

Wk 9

Mar. 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023

**Communion Sunday. Family Lunch.**

**Call to Worship.**

Psalm 95

Prayer.

Doxology

Joyful Joyful We Adore Thee

**Isaiah 53:1-6 (The Suffering Servant)**

**Prayer.**

Sing Hallelujah

Come Thou Fount

Jesus Name Above All Names

God is So Good

Jesus Paid It All

Offering Prayer.

Pastoral Prayer.

**Sermon Text.**

**John 19:1-15 | The Crown of Thorns**

‘Pilate then took Jesus and scourged Him. And the soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on His head, and put a purple robe on Him; and they began to come up to Him and say, “Hail, King of the Jews!” and to give Him slaps in the face. Pilate came out again and said to them, “Behold, I am bringing Him out to you so that you may know that I find no guilt in Him.” Jesus then came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, “Behold, the Man!”

So when the chief priests and the officers saw Him, they cried out saying, “Crucify, crucify!” Pilate said to them, “Take Him yourselves and crucify Him, for I find no guilt in Him.” The Jews answered him, “We have a law, and by the law He ought to die because He made Himself out to be the Son of God”

Therefore when Pilate heard this statement, he was even more afraid; and he entered into the Praetorium again and said to Jesus, “Where are You from?” But Jesus gave him no answer. So Pilate said to Him, “You do not speak to me? Do You not know that I have authority to release You, and I have authority to crucify You?”

Jesus answered, “You would have no authority over Me, unless it had been given you from above; for this reason he who delivered Me to you has the greater sin.” As a result of this Pilate made efforts to release Him, but the Jews cried out saying, “If you release this Man, you are no friend of Caesar; everyone who makes himself out to be a king opposes Caesar.”

Therefore when Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus out , and sat down on the judgment seat at a place called The Pavement, but in Hebrew, Gabbatha.

Now it was the day of preparation for the Passover; it was about the sixth hour. And he said to the Jews, "Behold, your King!"

So they cried out, "Away with Him, crucify Him!"

Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar."

John Stott wrote a book on Preaching in the 1980's, titled **Between Two Worlds**. The major premise of the book is that a Pastors duty is to preach the word of God to people who are living in the world. And you must take these people between these, Two Worlds.

You must take them from the world that they live in, into a world of Biblical times that they have never lived in, and then take them back into this world that they live in and do something about the truths they discovered during those Biblical times.

Everything given to us in Scripture has been given to us as examples unto us. To know God, and therefore know God's will ,and therein do God's will to God's pleasure.

In order to do this, the pastor must spend the time in private, going back into that world himself, in order to navigate his people into that world clearly and then navigate them back into this world that we live in and give meaningful and personal application to their lives.

In the world we live in now, Israel is at war.

In the Bible time that we are in now, Israel is occupied by Rome and just got out of war.

In the world we live in now, Jesus is misrepresented.

In the Bible time that we are in now, Jesus is on trial and being misrepresented.

In the world we live in now, Political leaders do not care about doing what is right.

In the Bible time that we are in now, Pilate is a political leader that does not care about doing what is right.

In the world we live in now, most religious leaders' agenda is no different than that of corporate executives, where the message they give is vested with the financial stakeholders and has nothing to do with Absolute Truth.

In the Bible time that we are in, the religious leaders of the Jews stand to have their entire racketeering enterprise torn down at the preaching of Jesus Christ.

In the world we live in now, the Christian church has become a living and breathing remnant with its focus on the world of Christ.

In the Bible time that we are in now, the 11 founding Christian church members are scattered anticipating the work that is happening with Christ.

In the world that we live in now, God is Sovereignly in control of all world events.

In the Bible time that we are in now, God is Sovereignly in control of all of these events.

Friends, we are living between two worlds.

**Taking on the importance of John 19, at least in my mind, is liking taking on the Mount Everest of Theology.**

Sometimes I come to a passage of Scripture

**Part I. v. 1-7.** Pilate then took Jesus and scourged Him. And the soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on His head, and put a purple robe on Him; and they began to come up to Him and say, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and to give Him slaps in the face. Pilate came out again and said to them, "Behold, I am bringing Him out to you so that you may know that I find no guilt in Him." Jesus then came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Behold the Man!" So when the chief priests and the officers saw Him, they cried out saying, "Crucify, crucify!" Pilate said to them, "Take Him yourselves and crucify Him, for I find no guilt in Him." The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and by that law He ought to die because He made Himself out to be the Son of God."

**This phase of the trial is the public humiliation of Christ.**

**In John Wall's book, None But Christ, he states that 'all of Christ's life was a cross' – Well all of it was a means of humiliation.**

**They say right that He is a king, but they do not give him any honor at all. They give Him indignation.**

Some show a casual resentment. But all of it is humiliation.

It's clear that Pilate is afraid of the circumstances. On one hand Pilate is afraid of the Jews, On one hand Pilate is afraid of the response of his superiors, but I think in his mind he is afraid of the Divine Retribution of crucifying an innocent man.

**The state of humiliation and the state of exaltation.**

5 stages of Christ's humiliation. The Apostle's Creed.

**4 stages of Exaltation.**

Resurrection. Ascension. Session with God. Return in Glory.

**Philippians 2. The Kenosis.**

**Q: Why was Jesus Christ humiliated? Was there purpose in the humiliation?**

**I don't want to overstate the acts of deliberate, public humiliation, but it seems clear that God uses humiliation to the ultimate good of the person that is publicly humiliated.**

**Communities throughout the world have a rich history of public humiliation.**

This public humiliation by the Romans is certainly far beyond anything sensible or restorative. To Scourge Jesus to the degree that they have would have left lasting scars, if not killed him through this by excessive blood lost and later most likely infection of the wounds.

**What purpose does public humiliation serve?**

**The scourging.**

**Jerome (on Jesus' scourging)**

**A Christian's Humiliation.**

As Christians we could expect humiliation in this world. Christ promised that to the disciples on His last day.

Q: Should Christians expect to be publicly humiliated? Personally ostracized. Disavowed. Not renowned public figures? Does it require a slight compromise to fit in with the world system?

**Consider this vision from Jerome in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century.**

**In A.D. 375** around the middle of the Lenten season, Jerome had a dream.

Jerome, The translator of Scripture into Latin had been baptized a Christian at age 19, but like many of his era, Jerome still loved to read “the judicious precepts of Quintilian, the rich and fluent eloquence of Cicero, the graver style of Fronto, and the smoothness of Pliny.”

After suffering a fever, Jerome experienced a realistic dream in which he was brought before a heavenly tribunal. A voice demanded him to identify himself. “I am a Christian,” Jerome replied.

“You lie,” insisted the voice. “(you are a Ciceronian, not a Christian), for ‘where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.’”

Jerome, imagining himself scourged, vowed never again to read “worldly” books (a vow he kept for ten years before relenting).

Later, relating this experience in a letter to a friend, he advised, “So long as we are held down by this frail body, so long as we have our treasure in earthen vessels (2 Corinthians 4:7); so long as the flesh lusts against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh (Galatians 5:17), there can be no sure victory. ‘Our adversary the devil goes about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour’ (1 Peter 5:8).”

“What communion has light with darkness?” he continued. “‘And what concord has Christ with Belial?’ (2 Corinthians 6:14-15). How can Horace go with the psalter, Virgil with the gospels, Cicero with the apostle? Is not a brother made to stumble if he sees you sitting at meat in an idol’s temple? (1 Corinthians 8:10). Although ‘unto the pure all things are pure’ (Titus 1:15), and ‘nothing is to be refused if it be received with thanksgiving’ (1 Timothy 4:4), still we ought not to drink the cup of Christ, and, at the same time, the cup of devils (1 Corinthians 10:21).”

**Better yet might be the states of Thomas Kempis, the author of one of the most widely distributed Christian devotionals of all time, The Imitation of Christ.**

‘If you desire to know or learn anything to your advantage, then take delight in being unknown and unregarded. A true understanding and humble estimate of oneself is the highest and most valuable of all lessons. To take no account of oneself, but always to think well and highly of others is the highest wisdom and perfection.’ Kempis

Q: Is it possible, that here on earth, Christians are met with smug infamy?

Q: The celebrities that have begun to find it palatable to claim Christ? Are they doing something right and we’ve got it all wrong?

A millennium and a half after Jerome, F. F. Bosworth, a well-respected Pentecostal preacher with an apparently, outstanding healing ministry, tendered a letter of resignation to the Assemblies of God. "It is with regret," he wrote, "that I return my credentials, but I believe that is the consistent thing to do, since I do not believe, nor can I ever teach, that all will speak in tongues when baptized in the Spirit."

The Pentecostals would say, Bosworth succumbed to doubting Scripture, BUT clearer heads would say Bosworth ascended Bunyan's Hill of Difficulty and now sees Truth with greater clarity.

It's been said before, "I would spend more time in getting an experience that fits the Bible than I would in endeavoring to get the Bible to fit personal experience"

**Be careful what you read, what you spend your time on, and which persons you admire.** Even great Christians of the past had imperfections, and imperfect theology.

**Instead of pondering whether we will or won't be humiliated let's concern ourselves with this...**

**'cast off every restraint'** – concern yourself less with where your humiliations come from and moreso concern yourself with what glory you are pursuing. **Whose Glory are you attempting to gain?**

To be humiliated by gods that are not your god. To be plighted by politicians whose laws are beneath the laws you have been called to obey. To be To have religious idols smashed that are not your idols. This is not something that will cause you any harm.

To be beaten when you do not treasure your body, might smart for a while, but it will be no loss of eternal treasure.

If you are beaten for being a Christian in this earthly body, take heart, you get a remodel in the life to come!

**Q: Do your legs hurt here?** They won't there. Have you lost your mind here? Don't worry, people will think you've gone mad that you'd prefer to meditate on Heaven, than watch Yellowstone.

Does Stem Cell Therapy solve your woes here? Try on Resurrection Therapy.

**A slap here, a scrouge there.** You will enter in to heaven, with a hearty handshake from Jeremiah, a bear hug from Ezekiel, an invitation to dinner from Elijah. Scrouge me here... Why, I have a noon stroll of on streets of Gold with the Sons of Issachar.

**A crown of thorns?** Friends, I believe you made a mistake! You won't find me making a complaint or calling for customer service or making a return, BUT I can't help to believe you picked the wrong crown! There is a crown of jewels currently being polished, awaiting for me! A crown of Emerald and topaz and rubies, settled nice and permanent in gold.

I've always been more of a baseball hat kind of guy, but who am I to argue with the Good Lord.

What if, and I'm not at all saying it always works this way, but what if, getting the payouts here is the rooster crowing there, and what if, the rooster crowing here, is the payouts there!?

2 Tim. 2:8 'Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, descendant of David, according to my gospel, for which I suffer hardship even to imprisonment as a criminal; but the word of God is not imprisoned.'

**Do we receive humiliation here like Christ?** Maybe God would permit, maybe He wouldn't. But what difference does it make. God, through the scourging, death and resurrection of Christ, has also permitted us to enter Eternal Glory with Him.

**Part II. v. 8-12 'Therefore when Pilate heard this statement, he was even more afraid; and he entered into the Praetorium again and said to Jesus, "Where are You from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. So Pilate said to Him, "You do not speak to me? Do You not know that I have authority to release You, and I have authority to crucify You?" Jesus answered, "You would have no authority over Me, unless it had been given you from above; for this reason he who delivered Me to you has the greater sin." As a result of this Pilate made efforts to release Him, but the Jews cried out saying, "If you release this Man, you are no friend of Caesar; everyone who makes himself out to be a king opposes Caesar."**

**Q: So the Jews care about honoring Caesar now?**

**Weren't they just inquiring of Christ how to evade Roman taxation? Matt. 22**

**Somethings never change...**

I just cannot help to highlight how in general the broad public narrative, the Zeitgeist of our age, is hypocrisy and deception and it leads people to destruction.

We saw this last week in **Psalm 12. 'They speak falsehood'** – That is the Zeitgeist of every generation.

And Friends, you can most seriously, and most certainly, orient the agenda of your life by whether you are in the group of speaking falsehood or not.

**Rom. 12** 'do not be conformed to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind'

The pattern of this world is a tapestry of deceit. And I know I talk about this often, but frankly, I would be unfaithful if I did not take pains with identifying this constant threat to your well-being.

Christ told us '**even the elect will be deceived**' – No the elect, those who have come to a correct understanding of repentance and salvation, won't lose their salvation, but they might be susceptible to lies in a number of other categories of their life.

**v.10-11 'So Pilate said to Him, "You do not speak to me? Do You not know that I have authority to release You, and I have authority to crucify You?"**

**So let's get this straightened out. All authority comes from God. That's is a Biblical view of Authority.**

God needed a coward to convict Christ. So God appointed Pilate.

God needed a criminal to conspire against Christ. So God had Caiaphas ordained.

God needed a devil to do a dirty deed, so God made a temporary disciple out of Judas.

God will get the business done that He wants done. And God will take the vessels of wrath and use them for His glory and He will take the vessels of mercy and will fill the pots of their life with His mercy.

**'To God be the glory, get things He has done, so loved He the world that He gave us His Son. Who yielded His life and atonement for sin, and opened the life gate that all may go in!'**

**Authority.**

**You can delegate Authority, but you cannot delegate responsibility.**

If you have authority then you have responsibility. If you have responsibility, then you have been given that responsibility to do what is right.

If you do not do what is right, then the people will experience the error of your ways. But, that is not the only reason you have a mandate to do what is right.

Ultimately, your responsibilities will come full circle and you will be held to an account for what you have done in either failure or success to uphold your responsibilities.

**Dodging and deflecting responsibilities.**

Your life will never be blessed if you dodge the responsibilities God puts in your life. If you are the kind of person that habitually dodges your responsibilities, you defer and default on your role in events, it will always come

You will not be able to hit the snooze button on your responsibilities for forever.

An ounce of prevention will be better than a pound of medicine.

If you were born in a landfill then figure out how to work for Waste Management. You've got homefield advantage. You'll climb straight to the top of the latter.

But we **must not grovel about our responsibilities** because gave us responsibilities to develop us, and our development has a direct impact on all the people around us.

**The saddest thing in the world to see** is not poor circumstances, the saddest thing to see is untapped and undeveloped potential.

**Could Pilate have been a good leader?** No, because God determined that he wouldn't be. But if Pilate were to have been a good leader, the only way that God has determined that a person be a good leader is that they take responsibility for doing what is right.

### **Managerial Technique.**

**Do it now, Dump It, Delegate, or Defer.** Personally, I think the concept is horrible. But this is how many people think. This is how Pilate thinks.

There is no sincere focus on what is right. There is no sincere care for upholding justice. He just wants to move on from the problem.

Unfortunately, that's not how authority works.

**'No authority over Me, unless it had been given you from above' John 19:11**

Now this gives a whole new application to **Rom. 13:1 'let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God.'**

Christ does not lobby for alliances. Christ does not create a coalition of forces to highlight where Pilate is wrong.

Christ's quite, humility speaks so loudly that Pilate is afraid and asks in the echo chamber of his conscious 'Where are you from?'

Pilate has adjudicated 100's of cases. We all know there are no criminals in persons, only innocent men wrongly a

### **Sin and Greater Sin.**

I have heard a few people say before that all sin is equal. That one sin is not worse than another sin. Well, unfortunately, that is not what the Bible teaches, nor is it what Jesus teaches.

Yes, the wages of all sin is death. But not all sin is viewed in the same light. Even Christ tells us that here.

There are sins by which they have a greater warrant for punishment than others. The dodging of responsibility certain warrants punishment for the effects that it has on people and on the neglect of the personal potential that God has given a person.

**Part III. v. 13-15 'Therefore when Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus out, and sat down on the judgment seat at the place called The Pavement, but in Hebrew, Gabbatha. Now it was the day of preparation for the Passover; it was about the sixth hour. And he said to the Jews, "Behold, your King!" So they cried out, "Away with Him, away with Him, crucify Him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar."**

**We have no king but Caesar.**

No king but Caesar, huh?



The original idea was that they would have no king at all. That God would rule over them and their days would be spent in peace and through obey God. That their priests would make intercession for them. That their lives would be full of the love of God and the goodness of God in all things.

**But that wasn't enough.**

They wanted a tangible, physical person. An object of affection and an object of rejection. A king to agree with and a king to disagree with.

**The day of preparation for the Passover.**

John is highlighting that Jesus is being sent to death about the same hour as the Passover lambs would be slaughtered on the Passover.

**Pilate Sat down on the judgment seat.**

At this point, Jesus body is completely ripped apart.

Matt. 27:19 'while he was sitting on the judgement 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.'

The Holy Spirit has illuminated Pilate's wife and she is horrified by the judgment of God.

This horrible event has to happen for our salvation.

Psalm 2 'Worship the LORD with reverence and rejoice with trembling. Do homage to the Son, that He not become angry, and you perish in the way, For His wrath may soon be kindled. How blessed are all who take refuge in Him!'

It is better to take refuge in the humiliation of Christ than the exaggerations of the world.

Honor the King. This is His glory.

**Q: Who will be the Ultimate Judge?** Rev. 20 - The Great White Throne Judgment.

**Shall I crucify your king?**

Acts 2:22 'Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know – this Man, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death.'

Yes.

Pilate and the Jews are the proximate cause of Jesus' death, but God is the Ultimate Cause. God is causing these events, done by evil men. But **what men mean for evil, God does for Good.**

**Living Between these two worlds. The world that is and the world to come.**

## **We take heart**

### **Communion**

**Fencing the Communion Table.** (Matter of Conscience until formal membership and church discipline put in place. The purpose is to protect people from incurring condemnation by unrepentant sin.)

#### **1 Cor. 11**

Pastoral Prayer.

### **Benediction.**

Num. 6:22-25

Closing Prayer

### **Small Group Questions.**

1. V.1-7. Have a discussion about your thoughts on the humiliation of Jesus Christ. Have you experienced humiliation for following Christ?
2. V.1-7. Pilate acknowledges that Christ is not guilty, but still attends to the Jews evil agenda; Is it our duty to step in to stop things that are wrong or is it wisdom to just always mind our own business? When do we know when to stand up for what is right and ignore things that aren't our business?
3. V. 1-7. Pilate clearly fails in his responsibilities; do you feel like you have responsibilities, if so, how do you feel about upholding your duties with joy and integrity? Do you see your duties as a 'reasonable act of worship' (Ro. 12)?
4. V. 8-12. Where does all authority come from? How do we reconcile evil and unjust leadership despite God's authorization of it?
5. V. 13-15. 'We have no king but Caesar?' – Who is our King? How can we encourage each other to obey and take refuge in our King? How can we 'share in His sufferings'? 1 Pet. 4.