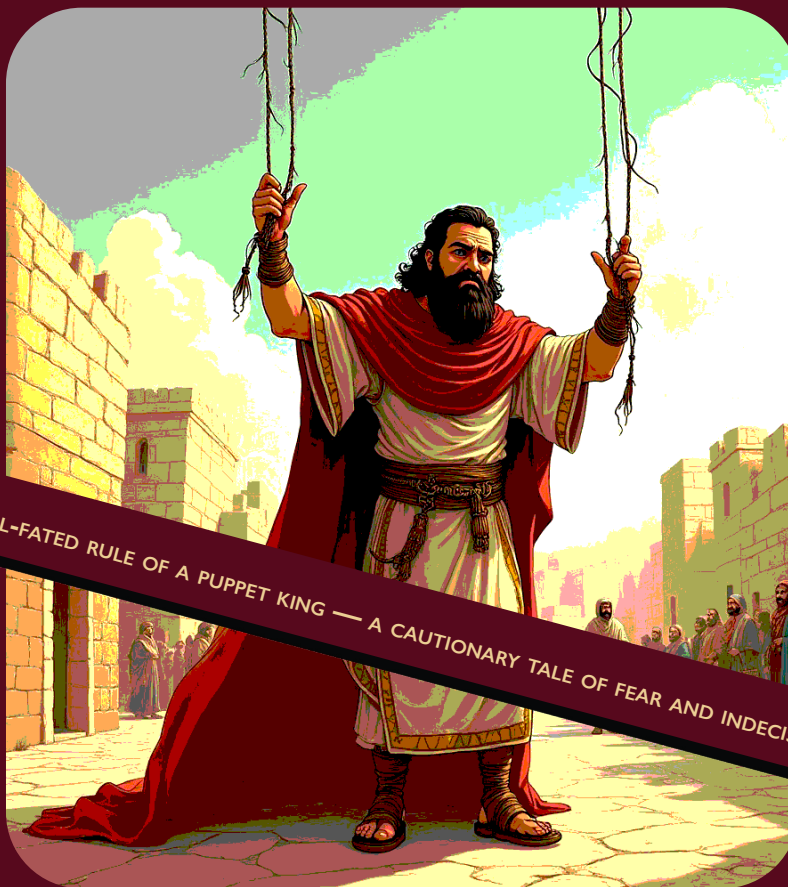


PILATE

AND THE CRUCIFIXION NEGOTIATIONS



THE ILL-FATED RULE OF A PUPPET KING — A CAUTIONARY TALE OF FEAR AND INDECISION ...

1. A brief background on the negotiations ...

- (Luke 3:1–2 ESV) In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, 2 during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John the son of Zechariah in the wilderness.

A. POSITION: Pilate had the authority to rule as the Roman governor of Judea.

B. LEVERAGE: But the Jews pulled the strings as they had the political power in their dealings with Pilate regarding their customs and beliefs.

C. This was due to two factors: Pilate's previous examples of incompetence and the Jews clever manipulation in their relationship with Rome.

Pilate was known for his cruel behavior and his enmity toward the Jewish authorities. He had the political authority but they had the political power because of his incompetence in handling their religious zeal in regard to their customs and beliefs. Rome and the emperor wanted peace and Pilate already had numerous failures in that regard and so his support from Rome was wavering. The Jews knew this and had used their harmonious relationship with Rome to win various power struggles over Pilate. They had humbled this puppet king on more than one occasion. Governing Jerusalem was a difficult assignment that needed a man of discretion of which Pilate was not. One more poor decision could cost Pilate not only his career but possibly his life.

2. Pilate negotiated with the Jews for the release of Jesus, 19:1-5.

- (John 19:1–5 ESV) Then Pilate took Jesus and flogged him. 2 And the soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head and arrayed him in a purple robe. 3 They came up to him, saying, “Hail, King of the Jews!” and struck him with their hands. 4 Pilate went out again and said to them, “See, I am bringing him out to you that you may know that I find no guilt in him.” 5 So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, “Behold the man!”

A. Flogging Jesus was a failed negotiation tactic.

B. Pilate knew Jesus was innocent and was trying to save his own life and career by somehow finding a way to release Jesus.

- (Matthew 27:17–19 ESV) So when they had gathered, Pilate said to them, “Whom do you want me to release for you: Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?” 18 For he knew that it was out of envy that they had delivered him up. 19 Besides, while he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent word to him, “Have nothing to do with that righteous man, for I have suffered much because of him today in a dream.”

C. But Satan was pulling the strings and Pilate the puppet king performed the bidding of his dark master and carried out his role in the humiliation of Christ.

Satan, blinded by rage, possibly believes he finally has his chance to achieve some measure of vengeance against God.

If you ever wondered what Satan would do if he could get his hands on God, then here you have it. He would savagely beat him and humiliate him with the most spite, malice and hatred he could muster.

How dare Christ refuse his offer to give him all the kingdoms of the world. He would make him pay for that decision.

- (Luke 4:5–8 ESV) And the devil took him up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, 6 and said to him, “To you I will give all this authority and their glory, for it has been delivered to me, and I give it to whom I will. 7 If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours.” 8 And Jesus answered him, “It is written, “ ‘You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve.’ ”

D. The soldiers, though out of ignorance, spoke the truth and rightly proclaimed that Jesus was indeed the King of the Jews.

E. The innocence of Jesus is once again proclaimed to his accusers.

F. Behold the man indeed — Jesus, the Word who became flesh.

- (Hebrews 10:5–10 ESV) Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, “Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body have you prepared for me; 6

in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure. 7 Then I said, 'Behold, I have come to do your will, O God, as it is written of me in the scroll of the book.'" 8 When he said above, "You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings" (these are offered according to the law), 9 then he added, "Behold, I have come to do your will." He does away with the first in order to establish the second. 10 And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

- (John 1:14 ESV) And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.
- (Romans 1:1–3 ESV) Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, 2 which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures, 3 concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh.
- (Romans 8:3 ESV) For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh,
- (Galatians 4:4 ESV) But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law.
- (Philippians 2:7–8 ESV) ... but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.
- (Colossians 1:21–23 ESV) And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, 22 he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him, 23 if indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister.
- (1 Timothy 3:16 ESV) Great indeed, we confess, is the mystery of godliness: He was manifested in the flesh, vindicated by the

Spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory.

- (Hebrews 2:14 ESV) Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil.

3. The Jews played hardball and demanded the death of Jesus on a cross, 19:6-7.

- (John 19:6–7 ESV) When the chief priests and the officers saw him, they cried out, "Crucify him, crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and crucify him, for I find no guilt in him." 7 The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die because he has made himself the Son of God."

A. The Jews insisted that the Romans crucify Jesus so that they would not be held responsible.

- (Acts 5:27–28 ESV) And when they had brought them, they set them before the council. And the high priest questioned them, 28 saying, "We strictly charged you not to teach in this name, yet here you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and you intend to bring this man's blood upon us."

B. Pilate told the Jews to crucify him themselves because he found no guilt in him.

C. The Jews responded with their demand that Jesus must die because he made himself out to be God.

4. Pilate became even more afraid as the far reaching implications of this looming dilemma dawned on his consciousness, 19:8-11.

- (John 19:8–11 ESV) When Pilate heard this statement, he was even more afraid. 9 He entered his headquarters again and said to Jesus, "Where are you from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. 10 So Pilate said to him, "You will not speak to me? Do you not know that I have authority to release you and authority to crucify you?" 11 Jesus answered him, "You would have no authority over me at all unless it had been given you from above. Therefore he who delivered me over to you has the greater sin."

A. Two reasons Pilate's fear increased.

#1: Pilate had already lost to the Jews in two or more encounters regarding emperor worship versus their zealous belief in one God.

#2: Pilate had been involved in intense interaction with Jesus and seems to be more and more aware that he was not dealing with a mere man. Adding to his apprehension was the Jews charge that Jesus is making himself out to be the Son of God. This seems to be cause to wonder if Pilate is somewhere in the recesses of his mind beginning to comprehend the true identity of Jesus.

B. Pilate was now in full panic mode as Jesus refused to answer and asked Jesus — **"Where are you from?"**

C. Though thoroughly shaken Pilate attempted to fall back on his position of authority.

D. Jesus set him straight on who was the authority.

5. Pilate caved in to the Jews and delivered Jesus to them to be crucified, 19:12-16a.

- (John 19:12–16 ESV) **From then on Pilate sought to release him**, but the Jews cried out, "If you release this man, you are not Caesar's friend. Everyone who makes himself a king opposes Caesar." 13 So when Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judgment seat at a place called The Stone Pavement, and in Aramaic Gabbatha. 14 Now it was the day of Preparation of the Passover. It was about the sixth hour. He said to the Jews, **"Behold your King!"** 15 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."** 16 So he delivered him over to them to be crucified.

A. Pilate is convinced of the innocence of Jesus and now seeks to release him.

B. The Jews pull their trump card — If you release this man who makes himself out to be a king, you are not Caesar's friend.

C. Lashing out Pilate calls out to them to behold their King and the Jews call out for Jesus' crucifixion.

D. Mocking them again Pilate challenges the Jews —

"Shall I crucify your King?"

E. The chief priests vehemently respond — **"We have no king but Caesar"** — and the irony was that they were telling the truth.

F. Pilate attempted to salvage what was left of his life and delivered Jesus to the Jews to be crucified.

G. Pilate came close to the truth but decided to save his life in this worldly realm rather than believe the truth of the kingdom of God.

CONCLUSION: PILATE CHOSE TO NOT DIE WITH JESUS AND SO LOST HIS OPPORTUNITY TO LIVE WITH JESUS FOREVER ...

It seems we observe much of that in our society and in the church today as we view life through the lens of Scripture ...

People profess that they want to live with Jesus ... that they want to have Jesus in their lives ...

But they are not willing to die with Jesus ... and they hope this is enough and that everything will work out in the end ...

But trusting in false hope and basing our lives on the wrong authority ... never, ever works out ...

This is wishful thinking ... a lie that contradicts Scripture and never ends well ...

- (2 Timothy 2:11–13 ESV) The saying is trustworthy, for: **if we have died with him, we will also live with him**; 12 if we endure, we will also reign with him; **if we deny him, he also will deny us**; 13 **if we are faithless, he remains faithful—for he cannot deny himself.**
- (Mark 8:34–35 ESV) And calling the crowd to him with his disciples, he said to them, "If anyone would come after me, **let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.** 35 **For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it.**"

So our question this morning is this:

Am I willing to die with Jesus that I might live with him?