

## “Jesus Condemned”

John 18:28-19:16

--CEFC 4/10/22

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We live in a country in which Lex is Rex--that is, law is king.

We Americans believe in the rule of law,  
and perhaps also in the rule of lawyers.

I would say that nowhere is that more true than in Washington, D.C.

They say there are more lawyers in the DC Metro area than in all of Japan.

Ours is the most litigious society in the world--

It In some circles, the phrase “See you in court”  
is almost as common as “Have a nice day.”

It’s not surprising, then, that the legal profession

is so well represented in our popular culture—

The American Bar Association has published its own list of the 25 greatest legal movies.

The list includes *To Kill a Mockingbird*,

in which Gregory Peck plays Atticus Finch  
defending a black man in racist Alabama  
who is wrongly accused of rape.

In a different vein there’s *My Cousin Vinnie*—

starring Joe Pesci as a somewhat bumbling Brooklyn lawyer

who only recently managed to pass the bar exam on his sixth try.  
And there's my favorite--*A Few Good Men*—  
starring Tom Cruise—the brash young lawyer,  
who confronts an arrogant Marine Colonel  
played by Jack Nicholson,  
who famously claims that “you can't handle the truth.”

And what's on the big screen has always been present on television---  
from “Perry Mason” to “LA Law”--you'll find them.

And, of course, there's “Court TV” where you can watch it live—  
including Johnny Depp's defamation case  
or a romance novelist's murder trial.

My older brother was a lawyer—a defense attorney,  
and one of my regrets in life is that I never saw him perform in court  
before he died too young at age 40.

There is something about the drama of a courtroom that draws us in,  
and for that reason, if it were packaged properly--  
I think one could make a box office hit out of the Gospel of John.

Granted, there is no crusading young lawyer,  
but it does have a great trial scene.

In fact, you could say that the entire book is really one extended trial.

John the Gospel writer has framed his whole story

around one central theme--

“Who is this man Jesus?”

“Is he truly the Son of God?”

He’s on trial--before the whole world.

Throughout his Gospel story John calls various witnesses to the stand  
to offer their testimony about the identity of this man in the dock.

John the Baptist “**came as a witness to testify concerning that light**” we read in 1:7.

“**I have seen and I testify that this is the Son of God.**” he says.

The first disciples, Andrew and Philip, testify concerning him:

“**Come and see--we have found the Messiah,**” they say.

Moses and the Old Testament Scriptures are called to the stand in Jesus’ behalf,  
and then, even God the Father and the Holy Spirit

lend their testimony in support.

It is an impressive array of witnesses.

And the case for the defense includes powerful signs

which provide material evidence in support of his case.

These are the works, the miracles, that Jesus performed.

Seven of these are laid before us in succession,

culminating in the raising of Lazarus from the tomb.

The witnesses and the signs--

John has set forth the case--

Jesus is, indeed, who he claims to be--he is the Christ, the Son of God,  
the one who gives life to all who believe.

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But now we come to the actual trial scene itself.

There were actually two trials--

first a trial before the Jewish court, the Sanhedrin,  
and then a trial before the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate--  
but John has focused his attention on the latter.

And what we see here is quite strange--

No witnesses for the defense come forward.

Jesus has no crusading young lawyer to argue his case.

The many who could speak on Jesus' behalf are nowhere to be seen,  
and even Jesus himself is silent in his defense.

He says only enough to incriminate himself in the eyes of his accusers.

And notice, too, no powerful signs are brought forth

that could have clinched the verdict in Jesus' favor.

When he appeared before Herod, as recorded by Luke,

we read that Herod hoped to see him perform some miracle.

But Jesus refused to offer any evidence--none at all.

He could have called down twelve legions of angels, had he wanted.

But instead, he listens to his accusers without any cross-examination;

then he allows himself to be beaten, and spat upon--

the object of abuse and mockery--

He appears as totally weak and powerless.

And throughout the story you get the clear impression

that Jesus would have it no other way.

This is the way it *must* happen, he would say.

Here is the most profound mystery surrounding these proceedings—

Jesus allows himself to be declared guilty.

The Sanhedrin declares him guilty of blasphemy against God,

for his claim to be the Son of God;

and Pilate declares him guilty of treason against the Roman Empire,

for the accusation that was a Jewish king.

As a result, he is sentenced to death by crucifixion.

That's the way John reports it,

for that's the way it happened.

But as you read his account of the trial carefully,

and if you read it in the context of John's entire gospel,

you can be sure that John wants us to look behind the verdict to the truth.

For the truth according to John

is that in condemning Jesus,

the court and all its players were only condemning themselves./

So let's look at each of the major figures in this legal drama,  
and see how this is true--  
and then we'll ask how we fit into this picture ourselves.

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I. First, let's consider **Pontius Pilate**--

His official position was that of Prefect--which was a military title.

He had risen through the ranks with the help of his mentor Aelius Sejanus,  
who was the Commander of the Praetorian guard in Rome,  
and highly influential in the imperial court.

Pilate had been sent to Palestine by the Emperor Tiberius in A.D. 26--

and he had had several run-ins with these seditious Jews since then.

The political situation in this outlying province was difficult at best,

and though his official residence was in Caesarea on the coast,

he made it his practice to be in Jerusalem with a large contingent of troops

during the great feasts days when large crowds congregated in the city.

So it was to Pontius Pilate that the Jewish leaders brought Jesus

early on that Good Friday morning.

And as John Stott points out in his book, *The Cross of Christ*,

there are two central features in the gospel writers' portrayal of the man.

1. First the evangelists assure us that **Pilate was convinced of Jesus' innocence**.

We see him going in and out of his residence--

talking to the Jews and then to Jesus--

and he is at a loss to know why this man ought to be condemned.

Three times, in precisely the same words,

John tells us that Pilate said to his accusers,

**“I find no basis for a charge against him”** (18:38; 19:4,6).

He’s committed no crime--

and John tells us that after his last interrogation of Jesus,

Pilate tried to set him free.

In Pilate’s mind, Jesus was an innocent man.

2. But equally, we notice in the Gospels **Pilate’s ingenious attempts**

**to avoid coming down on one side or the other.**

He seems determined neither to condemn Jesus,

nor to exonerate him.

Pilate wants to have it both ways--

he is clearly caught in a jam--

and we see him perform all the contortions

that we have become accustomed to here in Washington.

He appears as the spineless politician--

trying to please all the people all the time,

all the while trying to save his own skin.

Consider the four evasions that he tried--

1. First, **Pilate tried to pass the buck—**

When Jesus is brought to him by the Jewish leaders,

his first response is “**Take him yourselves and judge him by your own law.**”

But they were insistent that Jesus die,

and only Pilate had the authority to issue capital punishment.

So they refused.

Luke tells us that as soon as he heard that Jesus was from Galilee,

Pilate sent him to Herod Antipas, for that was Herod’s jurisdiction,

and Herod happened to be in Jerusalem at the time.

Let Herod take care of it.

It seemed the easy way out, but it didn’t work,

for Herod sent him back, unsentenced.

Pilate’s attempts to pass the buck went nowhere.

2. Then **Pilate tried to go half-way--**

He had Jesus flogged, and then tried to release him.

He thought this might appease the crowd’s lust for blood

without having to put Jesus to death.

But the whole idea was unprincipled--

if Jesus was innocent, he deserved nothing;



if he was guilty, let him die--  
there's no place for a half-way position,  
and his accusers wouldn't allow it.

**3. Next Pilate tries to do the right thing for the wrong reason--**

He gets an idea--it was the custom at Passover  
for the governor to grant amnesty to one prisoner as a favor to the Jews.  
Pilate had hoped that the people would choose Jesus,  
and he could be set free as an act of *clemency*  
instead of as an act of *justice*.

But again, Pilate's efforts were thwarted as the crowds demand  
the pardon of a man who was imprisoned for insurrection and murder—  
Barabbas.

**4. Finally, Pilate seeks to justify himself**

by condemning Jesus while claiming his own innocence.

Matthew tells us that in a symbolic act,  
he took water and washed his hands in front of the people.

**"I am innocent of this man's blood,"** he said.

And then, as John Stott puts it,

"before his hands were dry, he handed Jesus over to be crucified."/

Pilate believed Jesus was innocent,  
so why did he do it?

The evangelists tell us both that **“he wanted to set Jesus free”** (Jn. 19:12)  
and that he **“wanted to satisfy the crowd”** (Mk. 15:15).

In the end, as we read in Lk. 23:23-25--

**“*their* shouts prevailed,”**

**“Pilate decided to grant *their* demand,”**

he **“surrendered Jesus to *their* will.”**

Why?

The clinching argument is given to us by John--  
19:12-- **“If you let this man go,” the Jewish leaders told him,**  
**“you are no friend of Caesar.**

**Anyone who claims to be a king opposes Caesar.”**

Now they were talking his language.

To oppose Caesar the emperor would be the death of his career,  
if not of his very life.

In those days, as is all too true today, politics is personal,  
and being a “friend of Caesar” was the only way to the top.

We don’t know the precise chronology,

but we do know that about this time, Pilate’s sponsor in Rome, Sejanus,  
had met the displeasure of the current emperor Tiberius and had been executed,  
along with some of his closest associates.

That would have put Pilate in a very precarious position--

a situation that would not have gone unnoticed by the High Priest Caiaphas.

**“If you let this man go,**

**you are no friend of Caesar”--**

That declaration may have had ominous implications  
for Pilate in this context.

His own career was on the line,

He had his ambition to think about;

Most importantly, he had to consider

his reputation with the Emperor.

He mustn't let this lowly Galilean get in his way.

So, despite his own convictions about Jesus,

Pilate gives in the crowd to save his own neck.

Pilate is the spineless politician--and for two reasons, I think--

both of which are very much in evidence in our world today.

First, Pilate's weakness stems from the fact

that **he ran away from the question of truth.**

Jesus had said that it was his mission in life to testify to the truth--

**“Everyone on the side of truth listens to me,”** Jesus said.

but Pilate dismisses such talk with a cynical sneer--

**“What is truth?”**

There is no such thing as truth--

Everybody has their own truth--who's to say what's true?

All that matters is power.

It's expedience that counts--what works, what get things done.

How often is that said, and even assumed without argument, today.

We live in a “post-truth” world, in which facts matter less than emotion.

Truth has been replaced by “truthiness”—

a vague quality of seeming or being felt to be true, even if not necessarily true.

**“What is truth?”**

That was Pilate’s attitude,

and as a result, he had no reason to do what was right.

Without a conviction about truth,

there is no right or wrong--only what best advances my agenda.

His life is left with no foundation, no backbone.

His decision must be based on the balance of power.

But only truth can overcome power--

It was the Russian dissident Alexander Solzhenitsyn who said,

“One person speaking the truth has more power

than a whole city living in falsehood.”

That’s why I remember the time at the National Prayer Breakfast in Washington

when Mother Teresa,

tiny and old and frail as she was--

Mother Teresa was the most powerful person in that great ballroom,

filled with legislators and heads of state and even the President of the United States.

For before a hostile audience,

she dared to speak the truth about the violent horror of abortion in this country.

“One person speaking the truth has more power

than a whole city living in falsehood.”

Truth is the power that must guide our actions.

But Pilate, lacking truth, became a slave of power alone.

What truth do you have to stand on?

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But a second weakness we see in Pilate,

which also afflicts many in positions of authority today,  
was that he failed to appreciate **the authority under which he stood.**

19:10--"Do you refuse to speak to me?" Pilate said [to Jesus].

"Don't you realize I have power [the word is, authority]  
either to free you or to crucify you?"

Jesus answered, "You would have no power [the word is, authority] over me  
if it were not given to you from above."

Pilate had authority alright--

he wielded the authority of the Emperor of Rome.

But Jesus knew of a higher authority--

the authority of the God of Heaven and Earth.

All authority is derived authority--only God's authority is absolute.

All earthly authority stands under that divine authority--

and all human authority will be judged by that divine authority.

We all--from the lowliest child to the President of the United States--

we all stand, as our pledge of allegiance reminds us, "under God"--

that is, we all stand under the judgment of God.

We are ultimately accountable to him for all that we do.

Pilate had no conception of that--

and so he did whatever seemed to be best for himself.

Pilate ran away from the truth--

he had no conception of ultimate authority--

and so he condemned Jesus,

Jesus who is the truth--

Jesus who is the King of kings.

He condemned Jesus,

and in that act, Pilate condemned himself.

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Let's look at a second set of characters in this drama--

## II. The Religious Leaders.

It is a confusing cast because of the ambiguous role of Annas--

identified in 18:13 as **“the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest that year.”**

But then in 18:19 it is Annas who is described as the high priest.

Some historical background is helpful--

Annas held the position from A.D. 6 to A.D. 15

when he was deposed by Pilate's predecessor Valerius Gratus,

who appointed a new high priest.

But Annas continued to hold enormous influence,

partly because the Jews resented the intervention of the Romans in their affairs,  
and also because under the law of Moses

the appointment as high priest was to be for life.

As it turned out, no fewer than five of Annas's sons and his son-in-law Caiaphas

filled his position, so he was, in effect, the patriarch of high priests,

even when he didn't officially hold the office.

So Jesus was first taken to Annas

and then to Caiaphas--

As I mentioned, John skips over the trial before the Sanhedrin,

probably because he has already mentioned the decision they had made earlier,  
after the raising of Lazarus, which is found at the end of chap. 11.

Jesus had been tried by them *in absentia*;

he had already been found guilty.

He was a condemned man.

Any action taken by the Sanhedrin on that night of his capture

was a mere formality.

In many ways, John has already exposed the moral darkness of the Jewish leaders--

they were blind to the truth, no matter how clearly it was set before them.

In our passage this morning,

John give us two suggestions as to why the religious leaders

condemned their own Messiah.

First, they condemned Jesus because

they were more concerned with religion than with righteousness.

Did you notice the irony found in 18:28--

“Then the Jews led Jesus from Caiaphas to the palace of the Roman governor.

By now it was early morning, and to avoid ceremonial uncleanness

the Jews did not enter the palace;

they wanted to be able to eat the Passover.”

They were concerned about ceremonial uncleanness, all right;

but all the while they were perpetrating

the greatest miscarriage of justice in human history.

How they strain out a gnat but swallow a camel!

Sure, they were committed to the law--

19:7--The Jews insisted, "We have a law, and according to that law he must die,"

But Jesus had contended all along

that if they had only understood that law correctly,

instead of condemning him they would have become his followers (cf. 5:39).

"Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites!"

Jesus had said to them (Matt. 23:23),

“You give a tenth of your spices --mint, dill and cummin.



**But you have neglected the more important matters of the law --  
justice, mercy and faithfulness.”**

This is what happens when religion becomes more important than righteousness.

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But secondly, John would have us see that the Jewish leaders condemned Jesus  
because **they were more committed to *this world***  
**than to their God.**

This is the most telling critique of all.

Look at 19:15--

Pilate presents Jesus to the chief priests.

In a mocking tone he pronounces-- **“Here is your king!”**

**But they shouted, "Take him away! Take him away! Crucify him!"**

**"Shall I crucify your king?" Pilate asked.**

**"We have no king but Caesar," they answered.**

**“We have no king but Caesar”—**

How could they say that?

The Jewish leaders make themselves out to be more loyal

to the Roman Emperor than Pilate is!

And in so doing, they have forfeited their right to be called the people of God.

For what was their distinctive?

What was their highest privilege?

It was to have the Lord God as their king.

They seemed unconcerned with the kingdom of God--  
all that mattered was the kingdom of this world--

**“We have no king but Caesar.”**

Their politics trumped their loyalty to their God!

How sad!

And so they missed their true King--

he passed them by.

They condemned Jesus to die,

and in so doing they condemned themselves.

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But there’s one more actor on the stage--

a collective actor called **“the crowds.”**

The crowds are not given as prominent a place in John as in the other gospels--

he speaks instead of “the Jews.”

But the expression **“the Jews”** is a slippery one in John

that sometimes refers to the leaders

and sometimes to the people as a whole.

They appear as a mob in 18:39 when Pilate comes to them

and asks, in reference to the customary release of a prisoner at Passover,

it they want him to release **“the king of the Jews.”**

**‘They shouted back, “No, not him! Give us Barabbas!”**

**Now Barabbas had taken part in a rebellion,’ we read.**

Jesus or Barabbas--

it was an interesting choice.

On Palm Sunday the crowds had greeted Jesus with Hosannas

and had proclaimed him as

the one who comes in the name of the Lord--

he was the son of David, the Davidic king,

a champion sent to bring them freedom from foreign oppression.

But here he was, powerless and alone--

far from the victorious figure they had envisioned,

not at all what they had hoped for.

As Jesus had told Pilate,

his kingdom was not of this world.

It would not be realized by military action.

**"If it were," he said, "my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews."**

but they wouldn't fight,

and neither would he.

But Barabbas was different, you see.

He was nothing if not a fighter.

He had taken part in a rebellion,

an armed assault on Roman rule in Palestine.

He was a freedom fighter,

or a terrorist--depending on which side you were on.

He did all his preaching with a sword.

Was it to be Jesus or Barabbas?

Barabbas was an alluring choice,

symbolizing, in the words of one author,

“the fulfilling of this-worldly ambitions and dreams,

the gratification of human lusts and hungers,

the nationalist dream, the political kingdom.”<sup>1</sup>

Jesus--well, he offered truth and a new relationship with God as Father--

but it required a moral commitment

to face one’s own failures and to seek forgiveness and grace.

He offered life,

but it was a life that was found in humble service.

Jesus or Barabbas?

“**Give us Barabbas!**” they shouted,

and with that choice they condemned Jesus to the cross,

and in so doing they condemned themselves.

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The Roman governor,

The Jewish Leaders,

the boisterous crowds--they all condemned Jesus,

and John would have us know that in so doing they condemned themselves.

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<sup>1</sup>Milne, *Know the Truth*, p. 269.

But how do we fit into all this?

Let me take you back to the most well-known words that Pilate ever spoke--  
19:5--with Jesus wearing a crown of thorns and a purple robe,

Pilate presented him to the crowd and declared:

**“Here is the man.”**

“Behold, the man”<sup>2</sup>--“*Ecce homo*” in Latin.

These words are dripping in irony--

“Just look at him—

Here is the man you find so dangerous and threatening,” Pilate says,

“Can’t you see, he’s harmless, even ridiculous.”

As Pilate is mocking Jesus

he is also ridiculing the Jewish authorities at the same time.<sup>3</sup>

But John would have us read those words, “Behold the Man,”

with an even deeper irony.

For this was “the Man”--the one man above all others.

He was the God/Man--the Word become flesh--

the man in whom God displays his glory--

a glory that he was displaying

even in that moment of humiliation and degradation.

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<sup>2</sup> ἰδοὺ ὁ ἀληθινός.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Carson, p. 598.

Yes, Jesus was “**the Man**”--

he was the representative man.

For the incarnation has two dimensions, two directions--

On the one hand,

in the incarnation, God has come down to us,

Jesus Christ is God with us.

But on the other, the incarnation is man lifted up to God,

Jesus Christ represents us before God.

And it is this second dimension that is so important in this trial.

For Jesus’ death is a judicial death--

it is a death by trial.

As John Calvin, who was himself trained as a lawyer,

as John Calvin put it--

Jesus was “arraigned before the judgment seat as a criminal,

accused and condemned by the mouth of a judge to die.”<sup>4</sup>

And as I said, the charges against him were twofold:

he was charged as a blasphemer—

putting himself in the place of God

by claiming to be the Son of God.

and he was charged as a traitor—

putting himself above the Emperor

as a rival king.

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<sup>4</sup>Cited in Milne, p. 275.

But when you think about it,  
these are exactly the two perversions  
that are at the heart of all human sinning.<sup>5</sup>

Sin is **blasphemy**:

Didn't the devil tempt Eve in the garden by saying,  
**"You will be like God"**  
And when we sin, that's what we pretend that we are--our own Gods—  
deciding for ourselves what is good or evil.

And Sin is **treason**:

God said,  
**"Of any tree of the garden you may eat, except one--  
and the day you eat of it you will die,"**  
and that's what they did.

Our sin is an act of rebellion against the rightful rule of God in our lives.  
We want to rule our own lives apart from God.

Blasphemy and treason--we're all guilty as charged.

When you look at it this way,  
the trial that John records takes on a whole new level of meaning,  
a whole new dimension.

It is not just the trial of Jesus before Pilate,

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<sup>5</sup>Milne, p. 275.

it is the trial of us all,  
the trial of all sinful humanity before the judgment seat of God.

Jesus stands in our place before God,  
and even his silence is significant,  
for it is the silence of sinful man--  
his mouth is shut before the righteousness of God.

In his letter to the Romans, the Apostle Paul declares the universality of human sin  
and concludes--Rom. 3:19--**“so that every mouth may be silenced  
and the whole world held accountable to God.”**

And in the verdict against Jesus **we** are pronounced guilty.

He took our place--  
He was condemned in our place.

This is the gospel--  
1Pet. 3:18 **“For Christ died for sins once for all,  
the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God.”**

1Pet. 2:24 **“He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree,  
so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness;  
by his wounds you have been healed.”**

Yes **“Here is the man”**—Jesus, the man, died as our representative—as our substitute.

Substitution—  
One might say that this principle of substitution



lies at the heart of both sin and salvation.

As John Stott puts it:

[T]he essence of sin is man substituting himself for God,  
while the essence of salvation is God substituting himself for man.  
Man asserts himself against God  
and puts himself where only God deserves to be;  
God sacrifices himself for man  
and puts himself where only man deserves to be.  
Man claims prerogatives which belong to God alone;  
God accepts penalties which belong to man alone.<sup>6</sup>

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Jesus is on trial--

but in fact, Pilate and the Roman Empire were on trial;  
the leaders of Israel were on trial;  
and, through the crowds, the whole world was on trial--  
Before them stood the one man who spoke the truth,  
the one man who remained loyal to God his Father to the very end,  
and they condemned him to die.

But it is they--it is us--  
who deserve to die.

We are the blasphemers;  
we are the traitors.

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<sup>6</sup>*The Cross of Christ* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1986), p. 160.

This is the mystery of the gospel--

He died in our place;

He took our punishment on himself.

He was condemned so that we won't have to be--

when one day, we all face the judge

and our own lives will be put on trial.

**“Behold the Man”—**

Does he represent you?

Look to him and he will—

for by his wounds you will be healed,

and you will be forgiven forever.

Rom. 8:1 **“Therefore, there is now no condemnation**

**for those who are in Christ Jesus,”**

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Prayer

"Were you there when they crucified my Lord?"

We must answer "Yes, we were there"--

and not as spectators only, but as willing participants.

Like Pilate we may try to wash away our responsibility

but our efforts will be as futile as his.

'Twas I that shed the sacred blood;

I nailed him to the tree;

I crucified the Christ of God;

I joined the mockery.

Of all that shouting multitude

I feel that I am one;

And in that din of voices rude

I recognize my own.

Around the cross the throng I see,

Mocking the Sufferer's groan;

Yet still my voice it seems to be,

As if I mocked alone.<sup>7</sup>

Closing Hymn: *I Will Glory in My Redeemer*

Benediction:

2Ths. 2:16 May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father,  
who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope,

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<sup>7</sup>The 19th Century Scottish hymnwriter Horatius Bonar.

encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good deed and word.

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Following Jesus to the Cross, #3

April 10, 2022

## **“Jesus Condemned”**

John 18:28-19:16

This morning we come to the trial of Jesus before Pilate. We will consider its various actors, and ultimately, we will see how it involves us—for we joined in condemning Jesus, and in his trial, we stand condemned. But in the grace of the gospel, Jesus’ death issues in our justification before God.

### **Who Condemned Jesus?**

#### **I. Consider Pontius Pilate—**

**who evaded the truth.**

#### **II. The Religious Leaders—**

**who were committed to their religion  
and ultimately to the world.**

#### **III. The Crowds—**

**who demanded a political rebel instead of Jesus.**

#### **IV. How Do We Fit in this Trial?**

**Jesus as “the Man”—**

the One who represents God and Us

Sermon Response:

**“Jesus Condemned”**

John 18:28-19:16

- What is the significance of the mention of the Roman governor Pontius Pilate in the Apostles' Creed?
- Why would Pilate not immediately condemn Jesus when he confesses to being the "king of the Jews"?
- Who killed Jesus? Do you think you would have cried, "Crucify him!" with the crowds that day?
- How does the release of Barabbas provide a picture of the saving work of Christ?
- How does the atoning work of Christ—his death on the cross for you—change your life?
- Spend some time in prayer confessing your need of God's grace and thanking him for his saving work in Christ.

Consider these words as you pray--

*'Twas I that shed the sacred blood;*

*I nailed him to the tree;*

*I crucified the Christ of God;*

*I joined the mockery.*

*Of all that shouting multitude*

*I feel that I am one;*

*And in that din of voices rude*

*I recognize my own.*

*Around the cross the throng I see,*

*Mocking the Sufferer's groan;*

*Yet still my voice it seems to be,*

*As if I mocked alone.<sup>8</sup>*

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<sup>8</sup>The 19th Century Scottish hymnwriter Horatius Bonar.