

150. Pilate Judges Jesus (Matthew 27:11-31)

Prayer: Lord Jesus, because of our sin, we deserve death. But You suffered and died instead of us. We thank You for Your amazing and wonderful gift. Help us always thank You for Your love. Help us always trust Your saving work for us. We pray in Your name, Amen.

Matthew 27:11-14. Jesus stood in front of the governor, Pontius Pilate. Pilate asked Jesus, “Are You the King of the Jews?” Jesus answered, “Yes, the same as you say.” The Jewish chief priests and elders accused Jesus, but Jesus answered nothing. Pilate asked Jesus, “You hear how they blame You?” But Jesus answered nothing. Pilate was amazed.

- When the Jewish leaders accused Jesus of doing wrong, how did Jesus answer? Why did He say nothing?

Matthew 27:15-21. During Passover, the governor had a custom. The crowd of people could choose one prisoner, and the governor will let that person go free. A terrible criminal named Barabbas was in prison. The crowd of people came together. Pilate asked, “Who should I free? Barabbas, or Jesus the Christ?” Pilate knew the Jewish leaders accused Jesus because they were jealous. While Pilate was judging Jesus, Pilate’s wife sent him a message. She said, “That man is innocent! Let Him go. I already suffered much today because of a dream about Him.” The Jewish chief priests and elders talked to the crowd of people and told them to ask for Barabbas free and kill Jesus. Pilate asked the people, “Who should I let go free?” The people answered, “Barabbas.”

- What was the governor’s custom during Passover?
- Jesus is God the Father’s Son. The name “Barabbas” means “Son of the father.” Which Son deserved to die? Which Son deserved to go free?
- Why did the crowd of people ask for Barabbas to go free? Who wanted to free Jesus?

Matthew 27:22-26. Pilate asked, “What about Jesus the Christ? What should I do with Him?” The crowd answered, “Crucify Him!” Pilate asked, “Why? What did Jesus do wrong?” But the crowd only shouted louder, “Crucify Jesus!” Pilate noticed that he could not convince them, and a riot was starting. Pilate got water and washed his hands for everyone to see. Pilate said, “I am innocent of this man’s blood, I am innocent when He dies. His death is your responsibility!” All the people answered, “Let His blood be on us and on our children!” Then Pilate let Barabbas go free. Pilate ordered the soldiers to whip Jesus, then crucify Him.

- Did the crowd of people have a good reason to crucify Jesus? Why did they shout so much to crucify Jesus?
- When the people were stubborn, what did Pilate do? Was Pilate really innocent, or was Pilate also responsible for Jesus dying?
- Pilate said Jesus’ death was the responsibility of the crowd there. The people answered, “Let Jesus’ blood be on us and on our children!” Jesus’ blood can be on them (and on us) in two different ways. How?

Matthew 27:27-31. The soldiers took Jesus into the Praetorium (judgment place) and met around Jesus. They took off Jesus’ clothes and put a red robe on Jesus. They made a crown of thorns and put it on Jesus’ head. They gave Jesus a staff to hold. They knelt down in front of Jesus and mocked Him. They said, “Greetings, King of the Jews!” The soldiers spit on Jesus, took the staff and hit Jesus on the head again and again. When they finished mocking Jesus, they took the robe off and put Jesus’ clothes on Him again. Then they led Jesus out to crucify Him.

- How did the soldiers treat Jesus? Did Jesus try to stop them, or did He accept it? Why?
- Think about everything the Jewish leaders, Pilate, the crowd, and the soldiers did to Jesus. Did Jesus still love them, or not? What does that say about God’s love for us?