

Leaders Guide 11 The Trial before Pilate

1. **Suggested Ice breaker: Has the name my parents chose for me been good for me?**
2. **Prayer time: Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee because he trusteth in Thee. Isaiah 26:3**
3. **Sharing from the week**
4. **Read for This week: Matthew 27: 11-31; John 18: 28-40; 19:1-16 DA 77.**
5. **Questions for Discussion**
 - a. The trial before Pilate has become famous because it highlights many attitudes against Christ by those not wanting to serve Him., then and though history. What inspires the choice for a murderous Barabbas over a compassionate Christ? _____
 - b. In Matthew 27:20 it says the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask Barabbas and destroy Jesus. Leadership is influence. How should we respond when it is obvious leaders are persuading people against God's plan or will? _____
 - c. Pilate kept asking Jesus if He was a king. Jesus said he was a king but then clarified, "My kingdom is not of this world." Matthew 18: 36. Jesus talked about His kingdom a lot during His ministry. Share your thoughts about the Kingdom Christ established then and will establish at His coming. _____
 - d. When Jesus told Pilate the he came into the world to bear witness unto the truth (John 18:37) Pilate asked what is truth? What would you answer to that question _____
 - e. When the crowd was asking for the release of Barabbas instead of Jesus Pilate asked a penetrating question, "What then shall I do with Jesus which is called Christ? Matthew 27: 22. How is this an important question for every person? _____
 - f. Pilate believed in Christ being innocent but gave sentence to His death. He succumbed to the pressure of the religious leaders. When might we be faced with similar pressure? _____
 - g. Why didn't Pilate listen to his wife's concern about Christ (Matthew 27: 19) _____
 - h. Even though Pilate washed his hands declaring his innocence, was he innocent? When we enable a wrong but don't do it ourself, do we share in the guilt? _____
 - i. What spiritual lessons have you learned from reviewing Pilates story? _____

- j. If Jesus trial was in Canada in the 21st century would it have a different outcome? _____
- k. If you were asked to give a character evaluation of Pilate how would you describe him? _____

Background

Friday—Trials before Pilate and Herod, The crucifixion and burial. (All in Jerusalem)

As I begin to comment on this day I feel like a person trying to fill a swimming pool with water with only a spoon. This short post trying to address the enormity of the Christ's atoning sacrifice for the world is so inadequate. Hopefully you will be blessed by these few thoughts.

Chronology of the day: 6:00 Trial before Pilate begins. Religious leaders try and convince Pilate of Jesus guilt but he can find no fault with Him; The trial before Herod; The second appearance before Pilate where Pilate washes his hands because he believe Christ is innocent but gives in to the wishes of religious leaders to have Him crucified. He has tried two things as an alternative—scourging and giving them the choice of releasing Jesus or the criminal Barabbas—they cry "Release unto us Barabbas." Then Pilate says, "What shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ. They said crucify Him. 9 am Jesus crucified between two thieves: 12 noon darkness comes over the face of nature until 3 pm; Jesus utters It is Finished then dies; The earth quakes and the veil of temple rent in two; soldiers determine Jesus is dead; Joseph of Arimeathaea buries Christ in his unused tomb.

I could comment about the unjust and unfair trials of Jesus and the merciless flogging which tore His flesh and the struggles of Jesus trying to carry the cross but I want to focus on penetrating statements of Jesus on the cross.

The first words that Jesus uttered on the cross was "Father forgive them for they know not what they do." Jesus does not possess a vindictive spirit but a heart longing to redeem. Everyone of those who was responsible for nailing Him to the cross Christ was longing to forgive and have them accept His gift of salvation. His forgiveness is offered to every person on the planet knowing that through His forgiveness "whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life."

In the midst of His six hours on the cross Christ cries out, My God, My God why have you forsaken Me." The greatest suffering of Jesus that day was not the mocking, flogging, or the nailing to the cross but the feeling of separating from His Father. He had to bear the weight and guilt of the sin of the world and His Father's judgement of that sin. He experienced second death for us, so if we accept Jesus we will not have to die the second death of the judgement.

At the end of the six hours Jesus said "it is finished." Christ had accomplished the work He came to do. The cure for sin which mankind so desperately needed Christ had now provided. Yes, His resurrection would be an essential part of Christ's plan of redeeming mankind but He knew that once the atoning death was accomplished, His father through the power of the Holy Spirit would bring Him to life. Christ completed sacrifice for us is the good news of the gospel.

On the cross Christ heard the encouraging words from the repentant thief, "Lord, remember me when you come in your kingdom." Christ assured Him that day when everything seemed hopeless that he would be with Him in paradise. In other words He would be a part of those resurrected and taken to heaven with Christ. Hebrews says, "for the joy that was set before Him He endured the cross. The joy of Christ is His being united with all those who have accepted Him and His plan of salvation and thus Christ can claim as His at His return. With these He can enjoy eternal fellowship. This was His plan before the interruption of sin but now through Calvary that plan will be realized. Let's each ne determine to be a part of Christ's joy!