

The Road to Redemption

[The People's Court - John 19:5-16]

Why? Nicole Nordeman

We heard a crowd of people shouting
And so we stopped to find out why
And there was that man
That my dad said he loved
But today there was fear in his eyes

So I said "Daddy, why are they screaming?
Why are the faces of some of them beaming?
Why is He dressed in that bright purple robe?
I'll bet that crown hurts Him more than He shows
Daddy, please can't you do something?
He looks as though He's gonna cry
you said he was stronger than all of those guys
daddy, please tell me why
Why does everyone want him to die?"

"My precious Son, I hear them screaming
I'm watching the face of the enemy beaming
But soon I will clothe You in robes of My own
Jesus, this hurts Me much more than You know
But this dark hour I must do nothing
Though I've heard Your unbearable cry
The power in Your blood destroys all of the lies
Soon You'll see past their unmerciful eyes
Look there below, see the child
Trembling by her father's side
Now I can tell You why
She is why You must die"

This morning may the sacrifice, trial, cross, and resurrection not be just another historical fact.
Today may the cross of Calvary be personal.

The People's Court [John 19:5-16]

John 19:5 Then Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. And *Pilate* said to them, “Behold the Man!”

As we open the Gospel of John and walk the road to the Redemption, via the cross. We are stopped by a scene involving now not only Pilate the governor but a larger audience. To this audience Pilate brings (an innocent) Jesus.

Pilate has already issued a “not guilty verdict” which usually would stand but the crowd is undeterred. Now, Pilate appeals not to the crowd’s compassion but to their sense in recognizing that Jesus remains no threat.

Jesus, the Son of God has already been scourged (whipped by professional Roman torture specialists). They have made a mock crown out of thorns (most likely date palm branches in which the thorns can grow up to 12”). And these Soldiers have taken turns bowing down, as they would for a royal dignitary, and striking him repeatedly in the face. So we see Jesus, presented bloodied, bullied, worn, and ragged. This is the Jesus that is presented to the people to show he is truly no threat to the empire or the Jewish people.

The Person of Jesus Christ is a threat

But we see in Scripture that Jesus is not some meek, mild, savior that you add to an already good life. The perfect sinless sacrifice of Christ is a threat to our daily existence. Something in the very nature of the crowd knew that Jesus was different. And to acknowledge Jesus at the Son of God meant radical shift and that their lives as they knew it would never be the same.

Often we treat Jesus like we eat our bbq. Often we feel like our slab of ribs is pretty good; and if we want it to be a little better we can add the sauce. If you were BBQ, Scriptures show that you are burnt to a crisp and not salvageable. Our lives are more like charcoal than filet mignon. And Jesus makes us new.

³³ But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My

Father who is in heaven.

Matt. 10:34 “Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword.”

Mark 10:21 Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, “One thing you lack: Go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow Me.” **Mark 10:22** But he was sad at this word, and went *away sorrowful*, for he had great possessions.

¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone *is* in Christ, *he is* a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. ¹⁸ Now all things *are* of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation,

How does the deity of Christ threaten?

Jesus brings a sword because he knows that there are things in our lives that will only end that involves a sword. Jesus knows what parts we are holding onto that will make us sorrowful. Jesus knows that old habits die hard. ***There is nothing that I have given up for the sake of Christ that I regret.***

Jesus ***threatens your sin***. Are you on drugs and addicted? Jesus is a threat because he will break those chains. Going through a divorce? Jesus is a threat because he can bring reconciliation. Living a life addicted to lust? Jesus can give you new eyes and a new heart. Deeply religious and counting on your moral standing to bring grace? Jesus is a threat because he makes all things new not good things better. Oh that we would behold the man this morning. Jesus is better than anything we can think, ask, do, or say. Jesus is a threat to your retirement, church, comfort, charmed life, hopes, and dreams. And yet in Christ, everything else fades away.

Oh that Christ would call some into the ministry, some to the mission field, some away from your charm retirement to do the work of the master. Thank God Christ is threatens and stretches our sensibilities!

To behold the man is to behold new life where the old has passed away. Jesus is a threat to your old life. But to die to your self means that you gain abundant life.

Pilate dramatically presents Jesus: a sorry sight, swollen, bruised, bleeding from those cruel and ridiculous thorns. In his dramatic utterance Here is the man!

(Ecce Homo) Pilate is speaking with dripping iron: here is the man you find so dangerous and threatening: can you not see he is harmless and somewhat ridiculous (Carson)?

ECCA Homo – Behold This Jesus !!

John 19:11 Jesus answered, “You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above. Therefore the one who delivered Me to you has **the greater sin.**”

Not only does Christ threaten our lives—he directly confronts our sins

The text does not exonerate Pilate; his sin is only relatively less than that of the person who handed Jesus over to him. The fact that he would not have any authority over Jesus apart from heaven’s sanction therefore does not absolve him of all responsibility (Carson).

We see in this text a microcosm of our sinful nature and dealings. For some, **we feel like Pilate**: a good person who has declared Jesus innocent. For the most part he agreed with Jesus. Yet, he is not innocent. Our sin, even though small in our eyes is profaning an infinite holy God.

Do you feel like you are good and **your sin is no big deal**? Listen to the state of Pilate, although his sin is less than the greater sin of those who offered Jesus up, he is still held accountable. For those who feel good this morning, **know that none is good but God**. Turn to him and find complete and total forgiveness. May we quit comparing our lives to the “greater sins” of others.

Yet, we see in this text another group, those guilty of a “greater sin.” Today we have some in our midst that might feel they have sinned and are beyond the grace of Christ. What are you struggling and carrying with you today? What weight do you bear daily? Is it abortion, divorce, lust, addiction, abuse? Know that even the “greatest sins” in our eyes find forgiveness at the cross. Do you trust Him enough to give your greatest sins, knowing that only Jesus has the power to totally and radically give you mercy.

Its not enough to declare and agree with the innocence of Christ, we must admit and declare our guilt

Jesus confronts sin/ every sin in our lives. Jesus forgives sin/ every sin that is confessed and laid at the foot of the cross.

John 19:12 From then on Pilate sought to release Him, but the Jews cried out, saying, “If you let this Man go, you are not Caesar’s **friend**. Whoever makes himself a king speaks against Caesar.”

Pilate had ample reason to fear the implicit threat. Tiberius Caesar was known to be quick to entertain suspicions. (Carson).

Friend of Caesar was virtually an official title by the time of the Emperor Vespasian (AD 69-71), but its exact status in Jesus’ day is disputed.

Pilate may have some interest in justice, but he exhibits greater interest in protecting himself politically (Keener).

In confronting our fears Jesus let’s Pilate wrestle with his fear. Wrestling with something will leave an indelible mark. If the mark is left by grace, and your fears are given to the Father, the glory of Christ swallows up our fear.

So why is Jesus silent in our fears? He has already answered in his death, burial, and resurrection.

What keeps you from fully trusting Christ today? What keeps you from sharing your faith? What keeps you from radically living a life that displays the fingerprints of his grace upon your life? Is it that we all tremble when our loyalties and friendships are questioned? We desire to love Christ and yet we want friendship with the world.

What is keeping you from fully living out the freedom that Christ can bring? Is it friendship with the world, comfort, or fears of the past?

⁶ Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. ⁷ For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

When the world says “If you trust Jesus you are not a friend...” repeat this line: Are we weak and heavy-laden, Cumbered with a load of care? Precious Savior, still our refuge— Take it to the Lord in prayer; Do thy friends despise, forsake thee? Take it to the Lord in prayer; In His arms He’ll take and shield thee, Thou wilt find a solace there.

Jesus confronts and delivers us from our fears and failures

John 19:13 When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus out and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called *The Pavement*, but in Hebrew, Gabbatha. ¹⁴ Now it was the Preparation Day of the Passover, and about the sixth hour. And he said to the Jews, “**Behold your King!**”

Like Caiaphas before him, Pilate spoke better than he knew. The long-awaited king of the Jews stood before them, and they did not recognize him (Carson).

John 19:15 But 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!”

The Hebrew Scriptures repeatedly insist that the only true king of Israel is God himself (Carson).

The kingship of Jesus is a direct assault on the king that currently sits on the throne of my life. Who is your king today? Jesus, Caesar, or another?

The idea that Jesus can be my savior and not my king is myth. Jesus the Savior is King.

My Response

John 19:16 Then he delivered Him to them to be crucified. Then they took Jesus and led *Him* away.

In delivering Jesus over the prefect would have declared, **Ibis in cruce**m (you will mount the cross).

He mounted the cross for you; he mounted the cross for me. In the midst of the court of the people will you declare Jesus as king? Not only deciare will our lives prove the words of our mouths?

Know This:

16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. **17** For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

Respond this:

9 that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. **10** For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Two ways to respond: In this service (after) or by card.

Eph. 3:14 For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁵ from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is **named**, ¹⁶ that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be **strengthened** with might through His Spirit in the **inner man**, ¹⁷ that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being **rooted** and grounded in **love**, ¹⁸ may be able to comprehend with all the saints what *is* the **width and length and depth and height**— ¹⁹ **to know the love** of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Eph. 3:20 Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the **power that works in us**, ²¹ to Him *be* glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

ECCE Homo – Behold the man

Notes

The preferred Roman capital punishment for non-Roman citizens, crucifixion, is one of the most cruel and torturous forms of death ever invented and inflicted in human history (ECNT).

John 19:1 So then Pilate took Jesus and scourged *Him*. ² And the soldiers twisted a crown of thorns and put *it* on His head, and they put on Him a purple robe. ³ Then they said, “Hail, King of the Jews!” And they struck Him with their hands.

There were three forms of flogging administered by the romans:

1. The fustigation, a beating given for smaller offenses such as hooliganism often accompanied by a severe warning.
2. The flagellation, a more brutal flogging to which criminals were subjected whose offenses were more serious
3. The verberatio, the most terrible form of this punishment, regularly associated with other reprisals such as crucifixion.

The chronology of Luke and John is correct. But this means that Jesus received a second scourging, the wretched verberatio, after the sentence of crucifixion was passed (Carson).

Thorns

Probably an instrument of mockery rather than one of torture. The crown recalls the garlands worn by Hellenistic vassal princes, as generally only the highest ruler wore a diadem with white wool (Keener).

Struck

The imperfect verb indicates repeated blows to the face. Matt. and Mark record the soldiers hitting Jesus on the head with a staff used as a mock scepter (ECNT).

Connects with Jesus Jewish captors (18:22), reminding the reader that Jesus faced rejection from both his own nation and the larger ‘world’ (Keener).

The intention of the soldiers was rough mockery, but the long thorns added to the blood and the pain. The soldiers line up to pay their homage, but as they bend the knee and cry ‘hail king of the jews’ they strike him in the face (Carson).

John 19:4 Pilate then went out again, and said to them, “Behold, I am bringing Him out to you, that you may know that I find no fault in Him.”

Usually this ‘not guilty’ verdict reached by the Roman governor would stand (especially if repeated three times) but the Jewish leadership is not to be deterred (ECNT).

In the logic of the story, Pilate appeals not to the crowd’s compassion but to their sense in recognizing that Jesus remains no threat (Keener).

John 19:5 Then Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. And *Pilate* said to them, “Behold the Man!”

Pilate dramatically presents Jesus: a sorry sight, swollen, bruised, bleeding from those cruel and ridiculous thorns. In his dramatic utterance Here is the man! (Ecce Homo) Pilate is speaking with dripping irony: here is the man you find so dangerous and threatening: can you not see he is harmless and somewhat ridiculous (Carson)?

John 19:6 Therefore, when the chief priests and officers saw Him, they cried out, saying, “Crucify *Him*, crucify *Him*!”

Pilate said to them, “You take Him and crucify *Him*, for I find no fault in Him.”

Pilate uses sarcasm: he knows full well that the jews do not have the authority to impose the death penalty, and if they did, they would stone rather than crucify Jesus (ECNT).

John 19:7 The Jews answered him, “We have a law, and according to our law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God.”

John 19:8 Therefore, when Pilate heard that saying, he was the more afraid, ⁹ and went again into the Praetorium, and said to Jesus, “Where are You from?” But Jesus gave him no answer.

Jesus’ silence irritates Pilate. That silence was much worse than the modern crime of contempt of court, for as long as Pilate held the imperial commission he retained in his power both sweeping executive power, and, for non-citizens, final judicial authority. Pilate interprets Jesus’ silence as at best stupidity, at worse a baiting sullenness (Carson).

More afraid

Pilate’s actions in the narrative suggest that he entertains this charge on a more religious level, hence his fear. On the level of Johannine theology as a whole, this feature of the account likewise exudes irony: the agent of Rome proves more ready to believe something divine about God’s son than his own people do (Keener).

No Answer

Roman law did not interpret silence as a confession of guilt. Rather, Pilate seems simply exasperated that Jesus fails to recognize both his office and his attempts to act on Jesus’ behalf (Keener).

John 19:10 Then Pilate said to Him, “Are You not speaking to me? Do You not know that I have power to crucify You, and power to release You?”

John 19:11 Jesus answered, “You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above. Therefore the one who delivered Me to you has the greater sin.”

God’s sovereignty never mitigates the responsibility and guilt of moral agents

who operate under divine sovereignty while their voluntary decisions and their evil rebellion never render God utterly contingent (Carson).

The text does not exonerate Pilate; his sin is only relatively less than that of the person who handed Jesus over to him. The fact that he would not have any authority over Jesus apart from heaven's sanction therefore does not absolve him of all responsibility (Carson).

The identity of the person 'guilty of a greater sin is uncertain' (Carson).

Most important what God gives to Pilate is not authority or power since the Greek word is feminine while all others are neuter. The verbal forms suggest that what is given to Pilate is the entire turn of events, or, more precisely, the event of the betrayal (Carson).

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Friend of Caesar

Pilate had ample reason to fear the implicit threat. Tiberius Caesar was known to be quick to entertain suspicions. (Carson).

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Pilate may have some interest in justice, but he exhibits greater interest in protecting himself politically (Keener).

The verse is saturated with irony: In order to execute Jesus, the Jewish authorities make themselves out to be more loyal subjects of Caesar than the hated Roman official Pilate is (Carson).

The demonstrate their slavery not only to sin but to the political thralldom they earlier disavowed (8:33) (Carson).

John 19:13 When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus out and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called *The Pavement*, but in Hebrew, Gabbatha. ¹⁴ Now it was the Preparation Day of the Passover, and about the sixth hour. And he said to the Jews, “Behold your King!”

The bema was far more important than the paving stones: here is the personal representative of Rome offering his judicial decision on the one who alone is the promised Messiah, the one to whom the Father himself entrusted all judgement (Carson).

A governor would issue a formal condemnation in a capital case only pro tribunal, from the judgment seat (Keener).

Like Caiaphas before him, Pilate spoke better than he knew. The long-awaited king of the Jews stood before them, and they did not recognize him (Carson).

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John 19:16 Then he delivered Him to them to be crucified. Then they took Jesus and led *Him* away.

In delivering Jesus over the prefect would have declared, *Ibis in cruce*m (you will mount the cross). That he delivered Jesus over implicates Pilate in the chain of responsibility (Keener).

Illustrations

To clasp the hands in prayer is the beginning of an uprising against the disorder of the world.

Author: Karl Barth

Application

18:28

The Gospel confronts my religious/moral/behavioral justifications.

This is not simply a first century issues. People doing religious dances to gain favor with the Lord.

Its possible to desire religious observance and yet miss the Messiah who is right in front of you. It is possible to eat the Passover and miss the Passover Lamb.

There are times where religious observance blind us to the simplicity of the good news. Why do we complicate the beauty of the Gospel?

Rom. 8:1 Therefore, no condemnation now exists for those in Christ Jesus, ² because the Spirit's law of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. ³ What the law could not do since it was limited by the flesh, God did. He condemned sin in the flesh by sending His own Son in flesh like ours under sin's domain, and as a sin offering, ⁴ in order that the law's requirement would be accomplished in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

18:29-33

We see embedded in these verse the devastating effects of sin.

Sin puts us as enemies of the cross. It manifests itself as a new agenda, a selfish motive and set us up as accusers of Jesus Christ. Sin and righteousness don't mix. Where sin reigns,

Sins puts us in protection mode: our kingdom, our power, my future, my comfort

Sin then links us up to unusual and improbable situations. Sin will lead you to places you never thought you would go.

18:33-38

This is the power of Christ: Pilate thought he was interrogating Jesus; rather, the Son of Man was examining the heart of the procurator.

In this exchange Jesus changes the question from "am I a king" to Pilate, "Am I your king?"

18:36-37

The Gospel transcends the world

His Kingdom is not of this world

This does not signify that Jesus is inactive in the world. Rather, He transcends the world.

Servants: are you fighting? And if so who and what are you fighting?