesus or a murderer or a known murderer.

Let's let the murderer free, right? Everybody wants a murderer going around society killing more people. No! No one's going to make that decision you would think. And so I think Pilate intentionally puts Barabbas up against Jesus to avoid him having to I want to say have a backbone to make a decision to make a stand.

And so he puts him forward so that they'll choose Barabbas and we're going to look in a minute the crowd's decision and what the crowd does. So I think what's going on here with Pilate is he imagines he can give the crowd what they want and still maintain his innocence.

[15 : 10] So in verse 24 Pilate took water and he washed his hands before the crowd saying I'm innocent of this man's blood see to it yourself. We read already in John 19 he says you take him and crucify him.

And so now his first attempt to avoid making any kind of decision or stand didn't work. They choose to crucify or they choose to free Barabbas instead of Jesus and call it crucify.

And so again I think being a politician he wants to give the crowd what they want. He wants to be favorable with the crowd. Fine you take him and do it I find him innocent and he washes his hands of Jesus' blood and says I'm innocent of this man's blood.

Now the reality is that doesn't work. Right? Washing your hands publicly and saying I washed my hands of this you take him and crucify him. When the final judgment comes Pilate failed at what he was tasked with.

He was a judge an innocent man came before him there was testimony of it he saw it in the trial himself there's even testimony from God the Father that he's innocent and yet he doesn't set him free but allows him to be crucified.

[16 : 24] And so we see Acts 4.27 Peter in his sermon I would say really a proclamation from God Peter being inspired by God the Father the Spirit working in him Acts 4.27 For truly in this city they were gathered together against your holy servant Jesus whom you anointed both Herod and Pontius Pilate along with the Gentiles and the people of Israel.

So in God's final estimation of the guilty parties involved his conclusion is they were gathered together in Jerusalem against Jesus his holy servant Herod Pontius Pilate the Gentiles and the people of Israel.

And so Pilate's grouped in right there with the rest as those who were guilty of being in opposition to Jesus. And so I think we're taught something here. Pilate in the end seems condemned because of his cowardice his fear of man and I think we could draw really an easy conclusion for us an application for us to consider is that true of any of us?

Are there ways in which our fear of taking a stand for Jesus actually puts us on the side of those who condemn Jesus? I mean you look at Pilate he's not actively opposed to Jesus he says I find no guilt in this man I wash my hands of him you crucify him if you think he's guilty but in the end the judgment is he's guilty of being in opposition to Jesus Christ he's opposed to Christ because he will not stand for Christ we've talked about this before how I think a lot of times people like to imagine there being some middle ground there are those who are opposed to Christ and there are those who are for Christ and then here I am somewhere in the middle I believe him to be innocent holy a godly man maybe a prophet but I'm just not sure if I want to put my faith and trust in Jesus Christ and I've said it before that's an illusion there's no middle ground either you're a follower of Jesus Christ or you are opposed to Christ and I think this proves it with the life of Pilate and I wonder for us has there been a fear of other people's opinions or a fear of man that's caused some of you in this room not to stand for Christ maybe you're not willing to follow

Christ or commit your life to be a disciple of Jesus Christ because of what your friends will think or your family members will think maybe you're worried about how they'll judge you or what others will think about you maybe even you're reading the signs of the culture today and you can see already it's not going to be a popular decision to stand for Christ that means to stand against our culture and that's going to be hard but I want you to be warned that that's a dangerous position and in the end I think Pilate's condemned because of his fear of man of his cowardice next I want to take some time to look at the crowd we see in verses 12 through 13 that the Sanhedrin we've seen before come and accuse Jesus of many charges we've read already what some of the charges were but verse 12 but when he was accused by the chief priests and elders he gave no answer then Pilate said to him do you not hear how many things they testify against you so it's the Sanhedrin that are the ones who are bringing the charges against him and I'm not focusing in on them today because I really want to look at the crowd he does though

[20 : 08] Pilate does proclaim in verse 18 that he knows the motivation you know we always tell you and talk about we don't want to assume what's going on in other people's hearts but Pilate has the discernment to know that the Sanhedrin had brought Jesus before him out of envy that that is the motivation for why they want Jesus to be put to death and again I think that helps us to understand what's going on in the situation with Jesus' crucifixion it really reinforces much that I've said already about the Sanhedrin and their motivation their purposes in putting Jesus to death but their motivation is envy so their goal is not to get to the truth they're not really concerned with whether or not Jesus really is the Christ they don't care to know for sure is he the Christ so that they could believe in him but it's simply they want to protect their position and their power they're envious of Jesus because he's popular with the crowds and anyone else who's popular with the crowds is a threat to their popularity with the crowds you don't want someone else stealing your popularity and of course

I think it's not really about popularity ultimately it's about position and power if he is the Christ then what need is there for these religious teachers who are opposed to him if he's the Christ where's their power he's openly opposed them and so I think it's position and power that that causes them to be against Jesus and so envy just saying they were jealous of Jesus even perhaps the truth of who he was they don't want the Messiah to come in their day because it messes up their plans and so we read in verse 20 that the chief priests and the elders the Sanhedrin persuade the crowd to ask for Barabbas and to destroy Jesus and ultimately we see the crowd in verse 23 they are yelling they shouted all the more let him be crucified and I'm amazed at just how fickle the crowd is they're persuaded by the Sanhedrin to do this but do you guys remember we're I think now six days removed from the triumphal entry of Jesus Christ when Jesus came into Jerusalem do you remember what all happened then the crowd gathered and they cried out

Hosanna blesses he who comes in the name of the Lord and Hosanna really means God provides salvation salvation has been provided this is the Savior God has sent us salvation blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord and then six days later they're calling or crying out about the same guy crucify him put him to death it's really remarkable when Pilate washes his hands of this and again we said it's just an act he doesn't really accomplish anything but he washes his hands of it of the guilt of it did you see do you remember what the crowd cries out look at verse 25 and all the people answered his blood be on us and on our children it's really quite amazing you think especially I believe the Sanhedrin at least some of them understood who Jesus was and they're crying out let his blood be upon us the crowd may not have understood fully what was going on but yet they take responsibility for the death of a man that they really don't know well enough to know if he's guilty or innocent and what's really amazing about this is in light of Jesus's

Olivet discourse and I really want to try to briefly just tie this all in together here are the crowd Jesus is about to be crucified Pilate says I wash my hands of this of the guilt of this and they say let the guilt be on us and on our children and what did Jesus teach about in the Olivet discourse remember what he looked at he says Jerusalem's going to be destroyed and it's going to be a great tribulation such that has never been seen in all the world before wherever will be seen again the temple will be destroyed it's going to be defiled and unless you flee to the housetops you're going to die and the Christians excuse me not even flee to the housetops flee to the mountains and the Christians we talked about when they saw the signs come and they fled but Jerusalem is destroyed and I think when they say this they're proclaiming something that actually comes to pass they're putting

God incarnate to death they're killing the Messiah the Savior of the world they put him to death can we imagine there aren't repercussions for that but then all the more so when they say let his blood be upon us and upon our children that within one generation 40 years later God does bring judgment upon them and their children and really those in Jerusalem at the very least are wiped out almost completely very few people survive to be carried off into slavery they're almost all killed and put to death except for the Christians that fled when they saw it coming and so what they're proclaiming here actually comes to pass and of course that also means what Jesus told them all of it discourse comes to pass and it shows it proves that they were deserving of the punishment that came upon them they asked for the guilt of Jesus' death to be placed on them and within one generation they received the punishment for that guilt now there's a few things we can look at in terms of application we've talked about already

[26 : 09] Pilate's opposition to Jesus but to imagine that we could be opposed to Jesus and not face judgment it's crazy opposition to Jesus ultimately brings judgment as we see happen with them in a physical sense we understand as well spiritually that those who have not trusted Jesus Christ are headed for hell and one day though it's hard for us to understand now one day in eternity we will understand that that is a right judgment by God that God has treated no one wrong both in showing mercy but also in being just in judging secondly I want to just briefly address the fact that this has been used by many people as a platform for anti-semitic thought that I think even this was one of the charges that the Nazis used when they imprisoned and killed many Jews was look God's opposed to them they proclaim judgment upon themselves now I think in a broad sense there's a reality to which they proclaim judgment upon themselves and they experienced it in all of that discourse and to some extent they've experienced in the sense of being wiped out in a nation as a special people of God now the church is the people of God and there are Jews that are being saved and being brought into that but that doesn't mean that all Jews are bad or they were opposed to any race

God is opposed to racism and so I don't want you to misunderstand this what I think this means is in particular the destruction of Jerusalem and the destruction the temple a broad working out from that is their place as the special people of God is gone and so now and we see this especially with the apostles and the early church is not the Jews are all condemned to hell either many were saved in the early church many are being saved now but salvation for the Jewish people is to be brought into the church today there's no longer that special identity for them and really they I want to say almost they had their chance but we understand that God extended salvation to them he gave them all the blessings there's all these benefits that Paul presents in Romans to being a part of Israel and yet the rejection of Christ ultimately brought great judgment and condemnation for them but that doesn't mean that that extends to our view of them and how we treat them we treat them like we would treat anyone else we share the gospel our prayers that God would save and bring them into the church in Acts 3 13 through 15

Peter gives his summary of this he says the God of Abraham the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob the God of our fathers glorified his servant Jesus whom you delivered over and denied in the presence of Pilate when he had decided to release him so again inspired by God he says Pilate had decided to release Jesus but they delivered him over and denied him but you denied the holy and righteous one and asked for a murderer to be granted to you and you killed the author of life whom God raised from the dead to this we are witnesses so there again we see God's judgment or summary of this whole instance you denied the holy and righteous one and asked for a murderer to be granted to you and I think this really reveals not just the crowd in that day not just the spiritual condition of Israel in that day but it really reveals to us the condition of fallen man this is what the world is like for example I would think we could say easily swayed by false teaching can I just say I mean we've gotten to a point in our culture where we're denying that gender even exists and saying people can choose for themselves their gender I mean the level of craziness that is it is mind-boggling but it doesn't take much for the populace the great majority of people to be persuaded by things that 20 years ago we would have thought are ridiculous there are physical distinctions that are there naturally that are undeniable and yet we're denying them and I think how far will this go before that I would say it's probably just as crazy to call a unborn child a fetus and imagine that a fetus somehow isn't alive and so we've justified abortion we've justified homosexuality gender dysphoria or gender changes and so what else is left but I think we see fallen man easily persuaded by false teaching I think it's true not only in that kind of cultural realm but we see as well even with the church that there are many false teachers who come in and unfortunately it doesn't take much time on the television if you watch most televangelists most of the guys that are on TV preaching the most popular pastors probably in our country many of them maybe most of them are false teachers but those are the ones that are popular and the ones that sway the masses I think again it teaches us a little bit about our culture again I think we're taught that leaders are hungry for power they're envious of Christ who rightly possess it and so again fallen man this is the nature of fallen man we want power and those who get it that aren't us we're envious of even to the point of wanting them put to death that we may gain the power but I think beyond that we could say as well that fallen man by nature is opposed to

Christ and to God even to the point as we see in this passage of wishing him dead now that may sound radical but just consider again what we're facing in our culture what we've seen in history even consider let's go further back Paul and Romans Paul and Romans argues that there are no atheist he says that men suppress the truth and unrighteousness because they love to do unrighteous deeds and so why do people say that there's no God not because they really believe there's no God but because they like doing the things they want to do if God exists and I've got someone to answer to but there's no God I can do whatever I want I'm my own God I think ultimately that's what it gets down to and so again I think we ought not be surprised to find a culture who wants to imagine that God's dead that God doesn't exist let's push whatever evolution or whatever else we can push in society that might make us think that there's no God because if we push this long enough that I can do whatever I want to do of course we're seeing the fallout for that I can kill my child I can marry someone of the same gender I've told you already that in Canada it's already moved to bestiality they're arguing that you ought to be able to marry I think it was a goat the man was petitioning the government to marry so I see some crazy you guys are making funny faces just wait right

Canada England they're maybe a decade ahead of us it's coming all right so just know that this is where we're headed and the stuff that sounds completely absurd to us now will be completely accepted by culture in the future but why or how do we get to that conclusion well first we have to get rid of absolute truth we have to get rid of authority we have to get rid of God in his word and so again I think we're seeing this even in the crowds that's teaching us about our culture and then ultimately choosing to have a wicked murderer rather than Christ I think again the choice of fallen man to reject the Savior but would prefer to follow sinful men listen to Psalm 2 verses 1 through 6 hopefully this puts perspective on things lest you be discouraged about the state of our culture and our politics why do the nations rage and the people's plot in vain the kings of the earth set themselves and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against his anointed his

[35 : 01] Christ Jesus saying let us burst their bonds apart and cast away their cords from us fallen man feels in bondage to God let us burst his bonds apart why that I can have freedom to do what I want to do how does God respond all the kings of the earth all the rulers all those in positions of power gather together against God they're going to oppose God how does God respond he who sits in the heavens laughs the Lord holds them in derision then he will speak to them in his wrath and terrify them in his fury saying as for me I have set my king on Zion my holy hill so again what I was arguing with the crowds and the culture of today is no different than all of history and what we see in Psalm 2 fallen rulers gather together to oppose God to burst his bonds because they feel in bondage to him and they want to be their own kings their own rulers their own authority it's God threatened by this it's God scared oh no how does God respond it actually says God laughs now that itself is remarkable there are I think this is one of the unique places in God's word where we see that God laughs here's God's sense of humor the nations gathered against him that's funny just imagine ants gather together in opposition to us I mean they sting they bite but really I didn't say fire ants you guys if you've never been to Georgia they're fire ants okay but just these puny things up against God then he will speak to them in his wrath and terrify them in his fury what is God going to reveal in his wrath and how's he going to terrify them in his fury what's this great answer that God's going to give to them that's going to put them in their place here's the answer as for me I've set my king on Zion my holy hill his answer is the sovereign reign of Christ he's going to put Christ in power which if we want to tie this all in together I've argued already is what happens in 80 70 when they see him seated on the right hand of the father revealed to them in their judgment upon them in 80 70 so tying that all in together God's answer to their opposition to him is ultimately to allow

Christ to be crucified but then to resurrect him and seat him on the throne that he would reign over the nations with an authority that will never come to an end that can never be thwarted and that's what terrifies the nations that Christ is reigning on his throne and so I hope that one that teaches us about what the crowds and what fallen men are like what our world's going to be like but also helps us to see if you'll allow me that ultimately it doesn't matter that Christ is on his throne and God's already answered it so sometimes we feel like we've got to answer every single opposition I think we've got to stand for truth but I see some of you guys so worked up about things that ultimately don't matter here's what ultimately matters God is on his throne he's reigning Christ is seated on the throne reigning and that terrifies the nations finally I want to look briefly at Jesus the charges against him he's charged basically as a political revolutionary he proclaims himself to be king Luke 23 2 they began to accuse him saying we found this man misleading our nation and forbidding us to give tribute to Caesar and saying that himself that he himself is Christ the king and then it goes on to say they were urgent saying he serves up the people teaching throughout all Judea from Galilee even to this place and again John 19 7 the Jews answered him we have a law and according to that law he ought to die because he has made himself the son of God so the charges are that he's the king of the Jews which ultimately is tied to his being the son of

God but Jesus affirms that he is the king of the Jews by acknowledging Pilate's affirmation of this Pilate says are you the king of the Jews Jesus response is basically you're right about that you've got it right I am the king of the Jews you've said it yourself I'm the king of the Jews but I think we have to understand that as he answers Pilate Jesus's implication is not in the way you mean it I'm the king of the Jews but not in the way that you intend it John 18 33 through 37 so Pilate entered his headquarters again and called Jesus and said to him are you the king of the Jews Jesus answered do you say this of your own accord or did others say it to you about me Pilate answered am I a Jew your own nation and the chief priests have delivered you over to me what have you done Jesus answered my kingdom is not of this world if my kingdom were of this world my servants would have been fighting that I might not be delivered over to the Jews but my kingdom is not from the world then Pilate Pilate said then so you are a king Jesus answered you say that I am a king for this purpose I was born and for this purpose I've come into the world to bear witness to the truth everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice so I think Jesus affirms he is the king of the Jews but not in the way that Pilate would understand it his kingdom is not of this world it's a spiritual kingdom and again as we've already seen Jesus comes into that kingdom he's seated on his throne in heaven at the right hand of the father from where he's reigning now even though every knee has not bowed and there will come a day when Christ will return and every knee will bow and there will be a new heaven a new earth from which he will reign on this new earth but for now it's a spiritual kingdom it's not a physical kingdom he's no threat to Pilate at least to the Roman Empire and their rule in a political sense we saw in verses 12 and verse 14 he's silent before his accusers there was nothing to the charges that they brought against him they had nothing really substantial so really there's no need for him to defend himself but again we see he's willingly going to the cross this is Jesus's purpose this is his desire he wants to go to the cross he and the father are agreed on this so it really doesn't matter what they say about him only that it brings him to the cross the hour has come it's really what we've seen already in first Peter 2 23 that when he was reviled he did not revile in return when he was accused he did not accuse in return but he submitted himself to him who judges rightly so he ultimately is sitting under the judgment of God the father and saying God judges rightly it doesn't matter what Pilate decides or what they accuse me of I'm leaving myself to God and again as I mentioned already we see his innocence three times in John 19 Pilate declares

I find no guilt in him Luke 23 14 and 15 I have found no guilt in this man regarding the charges which you make against him no nor has Herod for he has sent him back to us and behold nothing deserving of death has been done by him we see Jesus proclaimed as innocent not for the first time but then I also want you to understand his suffering we get a beginning taste of this this week we see at the very end of our passage verse 26 then he released for them Barabbas and having scourged Jesus delivered him to be crucified so before he's delivered to be crucified he's scourged scourge is not a word that we use regularly at least not in this sense so let me kind of define what does that mean in the Roman sense it would mean there's a short wooden handle that would have several usually nine so you've heard the cat of nine tails it would have oftentimes nine but it could have a different number of leather cords and then with those other cords at the end they would have lead or brass and then sharply pointed bones so maybe some of each one or the other combination of all those but at the end of the leather cord would be this metal lead brass or sharply pointed bones at the end and you'd be whipped with it 39 times so just think of 39 times multiplied by nine leather straps with metal or sharp bone it was primarily done on the back though not always exclusively on the back would someone be whipped and the body was so deeply cut and torn that oftentimes deep veins and even arteries were regularly exposed so people could die from this sometimes even the bowels and internal organs would be exposed even coming from the back it would be torn to the point you could see inside to their internal organs and so again this often resulted in death and so we're just now getting into this you understand we're headed to Jesus is suffering all the more but I want you to see in this that it's vicarious Jesus is suffering in our place and I want you to remember that as we look at this that Jesus is taking upon himself the suffering that we deserve Isaiah 53 5 he was wounded for our transgressions he was crushed for our iniquities upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace and with his stripes we are healed what is Isaiah 53 speaking of when it says with his stripes we are healed I think it's this it's this whipping it's this scourging that's almost glossed over in

Matthew so though we're not yet at the cross and we know ultimately it's Jesus's death that saves us part of our healing comes through Jesus's suffering he's facing what we rightly deserve for our sins let me close just with some final application I've said already that Pilate finally finds Jesus innocent in the trial verse 26 is still there though he released for them Barabbas and having scourged Jesus delivered him to be crucified and so we see in this the guilty go free and the innocent is crucified how's that possible how could that be what happened well if I continue reading Isaiah 53 here's what it says all we like sheep have gone astray we have turned everyone to his own way and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all he was oppressed he was afflicted yet he opened not his mouth like a lamb that is led to the slaughter and like a sheep that is before its shearers is silent so he opened not his mouth by oppression and judgment he was taken away and as for his generation who considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living stricken for the transgression of my people and so we understand why this would take place even though he's proclaimed innocent the innocent had to die for the guilty he had to take our place in suffering Galatians 3 13

[46 : 50] Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us for it is written cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree and so what you see here is the beginning of Christ becoming the curse for us that we're going to see in the coming weeks that we might go free and so as we look at this as we consider how is it possible that Jesus could be put to death what we see is that this is God's purpose to redeem a people for himself and Christ is graciously going to the cross so that you may have forgiveness of your sins and eternal life in him we could say as well that he stood before the judgment seat of the governor that we might stand before the judgment seat of God that we might be able to stand in God's presence in judgment he took our guilt he received our punishment that we might receive his righteousness and his reward what a blessed state that is for all of us who put our trust in him and so I want to encourage you today as we look at this as we consider continue to consider this have you put your trust in Jesus Christ are you like the crowds maybe who are swayed by those around you or like Pilate who gives into the crowds are we maybe because of fear of man are we afraid to trust in Christ or have you seen Christ to be who he truly says he is the son of God the Christ innocent and understand that he's going to the cross to die for your sins

I want to encourage you to put your trust in him that you might have forgiveness of sins that you might have his righteousness given to you and then for those of you who have already done that this is a cause of worship and praise for us so in a second as we look at our last hymn oh holy Jesus how has thou offended it's begging the question how is it that Jesus could undergo these things and we ought to sing and praise realizing that that it's for us that we might have salvation let's pray together dear heavenly father we want to thank you for Christ thank you for his work for his atonement Lord even for the fact that he's scourged that he's silent before those who will put him to death he did not defend himself though he had every right to do so but he willingly went to the cross that we may have forgiveness for our sins and we pray for all who are in this room that they would put their trust in Jesus Christ that you would give them forgiveness that you would save them we ask all this in Christ's name amen we ask all this in Christ's name and we read you