

NO FOOLIN' Sunday School- April 1, 2012

Unifying Topic: JESUS TESTIFIES TO THE TRUTH

Lesson Text

I. Christ's Accusers (John 18:28-32)

II. King of Kings (John 18:33-36)

III. Servant Of The Truth (John 18:37)

The Main Thought: Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice. (John 18:37, KJV).

Unifying Principle: Amidst the good and bad things that happen to us, we wonder what our real purpose in life is. Why are we here, and what is our purpose? Even after He was betrayed, arrested, and tried by Pilate, Jesus was clear that His purpose was to testify to the truth of God's love.

Lesson Aim: To show that Christ's death was God's providential will, and God used it to fulfill His purpose for the world.

Life aim: To help adults not only to know justice but to have the desire to do what is fair and just by others.

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- 18:28 Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment: and it was early; and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the Passover.
- 18:29 Pilate then went out unto them, and said, What accusation bring ye against this man?
- 18:30 They answered and said unto him, If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee.
- 18:31 Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye him, and judge him according to your law. The Jews therefore said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death:
- 18:32 That the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he spake, signifying what death he should die.
- 18:33 Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again, and called Jesus, and said unto him, Art thou the King of the Jews?
- 18:34 Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me?
- 18:35 Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me: what hast thou done?
- 18:36 Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.
- 18:37 Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.

HISTORY:

Chapter 18:1-18 ¹After Jesus had finished His prayer, He takes His disciples to the Garden of Gethsemane (v.1). He had taken His disciples there many times before to get away from the crowds. Soon Judas came with a large crowd (some have estimated six hundred soldiers) to arrest Jesus (v.2-3). Because Jesus was completely aware of Judas' plan, He went out to meet them (v.4-6). It was at this point that Judas, in his act of betrayal, kissed the Lord (Matthew 26:49). The crowd was caught off guard by this unusual behavior of Jesus as He calmly faced them, identified Himself, and made no effort to escape. In this moment of personal crisis, He requested that they let the disciples go free (v.7-9). Peter, wanting to show his devotion to Christ, quickly drew out a sword and started to fight. Jesus did not need Peter's protection. He could have summoned legions of angels if it had been His desire to be delivered. Peter proceeded to cut off the ear of one of the servants (v.10-11). Jesus rebukes Peter and deliberately gives Himself over to His enemies. They bind Him and lead Him to the house of Annas (father-in-law of Caiaphas) for a sort of preliminary exam before going before Caiaphas, the high priest (v.12-14). Jesus knew His rights, but He did not insist on them. ²It is evident that two of Jesus' disciples had followed the Lord and His enemies across the Kidron Valley into the city of Jerusalem and into the courtyard of the High Priest. One of these disciples was Simon Peter and the other one is (probably John whom Jesus loved) (v.15). This is the only mention of John out of all the four Gospels. John here was known unto the high priest, went in with Jesus into the Palace of the high priest while Peter stood at the door. He then brings Peter in and the damsel who kept the door asks, "Are not thou also one of this man's disciples?" This is where Peter denied knowing Jesus (the first time). Peter then stands with the servants and officers over a fire of coals in the cold to warm himself (v.16-18).

Chapter 18:19-27 Annas had served as high priest but was thrown out of office by the Romans and now his son-in-law

¹ <http://www.family-times.net/commentary/jesus-betrayal-by-judas/>

² <http://www.family-times.net/commentary/trial-before-annas/>

Caiaphas was the high priest. This means that the trial before Annas was illegal and it proved to be very brutal. Annas was looking for something for which to convict Jesus. He questioned Him as to His doctrine (v.19). Jesus responded that He had nothing to hide and that He had taught publicly in the synagogues and in public places (v.20). Jesus refused to be a witness against Himself and instead He asked Annas to produce witnesses who could testify as to His teaching (v.21). Jewish law demanded that witnesses be called before a prisoner was questioned. Annas defied this law, which made the trial illegal. While Jesus was still tied up one of the Temple police struck him (v.22-23). Since Annas could prove no wrong in Jesus, He sent him to Caiaphas (v.24). It was only a short time until Peter denied his Lord: *"And Simon Peter stood and warmed himself. They said therefore unto him. Art not thou also one of his disciples? He denied it, and said, I am not"* This is his second time denying the Lord (v.25). Now here is the third time. *"One of the servants of the high priest, being his kinsman whose ear Peter cut off, saith, Did not I see thee in the garden with him?"* (v.26-27). The big difference between Peter and Judas was that Peter wept over his sins and repented, while Judas admitted his sins but never really repented. Judas expressed remorse, not repentance. It was the difference between godly sorrow that leads to repentance, and the sorrow of the world that leads to death.

LESSON:

John 18:28-32 Christ's Accusers

18:28 Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment: — Three trials occurred:

1. The first trial was before Annas, former high priest (18:12-14, 19-23).
2. The second trial was before Caiaphas, current high priest (18:24).
3. The third trial was before, Pilate, the Roman governor (18:28-32).

Now we are in the Roman governor's palace of residence.

18:28b ...and it was early; — Early morning probably means shortly after sunrise when the Sanhedrin met in formal session and pronounced its verdict on Jesus. **18:28c ...and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the Passover.** —Note: the Jews didn't enter Gentile quarters. They were more interested in ceremonial purity than justice. Look at the religious leaders who had arrested an innocent man and had already broken a number of their own laws; but they refused to enter Pilate's palace because they didn't want to be defiled themselves. Jews couldn't go into a Gentile courtyard open to the sky or a Gentile building or home. To enter the judgment hall would have polluted and contaminated them ceremonially and they would have been disallowed from participating in the Passover.

18:29 Pilate then went out unto them, and said,— The thing is that the Jews despised Pilate for many reasons and Pilate despised the Jews in particular for their intense practice of religion. The Jews on many occasions threatened to exercise their right to report Pilate to the emperor (even higher than Pilate). Pilate didn't live in Jerusalem. He was there because of Passover. However, to accommodate the Jewish leaders, Pilate goes out to them, being sensitive to keep the peace during Passover, since the city was flooded with Jewish pilgrims. He asks the question: **What accusation bring ye against this man?** — This was a logical question; however, the Jews had not prepared a formal indictment.

18:30 They answered and said unto him, If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee. — They wanted Pilate to accept the fact that they would not bring a person to him if he were not a malefactor (evildoer).

18:31 Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye him, and judge him according to your law. The Jews therefore said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death: — I assume that Pilate knew what was going on with Jesus and the Jews, but really didn't want to get involved. He found out for sure that the Jews really wanted to go as far as death. They wanted the Romans to judge the case and pass sentence according to Roman law because they, the Jews couldn't legally execute anyone, especially on the Sabbath or on feast days. Therefore, they wanted Pilate to pass sentence on Jesus. Normally, the Jewish leaders would have stayed clear of Pilate, but he was their only hope of carrying out the death penalty on Jesus.

18:32 That the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he spake, signifying what death he should die. — In Matt.20:18-19; Mk.10:33-34; and Lk.18:31-33 Jesus predicted to His disciples of what would happen to Him; regarding His death. The

Jews used the method of stoning to execute criminals. If Pilate were to authorize death, it would mean crucifixion. The Roman's method of execution had been predicted by Jesus. Jesus specifically said they would "*crucify*" Him in Matthew.

John 18:33-36 King of Kings

18:33 Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again, and called Jesus, and said unto him, Art thou the King of the Jews?

— The judgment hall was inside where Jesus was kept while he talked to the Jewish leaders outside. Pilate was able to question Jesus without the interference of the Jewish leaders. He would not examine Jesus in the crowd. ³His question to Jesus is not have you committed a crime, but "*are you king of the Jews?*" John skips this part- (*but Pilate's wife had warned him of a dream she had about Jesus. She told Pilate to have nothing to do with this*). ⁴Pilate's question revealed doubt. He asked it because Jesus didn't look like a revolutionary or a criminal.

18:34 Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me? — It was to say, "*Are you speaking for yourself or are you speaking on hearsay by My accusers?*" Jesus desired to know whether Pilate was asking this question for the Jews or for himself. Jesus answers by asking a question not by giving the answer to Pilate's question. Jesus challenges Pilate to think through the issue himself. In judging Jesus, a person is responsible for his own verdict.

18:35 Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me: what hast thou done?

– Pilate arrogantly speaks back by saying: (*I'm going to paraphrase*): '*This is not my fight. I am not Jew? Do you know who I am? This is between you and the Jews; your own nation and chief priests. They're the ones that delivered you to me.*' Jesus was before Pilate for some reason and Pilate now wants to simply know what He has done, never mind if He is king or not; never mind about His kingship!

18:36 Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence. — Jesus now gives clarity of His kingdom. He's really saying '*yes I am a king*, because there is no kingdom without having a king; '*but my kingdom is not of this world.*'

To the Romans, "*king*" meant a political rival. Though Jesus was a King, He was not a political rival in the sense Pilate thought. As far as he could see there were no servants fighting to prevent Him from being delivered to the Jews or anyone using force against the Jews or Romans. Jesus goes on to say that His kingdom was not from here. ⁵Pilate may have been relieved at Jesus' answer that His kingdom was not of this world or not from here, because he didn't know which is the stronger of the two kingdoms. [*The eternal King who rules over the souls of men is mightier than an external foe with powerful armies. Rome is gone, Napoleon is gone, Hitler is gone, but the Kingdom of Jesus marches on*]. We know that Jesus was speaking of a spiritual kingdom in which Pilate or the Jewish leaders could not understand. It just does not rise up from here.

John 18:37 Servant Of The Truth

18:37 Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.

— Pilate was still confused and he just wanted Jesus to admit that He is a king. With Jesus' answer, He didn't want Pilate to get hung up on kingship. But He takes time to tell Pilate about what He was born to do and why He came into the world. **To this end was I born**—not for political gain but it shows His humanity. **...for this cause came I into the world**—means that he existed before His birth in Bethlehem, therefore indicating His deity. **...that I should bear witness unto the truth**—He's speaking of His ministry; to testify to the truth. **Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice**—His was a spiritual kingdom of truth, and He won people to His cause not through force but through the conviction of the Him speaking God's Word. Jesus says, '*all I have done is tell the truth. Those who recognize the truth hear me.*' That really had gotten Pilate's attention.

SUMMARY:

³ <http://www.lovetheLord.com/books/john/49.html>

⁴ http://www.blueletterbible.org/commentaries/comm_view.cfm?AuthorID=2&contentID=7950&commInfo=31&topic=John

⁵ http://www.blueletterbible.org/commentaries/comm_view.cfm?AuthorID=2&contentID=7950&commInfo=31&topic=John

<http://www.pitwm.net-pitwm/sundayschool.html>

⁶We need to understand that long before the Jewish leaders arrested Jesus in the garden, they had planned to kill Him (John 11:47-51). However, these Jews did not have the right to execute anyone; so it was necessary to get the approval of Rome. This is why Jesus is brought into the Judgment Hall before Pilate (v.28). It is interesting to note that the Jewish leaders did not hesitate to condemn an innocent man and yet they were careful not to defile themselves by walking into a Gentile house (the Governor's Palace). They were more interested in ceremonial purity than in justice.

Pilate was not anxious to get involved in a Jewish court case, especially at Passover time, so he had tried to evade the issue. After all, if the prisoner was creating problems for the Jews, let them try Him under their own law. Pilate asks these Jews for a formal accusation that they have against Jesus and they did not have one (v.29). They just wanted Pilate to accept the fact that they would not bring anyone to him unless he was a criminal (v.30). Pilate, unaware that they wanted to kill Jesus, asked them why they didn't pass sentence on Him according to their own law (v.31). The Jews could use only the method of stoning to execute criminals and if Pilate were to authorize death it would mean crucifixion (v.32). Crucifixion was the method that had been predicted by Jesus (Matthew 20:17-19). Pilate has a private interview with Jesus and asks Him if He is "*King of the Jews*" (v.33). Jesus wants to know why Pilate was asking this question (v.34). Pilate avoids the question and instead asks "*what hast thou done?*"(v.35). Jesus answers that, He had no political motives in mind, but instead His kingdom is a spiritual one (v.36-37).

APPLICATION:

When truth is told some can't take it and can't understand it. Jesus' purpose was clear to Him but not to those around Him. Therefore, when you begin to tell others what the Lord told you, don't get upset when they don't want to understand it, just follow God. As you apply this lesson, know that there will be accusers, but there is still exaltation by God, no foolin'!

⁶ <http://www.family-times.net/commentary/jesus-is-innocent-before-pilate/>
<http://www.pitwm.net-pitwm/sundayschool.html>