

Good Friday Service

There they crucified him,
and with him two others,
one on either side,
with Jesus between them.

John 19:18



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HOLY WEEK DEVOTIONALS



Thoughts & Reflections

Pontius Pilate Character Study

Passages to Read:

Matthew 27:11-26; Mark 15:1-15; Luke 23:1-25; John 18:28-38; Acts 4:24-29

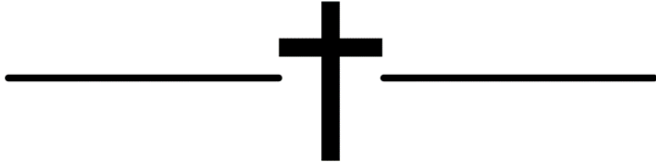
Observations:

- Pilate was the Roman governor of Judea (the province Jerusalem was in) from AD 26-36.
- All four gospels mention Pilate being involved in the trial and execution of Jesus .
- Pilate's wife has an enigmatic dream about Jesus and warns Pilate to "have nothing to do with that righteous man, for I have suffered much because of him in a dream" (Mt. 27:19).
- Pilate is portrayed in the Gospels as an easily swayed ruler who only does what is expedient. He knows the real reason the Jewish leaders want to kill Jesus is out of envy (Mt. 27:18; Mark 15:10). He finds Jesus to be innocent (Mt. 27:22; Luke 23:4, 14-15; John 18:38) yet still releases a guilty man to them, Barabbas, a murderer and insurrectionist (Mk. 15:7) to prevent a riot from happening (Mt. 27:24).
- John's gospel is the only gospel that gives an account of a full conversation happening between Pilate and Jesus after Pilate asks Him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" (see John 18:33-38; 19:9-11). After this conversation Pilate famously asks Jesus, "What is truth?" (John 18:38).
- Pilate was not the only one involved in Jesus' execution; he is included with Herod, the Jewish people and the Gentiles as those responsible for crucifying Jesus (Acts 4:27)

Reflection Questions:

1. Why do you think Pilate was amazed that Jesus did not answer his accusers when they brought charges against Him (Mark 15:5)? Why was he afraid when he found out Jesus was called "the Son of God" (John 18:7)?
2. Do you think that Pilate's wife's dream did anything to his view of Jesus? What does her statement ("have nothing to do with that righteous man, for I have suffered much because of him in a dream") mean?
3. How can Pilate be fully responsible for Jesus' death, as the Bible says he was, if the Bible also says it was God's *predetermined plan and hand* that brought it about (see Acts 4:27-28)? How do we hold these two truths at the same time?
4. Pilate allowed Jesus to be put to death because it was expedient and popular. In other words, he was more concerned with his reputation than doing what was right. Can you think of a time when you let what was expedient or popular get in the way of doing what was right?
5. If Pilate truly believed Jesus to be innocent, as every Gospel makes clear, is that equal to him having saving faith in Jesus?

HOLY WEEK



WORSHIP SERVICES

Please use this booklet to record your thoughts from the daily round table discussions covering a few of the biblical Holy Week characters. There is additional room for Good Friday service notes on the back.

Holy Week Character Studies Monday-Thursday, 3/29-4/1

Tune in for our Holy Week round table discussion with the Cornerstone Staff. You can watch/listen on the Cornerstone app or the website, cornerstonefree.org. Different characters will be discussed each day, including Mary of Bethany, Judas, Peter, and Pilate.

No Worship Service on Thursday, April 1.

Good Friday Service on Friday, April 2, at 7pm.

Communion will be observed. There will be a time of quiet reflection to close the service. The nursery will not be staffed but will be open for families to use if they desire.

Resurrection Sunday services on April 4

at 8:30am, 9:45am, and 11:00am.

Children's Sunday school and nursery will be available at the 9:45am service only. If you do not have young children, please plan to attend the 8:30am or 11:00am service if possible, to allow families with young attenders to come to the 9:45am service. Thank you.



All services will continue to be available online.

Mary of Bethany Character Study

Thoughts & Reflections

Passages to Read:

Luke 10:38-42, John 11:1-57; John 12:1-8

Observations:

- Mary was the sister of Martha and Lazarus of Bethany.
- She is first introduced in the book of Luke when Martha is upset with her because she is “sitting at the Lord’s feet listening to what he taught” instead of helping Martha prepare the dinner. Jesus defended Mary.
- The next time she is mentioned in the Bible (John 11) her brother, Lazarus, is sick. She and Martha sent a message to Jesus about Lazarus’ condition. This passage says that although Jesus loved Martha, Mary and Lazarus, he didn’t leave to go to them until two days later. When Jesus arrived outside the village, Martha immediately rushed to him, but Mary waited inside until she was told Jesus wanted to see her. Then, she immediately went to him. When Jesus saw Mary weeping, a “deep anger welled up within him, and he was deeply troubled.” Then Jesus wept. He called Lazarus out of the grave, and Lazarus came out which caused many people to believe in Jesus.
- Six days before the Passover celebration, Jesus arrived in Bethany at the house of Lazarus. Martha prepared a dinner to honor Jesus. After this dinner, Mary took a 12 oz jar of expensive perfume, and she anointed Jesus’ feet with it, wiping his feet with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance. Judas chastised her and told her the perfume should have been sold and the money given to the poor. Jesus defended her again.

Reflection questions:

1. What are some characteristics you see in Mary that are admirable?
2. Jesus defended Mary’s actions twice. The first was a response to Martha’s complaint. Jesus said to her “My dear Martha, you are worried and upset about many things! There is only one thing worth being concerned about. Mary has discovered it, and it will not be taken away from her.” What do you think Jesus meant by these words?
3. In John 11, we are told that Jesus was very angry, and then He wept in response to seeing Mary and the others weeping. Why do you think He was angry? Knowing he would raise Lazarus, why do you think he wept?
4. Jesus also defended Mary was to Judas. Jesus told him to leave her alone! He said she did this in preparation for his burial, then went on to say “you will always have the poor among you, but you will not always have me.” This seems to indicate that Mary understood Jesus was going to die, although many other close followers didn’t understand or accept this fact. Why do you think Mary understood what others missed?
5. Mary’s love for Jesus was extravagant. She chose to spend her time with Him at His feet, fully devoted to listening and learning. She was criticized by people for doing this, but Jesus defended her actions. How does her example of discipleship and worship motivate you in your relationship with Jesus and others?

Peter Character Study

Thoughts & Reflections

Passages to Read:

Matthew 14:28-33, 16:13-20, 17:1-3; Luke 5:1-7, 22:54-62;
John 1:42, 21:15-17; Acts 2:14-41, 10:9-48, 12:1-19; Galatians 2:7-21

Observations:

- ◆ Life Before Christ:
 - Peter was a man with many names! Simon was his birth name. Jesus called him Cephas (Aramaic), Petros (Greek) which means “rock.” (John 1:42).
 - We know that Peter was married (1 Corinthians 9:5).
 - We know that Peter was a fisherman. Being a fisherman was a common occupation of the day. It would be similar to working as a farmer in the Midwest or in the oil and gas industry in Wyoming. We also know that Peter returned to fishing following the resurrection of Jesus before Jesus restored him and commissioned him.
- ◆ Life with Christ
 - We know that Peter was one of the first disciples (Luke 5:1-7).
 - Peter often acted enthusiastically, but could be brash, impulsive and strong-willed (Mt. 16:22, 14:28-29).
 - Peter was a natural-born leader and often acted as the spokesman for the disciples.
 - Peter first confessed Jesus as “the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Mt. 16:16-17).
- ◆ Life after Christ
 - Peter was instrumental in the building up of the Church (Mt. 16:18-19, Galatians 2:9).
 - Peter makes every effort to point Christians to the true Shepherd and Overseer of the church, the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Pt. 2:25).
 - Peter was a humble leader with great influence and authority... But was he the Pope?

Reflection Questions :

1. Have you ever assumed that you’re nobody great and that God can’t use you because of a lack of education or pedigree in ministry?
2. Jesus certainly refined Peter. How is Jesus refining you?
3. Peter had ups and downs and yet Jesus remained faithful. How has Jesus remained faithful in your life through your ups and downs?
4. Find hope in the fact that Jesus patiently teaches his followers with firmness and love (Ps. 32:8).

Judas Iscariot Character Study

Thoughts & Reflections

Passages to Read:

Matthew 10:1-4; John 12:4-6; Matthew 26:14-16; John 17:12;
Matthew 26:20-25; Matthew 27:3-10

Observations:

- Judas was chosen by Jesus to be a disciple and also given authority by Jesus to perform miracles (Matthew 10:1-4).
- Judas stole money indicating what was going on in his heart and confirmed by the 30 pieces of silver (John 12:4-6; Matthew 26:14-16).
- Judas' act was necessary for Scripture to be fulfilled, and yet, it would have been better had he not been born. How is this reconciled? (John 17:12; Matthew 26:20-25).
- Judas shows extreme remorse for his betrayal of Jesus and even confesses his sin before committing suicide (Matthew 27:3-10).

Reflection Questions:

1. What do you think about Judas' being chosen and empowered by Jesus to perform miracles? Why would Jesus choose and empower Judas knowing that Judas would ultimately betray Him?
2. Judas was motivated by money. How have you allowed personal interests (money, fame, power, etc.) to outweigh the interest of Jesus in your life?
3. How much choice did Judas have in his life and in his sin? How do you reconcile God's sovereignty and human responsibility in this passage?
4. Is Judas in hell? If so, why did he feel remorse and confess his sin? If not, why is he called "the son of perdition?"
5. The old "Hell-Fire and Brimstone" preacher, Billy Sunday, once said, "Hypocrites in the church? Yes, and in the home. Don't hunt through the church for a hypocrite; Go home and look in the mirror. Then see that you make the number one less."