

“我要拿他怎么办呢？”——马可福音15:1-15

“What Shall I Do with Him?”—Mark 15:1-15

Introduction and Outline

- Scripture Reading: Mark 15:1-15; Mark 8:34-38
Mark 15:1-15 (NASB1995)
- Early in the morning the chief priests with the elders and scribes and the whole Council, immediately held a consultation; and binding Jesus, they led Him away and delivered Him to Pilate. 2 Pilate questioned Him, “Are You the King of the Jews?” And He answered him, “It is as you say.” 3 The chief priests began to accuse Him harshly. 4 Then Pilate questioned Him again, saying, “Do You not answer? See how many charges they bring against You!” 5 But Jesus made no further answer; so Pilate was amazed. 6 Now at the feast he used to release for them any one prisoner whom they requested. 7 The man named Barabbas had been imprisoned with the insurrectionists who had committed murder in the insurrection. 8 The crowd went up and began asking him to do as he had been accustomed to do for them. 9 Pilate answered them, saying, “Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?” 10 For he was aware that the chief priests had handed Him over because of envy. 11 But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to ask him to release Barabbas for them instead. 12 Answering again, Pilate said to them, “Then what shall I do with Him whom you call the King of the Jews?” 13 They shouted back, “Crucify Him!” 14 But Pilate said to them, “Why, what evil has He done?” But they shouted all the more, “Crucify Him!” 15 Wishing to satisfy the crowd, Pilate released Barabbas for them, and after having Jesus scourged, he handed Him over to be crucified.
- The most important question in everyone's life is who Jesus is and how I should treat him. This question directly determines how we live in this life, and more importantly, where we spend eternity after this life. Unfortunately, many people go through this life never asking themselves this question; while others have asked this question but have not given a correct and honest answer. Pilate fell into the latter category.
- Outline:
 - Title: “What Shall I Do with Him?”—Mark 15:1-15
 - 1. Background, Who’s Pilate (v.1)
 - 2. Scornful Disdain (vv. 2-5)
 - 3. Superficial Deference (vv. 6-11)
 - 4. Satisfy-the-crowd Decision (vv. 12-15)

Background, Who’s Pilate (v.1)

- "Early in the morningthe whole Council, immediately held a consultation": This was a formal court meeting, the complete record of which is found in Luke 22:66-71. The only purpose of this meeting is for the leaders to create an appearance of justice and legality to cover up their crimes. Earlier, they interrogated Jesus all night in the high priest's house, where both the time and place were totally illegal; here, they gathered "early in the morning" because the law stipulated that all cases must be processed in the morning.

【Insight】 The text highlights their hurry. As soon as morning came they immediately acted; can't wait for a moment for fear that something would get in their way. Hasty actions are often driven by a sinful desire that wants to get things done quickly and cannot patiently seek fair and reasonable judgment. To make accurate judgments, you must learn to slow down, think calmly, and never be impatient.

【Supplement】 Luke 22:66 says that they “led Him away to their council chamber,” which was equivalent to a court and the only place where they may legally gather to judge cases. They want to cover up the illegal nature of the whole thing with an appearance of legality. Luke records the process of this trial, which was pretty much a repetition of the interrogation at home in the night, finding no charge to legitimately condemn Jesus to death.

- "They led Him away and delivered Him to Pilate.": because only Pilate had the authority to sentence Jesus to death. Even though they found no crime for death penalty, they still had to drag Jesus to the Roman court. They'll figure out something once they're there.

【Insight】 On the one hand, we see the despicable character of the Jewish leaders; on the other hand, we once again marvel at God's sovereignty in working all things together. The time God appointed for Christ to die was Passover, so this case had to proceed quickly. Even the craziest of all evil deeds are under the sovereignty of God and advance the timetable of God's redemption work.

【Background】 Pilate was the governor of the province of Judea in the Roman Empire. He was a brutal ruler who had no idea how to rule people. He had repeatedly offended the Jewish culture and religion, angered both the Jews and the emperor and was in danger of losing his job anytime. So now he must try his best to please the Jews. If he made them angry again, his political career would be over.

【Supplement】 The Jewish leaders accused Jesus of three things before Pilate: "Misleading our nation and forbidding to pay taxes to Caesar, and saying that He Himself is Christ, a King." (Luke 23:2). The purpose of these false accusations was to label Jesus as an insurrectionist whose aim was to overthrow Roman rule. But Pilate didn't buy their lies at all (see verse 10).

Scornful Disdain (vv. 2-5)

- "Pilate asked Him, saying, 'Are You the King of the Jews?': The tone was not a genuine question, but a mocking sarcasm. It's like, "You? You are the King of the Jews? Look how miserable you are. They treat you like this and you still claim to be their king? I've never seen such a failure of a king."
- "He answered him and said, 'It is as you say.': Your words are right, but your understanding is wrong. I am their king, but not the kind of king you know. That's why you can't understand how I can be a king, for my way of being a king is totally different from your way. I am not a king who rules my subjects from above, but a king who bows down to serve them. I would even sacrifice my life to serve them and atone for their sins. But you are right, I am their king.

【Supplement】 For the complete dialogue, see John 18:33-38. Jesus explained to Pilate the truth about his kingship, but Pilate replied dismissively: "What is the truth?" Not interested. Just like today's postmodern culture, truth is all relative. You have your truth, and I have my truth. As long as it can get me the happiness I want, that is my truth. The truth of Jesus obviously cannot give people status.

power, wealth, or fame in this world, otherwise Jesus would not be in this situation. So Pilate was dismissive of the truth about Jesus, just like many people today.

- "Do You not answer? ": Still a sarcastic tone. You just let them accuse you like this? How can any king be like you? Other kings would've beaten them down or even killed them for treating them like this. And you won't even answer a word?
- "But Jesus made no further answer; so Pilate was amazed.": He's never seen this kind of a person in the world, who doesn't fight back and bears so patiently with people slandering him, and He wouldn't defend Himself at all! Pilate didn't see the beauty of spiritual character behind this. He was just curious and yet still uninterested.

Superficial Deference (vv. 6-11)

- "Now at the feast he used to release for them any one prisoner whom they requested." This was Pilate's peace-keeping policy. Pilate wanted to use this policy to release Jesus because his remaining conscience did not allow him to kill Jesus.
- "The man named Barabbas..... who had committed murder in the insurrection.": a notorious murderer. He was probably a leader of a mob gang, going around killing people for political purposes. Such political unrest was part of daily life in the Jewish society at the time.
- "Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?": According to Matthew, this question is a choice between two options: release Jesus or release Barabbas? Choose one or the other, it's an easy choice. Pilate thought the Jews would definitely choose Jesus.

【Contrast】 Barabbas' full name was likely Jesus Barabbas, as is seen in some early manuscripts. So, here are two Jesuses before Pilate: one Jesus has spent his whole life doing good deeds to serve people, and the other Jesus, Jesus Barabbas, is an infamous rebel, a murderous insurrectionist who's good at killing people. The cross of Jesus was probably prepared originally for Barabbas.

【Insight】 We can easily see ourselves in Barabbas. It is we who deserve the punishment of God's wrath for sin, but because of the punishment Jesus bore on our behalf, we, like Barabbas, are set free.

- “he was aware that the chief priests had handed Him over because of envy”: Pilate obviously had some kind of respect for Jesus. He saw that the religious leaders were jealous of Jesus, and he knew that Jesus' moral character was far superior to those of these leaders.

【Analogy】 This is like many people today who only regard Jesus as a great moral teacher, and wish their family and friends could go to church to learn some moral teachings of Jesus. But in the end, this attitude did not lead Pilate to repent and be saved. Such superficial respect only shows one can make some basic moral judgments. Once Jesus confronts the worldly interests they're really after, they'll be quick to have nothing to do with Jesus.

- “But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to ask him to release Barabbas for them instead”: In a short time, the leader successfully manipulated the people. Perhaps they said, "Barabbas was a brave and fearless fighter for God. This is the Messiah we want, Amen?" They knew how to manipulate the crowd and stir up their emotions. This is an important skill of all false teachers.

Satisfy-the-crowd Decision (vv. 12-15)

- “Then what shall I do with Him whom you call the King of the Jews?": How shall I treat Jesus? Here is the ultimate question we all must answer. Should we treat Him according to the truth or follow the opinion of the crowd? Pilate resorted to a public poll... He knew full well what the truth requires him to do, but he lacked the courage to act accordingly, for, from the very beginning, he was never truly concerned about the truth—he was only concerned about his own interests.
- "Crucify Him!": Ultimately, everyone who understands the truth of Jesus yet chooses to reject Him does so because their primary concern is not the truth, but their own interests.
- "Why, what evil has He done?"—Pilate's conscience was still troubling him; he clearly knew what was right and what was wrong.
- "They shouted all the more, ‘Crucify Him!’": The power of a shouting crowd is great, and few can resist it. Under the manipulation of the religious leaders, the crowd now uses its momentum to manipulate Pilate. This entire scene is driven by emotional manipulation—no one is seeking God's justice and truth.
- "Wishing to satisfy the crowd, Pilate ..."—What caused him to go against his conscience and reject the truth? It was these words: "Wishing to satisfy the crowd." Any decision made solely to please people is certainly a wrong decision. In his desire to win favor, Pilate had to abandon the truth, betray his conscience, and make a decision that was clearly morally wrong.
- "After having Jesus scourged, he handed Him over to be crucified.": Pilate judged Jesus, but one day he will be judged by Jesus. Here, he condemned Jesus to death, but in the future, he will be condemned by Jesus to eternal death. And that's because, when confronted with the question of who Jesus is and how he should treat Him, Pilate chose to follow the voice of the crowd instead of the truth.

Conclusion

How would you answer this question? Who is Jesus? How would you treat Jesus? May we all give a correct and honest answer according to the truth and with all our lives.