

Pilate, The Roman Governor

John 18:28-40

Thank you for joining us, we are glad to be here and honored you are there. This is *Hope for Today*, and this program is produced by *Heralds of Hope*, our goal is to use media to make disciples of Jesus Christ to accomplish the great commission in our lifetime. While you are listening to today's teaching, we hope you will be encouraged and your relationship with Jesus will become deeper and more meaningful. This after all is what a disciple is, someone who is a follower or student of a teacher. Our teacher is Jesus, and we want to become more like him.

Turn to John 18 and for the account of Jesus before Pilate. We are so glad you joined us, and we are happy to tell you we know the answer to Pilate's big question. He asked, "What is Truth?" And the truth was standing right in front of Him. Let's listen to Pastor J Mark as he teaches us more about Jesus.

The first court before which Jesus stood trial was a religious court. It is proper that that happened. From the religious court Jesus' case was transferred to the civil court. This was headed by Pilate, the Procurator, or Governor. He had been appointed in the year 26 in the common era.

Rome had governors in various parts of the empire, but the governing of Palestine seemed to be so difficult that Pilate, the Governor, was responsible directly to the emperor in Rome. Years ago, a pillar was found in the ruins of Caesarea along the seacoast. In the inscription on that pillar was the name Pilatus, that is Latin for Pilate. So, there is no question, but that Pilate was a Roman Governor in Palestine. The Bible record states he was there at this time and was to render a judgment about Jesus. They brought Him to Pilate's judgment hall early in the morning. The Governor expected to sit in judgment then.

John, the beloved disciple in his report of that scene, pictures the captain and his soldiers, the religious leaders with the mob which had gathered and PILATE-THE ROMAN GOVERNOR. The text is found in John 18:28-40.

28 *Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment: and it was early; and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the Passover.*

29 *Pilate then went out unto them, and said, what accusation bring ye against this man?*

30 *They answered and said unto him, if he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee.*

- 31 *Then said Pilate unto them, take ye him, and judge him according to your law. The Jew therefore said unto him, it is not lawful for us to put any man to death:*
- 32 *That the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he spoke, signifying what death he should die.*
- 33 *Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again, and called Jesus, and said unto him, Art thou the King of the Jew?*
- 34 *Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me?*
- 35 *Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me: what hast thou done?*
- 36 *Jesus answered, my kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.*
- 37 *Pilate therefore said unto him, Are you a king then? Jesus answered, You say that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.*
- 38 *Pilate saith unto him, what is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault at all.*
- 39 *But ye have a custom, that I should release unto you one at the Passover: will ye therefore that I release unto you the King of the Jews?*
- 40 *Then cried they all again, saying, not this man, but Barabbas. Now Barabbas was a robber.*

From this text we obtain insights into the PROCEEDINGS employed by Pilate, the Roman Governor.

In this civil court scene, the first proceeding began promptly: **The Accusation was Required.**

It was early in the morning when they brought Jesus to Pilate. He had the right to ask His accusers to state their case, "What accusation do you bring against this man?" In reply they simply said, "If He were not a malefactor, we would not have brought Him to you." In other words, we do not bother you with the innocent, Governor. He is an evildoer. Malefactor means evildoer or a doer of evil. They answered, we brought Him here because He is an evildoer, and He must stand judgment before you.

But Pilate tried to turn the case back to them by saying, "You have a law, judge him by your law." But they replied, "It is unlawful for us to execute a man." Rome had denied them this right and they were correct in saying it.

However, I want you to notice carefully verse 3Z. It reads like this: "That the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he spoke, signifying what death he should die." You see, the Jewish system of execution was by stoning. The Roman system of execution was by crucifixion. Jesus had said, (it is recorded in John 12:32), "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me. He said that to signify what death He should die. When Jesus had spoken to Nicodemus, early in His ministry, He had said, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up." So, their request that Pilate try Him and sentence Him was in harmony with the divine purpose.

So first, the accusation was required. Having heard that,

Pilate entered into conversation with the accused and **The Investigation Was Conducted.**

Pilate asked Jesus four questions. The first one was right on target, "Are you the King of the Jews"? That was a very touchy question. It was basic to the trial. If Jesus had said, yes, He would immediately have run into the problem of the Roman authority. I would have you note, however, that Jesus did not deny it, He only raised the question, "Do you say this of yourself, or did somebody else tell you?" He did not deny it. At the moment He did not admit it.

Pilate's second question was logical, "What have you done?" He was searching for evidence: Pilate needed to know why the nation had delivered Him. But that was a loaded question. It was hardly a fair question because He would convict Himself. If, indeed, He was a malefactor, doer of evil, as they said He was, He would have convicted Himself. It was hardly a fair question.

Then Jesus replied, "My kingdom is not of this world order". Pilate immediately caught the note and asked Him the third question, "Are you a king then"? Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. I really came to bear witness to the truth. And everyone who is of the truth hears my voice.

Then Pilate asked the fourth question, “What is truth”? It was an easy way to avoid a responsibility. Pilate hadn’t heard Jesus once declare, “I am the way, the truth and the life”. What is truth? Jesus is truth. Pilate missed the truth in investigating the case.

Upon a warped accusation and an inconclusive investigation, **The Summation was Offered.**

Pilate’s first statement to the Jews was courageous, “I find no fault in Him”. That is a clear statement, a clear summation of the case, “I find no fault.” But instead of carrying through with that, he responded, “I am willing to honor your custom that at Passover I release some prisoner to you. Now, will you, therefore, that I release unto you the King of the Jews?”

That must have been an insult to them. They immediately responded by rejecting his proposal in these words, “Not this man, but Barabbas.” The comment is that Barabbas was a robber. He was an insurrectionist, a criminal but they chose a criminal for release rather than an innocent man. Pilate offered the summation, but they rejected it.

The trial before Pilate was not based on facts, but on feeling. They chose to free a wicked man and crucify an innocent one. But, my friend, only an innocent one could die for us. Pilate verified His innocence. He said, “I find no fault in Him”.

Again, I raise the question, “Why?” God knew only in that way would it be possible for us to be forgiven. Peace with God is possible only by His way. Your way or my way will not bring peace.

O God, righteous Heavenly Father, we bow in your awesome presence. We acknowledge that you are sovereign over all things. In today’s lesson we saw how you arranged the circumstances of history to accomplish your plan for our salvation.

Pilate had freedom to make choices, and he did, but you used his choices to fulfill you plans and purposes. And so, our innocent Savior, Jesus Christ, was delivered to death, unjustly, for our sake. And yet, through this clear miscarriage of justice, we have obtained peace with you through Jesus, in whose name we pray, Amen.

Thank you, J Mark for this teaching from God’s word and thank you for joining us. It is a privilege for us to study God’s word and learn from it. Now take what you heard and put it into practice. The teaching and instruction in the Bible is for us and it is meant to be lived.

Don’t be like the man in James 1 who see himself in a mirror then goes away and forgets what he looks like, instead be like the man in v 25 who looks intently into the word and is a doer of the work. God says, “that man will be Blessed in what he does.”

And we want to bless you as you follow Jesus and share Him with those around you. If you have any questions or if you would like today's teaching just contact us and ask for it by title or tell us the passage. We also have a study guide available designed to help you learn more from each lesson, it is called the Hope Herald. Please let us know if you are interested, and we would be happy to give you one.

Here are several ways you can reach us. The quickest and easiest way is through email. Our email is mail@heraldsofhope.org. If you don't have email, you could send us a letter, send it to *Hope for Today*, Box 3, Breezewood, Pennsylvania 15533. And the 3rd way you can contact us is through our website. Our website is heraldsofhope.org. Please look on our website for this teaching and other similar teaching. There you will also find other resources available from Heralds of Hope. Again, the website is heraldsofhope.org

We thank you again for joining us for today's program. I encourage you to join us again next week as Pastor J. Mark continues teaching from the Gospel of John. We look forward to being with you then and will leave you with this blessing from Number 6. The Lord bless you and keep you, the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you. The Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace.