

March 18th – Don't Live to Please Others

*“So Pilate, wanting to gratify the crowd, released Barabbas to them; and he delivered Jesus, after he had scourged Him, to be crucified.”*

*(Mark 15:15)*

Sometimes it's very tempting to live our lives to please other people. Entire industries are built on the idea of showing everyone else how they ought to live. Just a simple trip to the check-out stand at the grocery store is evidence of that. At the check out stand, there are magazines that tell women how they ought to look. There are nutrition guides that tell us how we ought to eat. The unwritten goal is to help us conform ourselves to the current standard so we can please everyone around us.

Today's verse takes us back to the occasion when Jesus stood before Pilate. Pilate had the power to release Jesus or the authority to sentence Him to death. The Gospels tell us that Pilate took Jesus aside privately and questioned Him. I think it's clear that Pilate was impressed with him and even said that he found no fault in him. But, “wanting to gratify the crowd,” he released a criminal (Barabbas) and sentenced Jesus to die like a criminal on the cross.

Had Pilate been led by the truth, he would've surely released Jesus, but he was more concerned with pleasing the crowd. Why? Because he didn't want anything to endanger his privileged position as the Roman leader of Judea. Perhaps you and I succumb to the same temptation. Rather than taking an unpopular stand and living for Christ, we decide to conform to the world and sin against God. Don't live your life to please others – live your life for an audience of One (Gal. 1:10).