

## Home Group Leader's Notes

Week of April 3, 2022

John 18:28-40

Sermon Series: *This is Love*

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### WHEN WAS IT FOR YOU?

When you first learn of Jesus being on trial? What was it like?

His trial is the focus of our passage. For me, I didn't hear about His trial until I was an adult. It was and is still shocking and sickening.

### LEARNING FROM GOD'S WORD

We can learn so much from every page of Scripture. This week we are examining the trial of Jesus before Pilate. The author, John, was selective and insightful in his record. Read through John 18:28-40 and consider these comments and questions. Please remember to look beyond the mere facts of the trial. Learning should move us deeper in our love and trust of God.

Who and what is the driving force of Jesus' trial?

The Jews were the driving force. They rejected Jesus as the Messiah and believed Him to be upsetting their plans and power. Behind them, it is clear that the devil himself wanted Jesus stopped and destroyed.

Besides Jesus, there are two main forces at work, the Jews and Pilate (Rome). They do not like each other and are reluctant to cooperate. Why are they working together? What are the Jews attempting to do through Pilate?

They had different motives. The Jews reasons are above. They manipulated Pilate into hearing the case. The Romans wanted to quiet the stirrings of the Jews through appeasement.

How were the Jews working for and protecting their own interests in this passage? (28-31)

The Jews could (and had previously tried to) stone a man. But they feared the reprisal of the people, for Jesus had done many great acts of love and was teaching with authority. Instead, they wanted Rome to do their dirty work. So, they claimed that he was "a criminal" and appealed to Pilate.

What accusation against Jesus did the Jews bring to the Roman authorities? Why didn't they handle the issue themselves?

They accused Him of sedition, saying that he made the claim of being a king. (See v. 33)

The Sanhedrin did have the power to put people to death. What method would they have used? How does this coincide with Jesus' prophecy in 12:32-33?

They could stone a person, but they could not crucify Him. Jesus prophesied that He would be "lifted up from the earth."

What was Pilate's lead question? Why would he ask this question? (I.e., What was his source of information for this question?)

"Are you the king of the Jews?" This is what he heard from the Jews (Sanhedrin officials). This could be considered an act of sedition against Rome.

How did Jesus answer and explain His answer? How was this relevant to Pilate (Rome) and what was Pilate's decision? (33-38)

Jesus answered that His kingdom was not of the world. Therefore, He was making no claim against Rome.

Jesus included in His answer, "If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting so that I would not be handed over to the Jews." How was this relevant to the governor of Rome? (36)

A person making a claim against the Roman kingdom would be fighting for their other kingdom. Jesus had stopped Peter from attempting to fight against Rome. He made no military attempt at bringing about another kingdom.

Jesus' answer to Pilate included some unexpected statements. Jesus spoke to His birth and purpose, i.e., "to testify to the truth" (37). What did He mean? What was His purpose and the implications of that purpose? (cf. John 17:1-8)

Jesus referred to the truth that He revealed God. He represented the truth about God and His master plan to save people from the wrath of God by sending His Son to die in their place.

When Jesus was before Pilate, who was guiding the conversation? What was the result of the questioning?

Pilate opened with a question, but Jesus was guiding the conversation. Jesus was able to (1) find out the source of Pilate's information, (2) explain the truth about His kingdom, and (3) reveal His purpose for being born and coming into the world.

Pilate was unconvinced of the accusations of the Sanhedrin. Why didn't he just release Jesus? (38)

Pilate wanted to quell the stirrings by appeasing the Sanhedrin officials. After all, Jesus was just another man to kill.

From this passage, what do we learn about Jesus and His purpose?

Jesus was intentional about everything. No one forced Him to go to the cross. Rather, we see Jesus, influencing people and revealing why He came into the world, i.e., to sacrifice Himself and to reveal God's kingdom.

What do we learn about people of 'the world' and their response to God?

Both the Jews and Pilate were focused on being in control, having power, and refusing to believe in the God who came to die for them. One group used religion, the other used politics and the power of Rome. Both failed.

#### **HOW MIGHT THIS INFLUENCE HOW I THINK AND ACT THIS WEEK?**

Two opposing groups worked to condemn Jesus. Pilate was reluctant to condemn Jesus but turned to others in the world to make his decision. (Cf. "Do you want me to release 'the king of the Jews'?") What are some ways that we are looking to the world to make decisions for us?

We are all being influenced by the world. We are being told how to think, feel, and act. This will include what to purchase, where to go, what to wear, choices of entertainment, etc.

Who is influencing whom?

## DISCUSS TOGETHER

What do you learn about Jesus from this passage? How should His thinking and purpose be ours? Jesus sacrificial love and resolve to save others by revealing the truth about God should be my purpose in life.

We can see a great incongruity of the Jews worrying about their “cleanness” (28) while scheming to have Jesus executed. What does this tell us about people (including us)? How is it that we sometimes act this way?

We can appear righteous or spiritual or religious and yet be dirty on the inside. We are experts at trying to look good on the outside but willing to lie, manipulate, and scheme to get our way.

This passage reveals how a group of people influenced others to make terrible decisions. What are some ways that the world is influencing our direction and decisions? How is mob mentality or group think affecting our lives?

Caution: This conversation could turn political.

Diane and I recently visited The Living Desert in Palm Desert. Almost every animal exhibit had information about origins that assume that there is no Creator.

The world is telling us what to think about God, the gospel, politics, war, relationships, morality, etc. The list is endless.

## PRAYER NEEDS

Jesus taught us that prayer is coming to our Heavenly Father with our needs, concerns, and requests. Through prayer, we declare our dependence on God with everything in our life.

Please join us in asking our Father for some needs of the Trinity family.

- Please pray for the many families who have lost loved ones
- Please pray for God to guide our Elders, Directors, and Pastors
- Please pray for teamwork and unity as we love and serve our church family and community
- Pray for the Micah House team as they help students and share the good news

I pray that our Father will help us all to see God’s magnificent love and grace. It’s a privilege to team up with you.

Steve