

Dustin Daniels | River Bible Church  
**Mark 15:1-5 | Pilate's Amazement**  
November 21, 2021

**WELCOME:**

- Please turn your Bibles to Mark 15:1-5
- Bibles in back—our gift to you.

**REVIEW:**

Last Sunday, we carefully considered Peter's denial of Jesus. *denials*


It's important to note that Peter didn't just deny Jesus once or even twice, but three times.

What led to Peter's betrayal?

We learned from Peter several things about what not to do.

**KEYPOINT:**

*+ Peter talked too much, listened very little, refused to pray, acted too fast, and followed Jesus at a distance.*

In other words, Pete represents you and me. 

We've all done these things at one time or another.

All of those things set Peter up for failure.

Jesus repeatedly tried to speak into his life, but Peter would not listen.

Peter has a bad case of the normals—just like all of us at one time or another.

*At those times*  
We truly think we're right, like Peter.

And dear friends, when you think you're right, and godly people are telling you that you're not—that is when you are the most deceived.

We become dangerous people when we start asserting our rights.

Peter is exhibit A—starts waving a weapon around like a madman.

Demanding things go our way...or else.

God calls this foolishness in Scripture.

Peter was a fool at that moment.

Where you are right in your own eyes <sup>but</sup> and your a fool in every one elses.

At the end of the day, this boils down to the sin of pride.

We may say not verbally say things like this, but our motive often times is...

*"If people would just do as I say, everything would be fine."*

And yet, it is written...

+ **Proverbs 16:2**—All a person's ways seem right to him, (not God and not others.)

Jesus, in His grace, didn't press the issue with Peter.

+ **KEYPOINT 1:**

*Jesus loved Peter enough to let him fail.*

Jesus did what He could to protect Peter, but Pete didn't want protecting...until He did.

**Last week KEYPOINT:**

*Character is demonstrated by what you're not prepared for.*

Character is revealed by your spontaneous response to a surprise situation.

Peter was caught off guard by a maid who told everyone the truth.

So let me ask you this...

What comes out of your mouth when you are unaware and caught off guard, when you're scared, surprised or fearful?

What comes out reveals what's deep in your heart.

That's all a review from last week. If you missed it, the sermon is on our website.

**INTRODUCTION:**

Today we meet a new person in the narrative of Jesus' passion.

Pontius Pilate

As you'll remember, the Jews have already had two of three trials of Jesus. These Jewish trials make a mockery of their judicial system.

We'll see the third Jewish trial today, along with the three trials of the Romans.

But before we get there, let me set today's narrative up and back up a little bit to give us some context.

It was around 1:00 on Friday morning where Judas Iscariot betrayed Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane.

The Roman officers, Temple Police and the Sanhedrin (Jewish Supreme Court) are with Judas during the arrest Jesus.

There could have been 1,000 people there.

When they arrested Jesus they didn't take him to a holding cell in the Temple, but instead, they brought Jesus to the house of Annas, the high priest emeritus.

This was the first Jewish Trial.

Annas found Jesus not guilty.

He didn't say that—but his actions prove it.

Because Annas sent Jesus across the courtyard over to his son-in-law's home—Caiaphas—who just happens to be the reigning high priest. (John 18:19–24).

This is the second Jewish trial of Jesus—happens around 3:00am.

No matter how hard Caiaphas tried to condemn and convict Jesus formally, he couldn't find any faithful witnesses or testimony against Jesus.

So the Sanhedrin made up accusations of blasphemy and sentenced Jesus to death.

This is also the same time where Peter found himself on trial.

We discussed that last Sunday.

As we dive into this narrative this morning, it's important to note that the other three Gospels give much more details than Mark.

So we're going to harmonize the Gospels so we can see a more vivid picture of today's narrative.

But we're really going to focus on this man named Pontius Pilate.

Who is this man? And why is he so important in the life of Jesus Christ?

*Secondly - Why do you care?*

*\*Please stand for the reading and honoring of God's Word.\**

### **SCRIPTURE: Mark 15:1-15 CSB**

**Mark 15:1**—As soon as it was morning, having held a meeting with the elders, scribes, and the whole Sanhedrin, the chief priests tied Jesus up, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate.

**Mark 15:2**— So Pilate asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?" He answered him, "You say so."

**Mark 15:3**— And the chief priests accused him of many things.

**Mark 15:4**— Pilate questioned him again, "Aren't you going to answer? Look how many things they are accusing you of!"

**Mark 15:5**— But Jesus still did not answer, and so Pilate was amazed.

### **PRAY:**

*Teach me, Lord, the meaning of your statutes, and I will always keep them.*  
(Psalm 119:33)

### **EXEGESIS:**

**Mark 15:1**—As soon as it was morning, having held a meeting with the elders, scribes, and the whole Sanhedrin, the chief priests tied Jesus up, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate.

*As soon as it was morning*—that phrase is divine. It is glorious and magnificent.

The power of God to save sinners is upon mankind this very day.

The waiting is now over—Mankind has been waiting since Genesis 3:15.

It's like God Himself can't wait a moment longer to:

- save humanity from themselves
- to save them from a very real place called hell
- AND to save them for God's Kingdom.

So, it is morning, and Luke's Gospel gives us more detail.

**Luke 22:66**— When daylight came, the elders of the people, both the chief priests and the scribes, convened and brought him before their Sanhedrin.

This third meeting was simply a formality for the Jews.

It probably didn't take long.

It's a legal necessity—they wanted to legalize their lawlessness.

They wanted to give some kind of credence to every Jewish law that they broke the night before.

Because they knew it was illegal to convict Jesus at night.

They knew they were breaking the law by bribing witnesses to lie.

They knew that it was detestable in God's sight for Jesus not to have his own defense.

So, they wanted to feel good about themselves as they lay their head on the pillow tonight, thinking that they somehow and somehow fulfilled their duty with the justice system.

Secondly, they had to discuss what crime to charge Jesus with formally.

What was his crime? What did Jesus do so wrong?

What heinous act did Jesus perform that was worthy of death—and death on a Roman cross for that matter?

Well, Pilate didn't care one bit about the Jews bickering on religious laws.

So the Sanhedrin chose to charge Jesus with something that they knew would get Jesus crucified.

The charge?

Claiming to be a new king—which is a severe offense to the Romans—punishable by death.

So, the Jews, having found Jesus guilty once again at this third trial— they knew they had to get Jesus to Pilate around dawn.

Why did they have to get Jesus in front of this man named Pontius Pilate first thing in the morning?

The official workday of the Roman government started very early in the morning.

Why? Because the Roman politicians only worked half days!

They “embarked on pursuits of leisure” for the rest of the day.

Roman legal proceedings began at daybreak.

Because Pilate heard cases from sunrise to 9 a.m.

**Mark 15:1**— and handed him over to Pilate.

The play on words, “handed him over” is significant:

Jesus must be delivered up according to God's plan of salvation.

The picture here is that God is the primary cause who is handing Jesus over.

The Jews are the secondary cause.

We see this laid out in the book of Acts. Peter is speaking to the Jewish leadership.

**Acts 2:23**— Though he (Jesus) was delivered up according to God's determined plan and foreknowledge, you (Jews) used lawless people (Romans) to nail him to a cross and kill him.

So in God's plan for salvation, God allowed the hatred of both Jews and Gentiles— all of mankind participated in murdering the Anointed One.

So the Jews arrive first thing in the morning. They are standing outside Pilate's headquarters.

**cf. John 18:28**— They did not enter the headquarters themselves; otherwise they would be defiled and unable to eat the Passover.

This verse is a prime example of why Jesus hates religion.

These “religious” men refuse to enter a Gentile's home because it will make them ceremonially unclean—



But, they have no problem, even under oath— lying, scheming and bribing all in an effort to murder the Son of God.

+ **cf. John 18:29**— *So Pilate came out to them and said, "What charge do you bring against this man?"*

+ **cf. John 18:30**— *They answered him, "If this man weren't a criminal, we wouldn't have handed him over to you."*

That's kind of snarky isn't it?

They don't answer Pilate's question.

The Jewish Sanhedrin clearly do not want Pilate to hold another trial.

In their minds, they already tried Jesus—three times!

Jesus is guilty and deserves death.

So, in all reality, the Sanhedrin are trying to force Pilate to do their dirty work from the very start.

They want Pilate to be the executioner.

But Pilate is on to their game.

+ **cf. John 18:31**— *Pilate told them, "You take him and judge him according to your law."*

*"It's not legal for us to put anyone to death," the Jews declared.*

Pause... I need to mention that the OT prophesied the Empire of Rome <sup>had</sup> in the <sup>Wall</sup> fulfillment of biblical prophecy.

The cross was foreshadowed in the Old Testament (Deut. 21:22–23; Num. 21:5–9; Ps. 22:1, Isa. 53:5; Zech. 12:10).

Secondly, Jesus was also very explicit about the cross in the Gospels (cf. Matt. 20:18–19; John 12:32).

But here's the thing... the Jewish people did not use crucifixion as a form of execution.

As you know they carried out capital punishment crimes by stoning. (Josh. 7:25; Acts 7:58).

**cf. John 18:31**— ... "It's not legal for us to put anyone to death," the Jews declared.

When did the Jews lose their authority?

We know that earlier in the Gospels, the crowds threatened to stone Jesus multiple times. (John 8:59, 10:31)

We know the story of the woman caught in adultery.

Well, there is an <sup>the Talmud</sup> extra-Biblical Jewish text called The Talmud.

The Talmud reveals the exact year that Israel's ~~capital punishment~~ authority was <sup>lost its authority for capital punishment.</sup> revoked.

The year is AD 30.

This is also the same year that Jesus was crucified. - April 7, AD 30

One of the reasons that the Disciples were confused about Jesus talking about His crucifixion was that Jews don't crucify people—they throw stones at their head.

If Jesus had been executed under Jewish law, He would have been stoned to death.

Being stone to death would make Jesus a false prophet.

So when Jesus kept saying to his Disciples that <sup>//</sup>my time has not yet come<sup>//</sup>, this is one of the reasons.

In God the Father's perfect timing—He moved the Roman Senate to take away the power of capital punishment from the Israel so that Jesus would die via crucifixion in exact accordance to the Scriptures.

Dang! He said that months prior.

### **KEYPOINT 2:**

*God is also working in our current administration—as He does in every administration.*

**Mark 15:1**— and handed him over to Pilate.

We have to pause at this moment and ask the question...who is this Pilate?

Why does he [all of a sudden] show up on the scene and have this kind of authority over the Jews.

How does this man have the authority over life and death?

This is the first mention of Pilate in Mark's Gospel.

Who is this guy?

Mark doesn't write any detailed information about Pilate because his original audience is the Romans.

They know who Pilate is! But we, as 21st century Americans, don't.

Think about this...Pilate is so important that the early church fathers wrote him into the very creeds of the Christian faith!

**The Apostles Creed**—which both Roman Catholic and Protestant Church use.

*I believe in God, the Father Almighty,  
the Creator of heaven and earth,  
and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord:  
Who was conceived of the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried.*

Pause...It's understandable to have God the Father, God the Son, and the Holy Spirit in a creed like this.

But why are the virgin Mary and Pontius Pilate mentioned?

Why not the other players in Jesus' life?

Why doesn't the Apostle's Creed read like this...

*Jesus was also "betrayed by Judas Iscariot," "denied by Simon Peter," and "delivered up by the High Priest Caiaphas."*

Why are those people not in this creed?

Why is Pilate, a Roman politician, placed in one of the important creeds in all of Christendom?

Well, Pilate is the one who is formally and judicially responsible over the final judgment and execution of Jesus of Nazareth.

In other words, Pilate is the public person of record.

He is the one who issued the legal judgment to crucify the Son of God.

This is a significant detail.

Let's learn some background on Pontius Pilate.

Pilate was born in Spain. He's a Roman citizen.

He served as the Governor or the "Prefect" for ten years.

As you know, the Roman Empire was indeed an Empire.

However, Pilate was a low-ranking Governor in the Empire itself.

No Roman wanted to rule the area known as Palestine.

~~In the OT, this is the same area called Canaan.~~

Palestine was considered one of the lowest rungs on the corporate ladder for a Roman politician.

So ruling the nation of Israel for more than a decade was not so much a sign of success for Pilate, but more of a sign of failure.

Why didn't Pilate move up the corporate ladder?

Well, he was known to overreact to situations that he felt were threatening.

Historians tell us that Pilate was an inept and heavy-handed administrator.

He also purposely provoked the Jews for his own entertainment.

For example, when Pilate first became Governor, he decided to make a statement.

He deliberately insulted the Jews by flying Roman flags in the city of Jerusalem that had the image of Caesar on them.

Romans consider Caesar a god.

As you know, God told the Jews to stay away from images and false gods.

It's number two on God's top ten list. (Exodus 20:4)

The Jews were so offended by Pilate's actions that day, they followed him home walking nearly seventy miles.

And when they got to his residence, they staged a nonviolent protest at Pilate's house for five more days!

At the end of five days, Pilate lost his patience and temper and ordered his soldiers to murder the Jews.

But when the soldiers told the Jews that they have two choices:

1. leave unharmed
2. be murdered

*"The Jews bared their throats."*

They gave the soldiers room to slit their throat from ear to ear.

The Jews dared Pilate to kill a bunch of unarmed men.

They told Pilate they would rather die than for God to be humiliated like that.

Pilate relented and took down the flags from Jerusalem (*Ant.* 18.55–59; *War* 2.169–71; Philo, *Embassy to Gaius* 299–304).

But of course, that kind of news spreads fast and the Emperor eventually heard about it.

Not good, seeing that's one of the first things on his record.

In a second instance, in Luke 13, we learn where Pilate murdered a number of Galilean Jews who were bringing their sacrifices to Jerusalem.

Not only was murder a problem for Pilate, but in the chaos of what took place, the Galileans blood was somehow mixed with the blood of the sacrifices to God.

Obviously, that didn't go over well with the Jews!

Another time, Pilate was constructing a twenty-three-mile-long aqueduct to bring water into Jerusalem.

That's the good news. The bad news is that he stole money from the Jews to do so.

He walks into the Temple and steals from the treasury to pay for it.

How would you like your tithing money to be stolen by the city so they can build more roundabouts?

As you can imagine, that didn't go over well with the Jews either.

The Jews started to protest.

Pilate responded with violence.

At the end of the day, Pilate murdered and trampled a large number of Jews.  
(*Ant.* 18.60–62; *War* 2.175–77).

Pilate ultimately lost his job when he ordered his soldiers to attack Samaritans.

That was the straw that broke the camel's back, and the Emperor fired Pilate and banished him from Rome.

Pilate was so humiliated that he committed suicide.

So this is the type of man that the Jews bring Jesus to.

As we now know, Pilate has no tolerance for Jews. He despises them.

**Mark 15:2**— So Pilate asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?"

All four Gospels have the identical question.

The pronoun **you** is emphatic— "Are **you** the king of the Jews?"

Pilate's tone is that of arrogance, contempt, scorn, and surprise.

As Pilate looks at Jesus, it is absolutely ridiculous that this man—Jesus of Nazareth— claims to be the King of the Jews.

Picture this scene—Jesus' face is beaten, bruised, and bloodied.

Remember, the Jews have been beating on Jesus for the past four or five hours.

His clothes <sup>are</sup> were stained with dirt, sweat, and blood.

Do you have that picture of Jesus in mind?



So, does Jesus, at this moment, appear to be a king to you looking like that?

No, He doesn't appear to be a king to Pilate either.

So Pilate's question dripped with scorn and sarcasm.

And yet, the Jews had to make Jesus appear to be a threat to Rome.

At the same time, they had to portray Jesus as a dangerous revolutionary that was out for Caesar's job.

Even the Jews' logic here makes no sense.

Pilate may be crazy but he's not dumb.

Pilate knows that if Jesus were a true revolutionary, the Jews would hide him and join in his rebellion—not hand Him over.

Note that Pilate did not ask Jesus, "*Are you the Messiah?*"

Pilate doesn't give a rip about the Messiah.

The most important question from Pilate's perspective as an official of the Roman government was, "*Are you really a competitor to Caesar?*"

**Mark 15:2**— So Pilate asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?"  
— Jesus answered Pilate, "You say so."

NIV—"*You have said so.*"

NKJV and the NASB—"*It is as you say.*"

Jesus' answer has been grossly misinterpreted and misunderstood.

Jesus' wording—seems to be a bit strange for us living in the 21st century.

So we have to understand that Jesus' response emphasized Pilates' own words—  
Not Jesus' words.

Jesus didn't deny that title—<sup>That Pilate used</sup> The King of the Jews—<sup>“</sup> but it was not his preferred title.

But make no doubt about it— He is most definitely affirming that He is a King.

From Pilate's perspective a strange and puzzling king... <sup>but a King, none the less.</sup>

What Jesus is saying to Pilate is.... *"Yes I am a king, but it's not the way you think. I'm not out for Caesar's job."*

Jesus' answer implies that it was open for further discussion.

We see that discussion in John 18.

- + **John 18:33**— Then Pilate went back into the headquarters, summoned Jesus, and said to him, "Are you the king of the Jews?"
- + **John 18:34**— Jesus answered, "Are you asking this on your own, or have others told you about me?"
- + **John 18:35**— "I'm not a Jew, am I?" Pilate replied. "Your own nation and the chief priests handed you over to me. What have you done?"
- + **John 18:36**— "My kingdom is not of this world," said Jesus. "If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would fight, so that I wouldn't be handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here."
- + **John 18:37**— "You are a king then?" Pilate asked.

"You say that I'm a king," Jesus replied. "I was born for this, and I have come into the world for this: to testify to the truth.

So even though the Jews found Jesus guilty three times, Pilate does not.

Look at verse 38.

**John 18:38**—After he had said this, he went out to the Jews again and told them, "I find no grounds for charging him.

**I find**—legal language that determines a verdict—still used today.

But the Jews did find grounds...Back to our text...

**Mark 15:3**— And the chief priests accused him of many things.

What things?

**Luke 23:2**— "We found this man misleading our nation, opposing payment of taxes to Caesar, and saying that he himself is the Messiah, a king."

In other words, treason, tax evasion and terrorism.

As we all know, by spending the last 19 months in Mark's Gospel—verse by verse — those things are lies.

Jesus is not an insurrectionist.

He never promoted rebellion.

Jesus never even hinted at civil disobedience against Rome (cf. Matt. 5:21).

The truth is that He taught people how and why to pay their taxes (Luke 20:21–25).

Jesus also physically avoided those people who tried to make Him king by force (cf. John 6:15).

So while the Sanhedrin continue to spew their lies...

**+** **Mark 15:4**— *Pilate questioned him again, "Aren't you going to answer? Look how many things they are accusing you of!"*

Jesus remains silent while Pilate wants Him to respond to the charges.

Because Pilate is following Roman law.

1. Roman law centered on the indictment—the listing of the charges.
2. The defendant responds.
3. The decision.

The problem that Pilate has with Jesus is that Jesus doesn't respond!

*His silence is his answer.*

**+** **KEYPOINT 3:**

*Jesus trusts in God the Father to provide the answer to the charges.*

In other words, Jesus did his job for the past three years.

Jesus was obedient to the Father by proclaiming the Gospel to Israel.

Jesus healed the sick and cast out demons!

And now Jesus watched quietly for God the Father to act.

What's the problem with waiting on God to act?

The problem is waiting!

God's timing is not our timing!

We want to be delivered from pain and suffering right now!

But before the truth is revealed, Jesus <sup>has</sup> to be humiliated, suffer, and die the worst death a human being can endure.

**Mark 15:5**— *But Jesus still did not answer, and so Pilate was amazed.*

Why was Pilate amazed?

Because Pilate was used to people begging and pleading for their lives!

He had never seen this calm, confident demeanor in a prisoner before.

Jesus is certainly not acting like a treasonist, tax evading terrorist that the Sanhedrin are making Him out to be!

**KEYPOINT #4:**

~~Jesus did not behave like a person whose life was in Pilate's hands because it wasn't.~~ Jesus WAS NOT Acting like He WAS getting ready to die — because He WASN'T!

Jesus' composure facing the death penalty amazed Pilate.

As well it should, as Jesus is no ordinary prisoner.

Pilate had no idea that Jesus was fulfilling OT Scripture at this moment.

**Isaiah 53:7**—*He was oppressed and afflicted,*

yet he did not open his mouth.

*Like a lamb led to the slaughter*

*and like a sheep silent before her shearers,*

he did not open his mouth.

Who is Isaiah talking about?

It's at this moment where Pilate is convinced of Jesus' innocence.

This is also the moment where Pilate learns that Jesus is a Galilean.

Pilate thinks to himself, "AH, this isn't my problem. This is Herod's problem!"

+ **Luke 23:6**— *When Pilate heard this, he asked if the man was a Galilean.*

+ **Luke 23:7**— *Finding that he was under Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod, who was also in Jerusalem during those days.*

+ **Luke 23:8**— *Herod was very glad to see Jesus; for a long time he had wanted to see him because he had heard about him and was hoping to see some miracle performed by him.*

+ **Luke 23:9**— *So he kept asking him questions, but Jesus did not answer him.*

Jesus didn't answer because Herod has no real authority—Pilate is the one with authority.

+ **Luke 23:10**— *The chief priests and the scribes stood by, vehemently accusing him.*

So these guys are following Jesus around spouting the same lies to anyone who will listen.

+ **Luke 23:11**— *Then Herod, with his soldiers, treated him with contempt, mocked him, dressed him in bright clothing, and sent him back to Pilate.*

Herod sent Jesus back to Pilate, proving that Jesus was innocent once again.

Both Pilate and Herod saw the Jewish freak show all for what it was.

Religious

At this point, between Herod and Pilate—nobody is making decisions.

So, the Sanhedrin works themselves into an angry <sup>Mob</sup> frenzy, and Pilate is in a more challenging spot than before.

From a political perspective, Pilate had been formally warned by Rome about his administrative style. *Pilate can't start killing people like he's done in the past.*

~~The Emperor warned Pilate of all the heavy-handedness and all the violence without just cause.~~

~~Needless to say, some type of insurrection would not look good on Pilate's record.~~

Then all of a sudden, Pilate had an idea that would get him out of this mess. What was the idea?

You'll have to come back next Sunday!

## PREACH

I want to focus on verse five as we wrap up today's message.

**Mark 15:5** *But Jesus still did not answer, and so Pilate was amazed.*

Pilate was amazed at Jesus.

Pilate's a Gentile!

Over ten years of ruling Palestine, Pilate had sentenced a lot of people to death via crucifixion.

He watched many people beg for their lives.

He's watched countless crucifixions.

And yet, no one acted or responded like Jesus to Pilate.

Throughout the Gospel's we see many people amazed <sup>w</sup> at Jesus:

After Jesus calmed the storm ~~the Disciples asked~~

**Matthew 8:27**— The men were amazed and asked, "What kind of man is this? Even the winds and the sea obey him!"

After Jesus drove out a demon...

**Matthew 9:33**— When the demon had been driven out, the man who had been mute spoke, and the crowds were amazed, saying, "Nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel!"

When Jesus taught Nicodemus...

**John 3:7**—Do not be amazed that I told you that you must be born again.

Now there are also two times in the gospels where Jesus is amazed.

Both instances deal with faith.

Jesus was amazed by the people in His hometown of Nazareth:

**Mark 6:6**—And he was amazed at their unbelief.

Jesus was also amazed hearing of the Centurion's faith—a Gentile!

**Matthew 8:10**— Hearing this, Jesus was amazed and said to those following him, "Truly I tell you, I have not found anyone in Israel with so great a faith."



Question: What is it that amazes and astonishes and marvels you about Jesus?

- Does the fact that Jesus is the Alpha and the Omega amaze you? (Rev. 1:8)
- Author and perfecter of our faith ? (Heb. 12:2)
- Jesus is eternal life. ( 1 John 5:20)
- Faithful and true. (Rev. 19:11)
- Image of the invisible God (Col. 1:15)
- King of all kings (Rev. 19:16)
- Lamb of God (John 1:29)
- Lord of Lords (Rev 19:16)
- Prince of Peace (Isa 9:6)
- Righteous Judge (2 Tim 4:8)
- Savior of the World ( John 4:42)
- Shepherd and Overseer of your souls (1 Pe 2:25)
- Your life (Col 3:3)
- Your salvation (Eph 1:13)

And I can go on and on...all day!

Or maybe a better question is—*Is Jesus amazed with you?*

like the Centurion

Is Jesus amazed that you are an obedient child of God sharing the good news of the Gospel with those in the Verde Valley.

Does Jesus marvel that you are applying His Word to your life?

Is Jesus astonished—and smiling—because you're doing your part in fulfilling the Great Commission by knowing the 3 Circles, handing out those blue invitation cards and giving away Bibles? ☺

Or is Jesus amazed that you're so fearful of the world?

-like those in His hometown of NAZARETH

Is He amazed that you're more concerned about politics and Covid than the souls of those in the Verde Valley?

What do you spend more time talking about? Covid or Jesus?

Yes, Jesus was amazed twice in the Gospels.

1. Faithlessness
2. Faithfulness

*That is a good question - to ponder this week.*

**PRAYER**

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