

JOHN 18:28-40

God's eternal plan of
redemption moves our
Savior closer to the cross



Jewish leaders deliver Jesus to Pilate charging Him with a capital offense (18:28-32)

28 Then they led Jesus from the house of Caiaphas to the governor's headquarters.

- Jesus is determined to be guilty of a capital crime against Jewish law and Rome and taken to Pilate's headquarters for his verdict

It was early morning. They themselves did not enter the governor's headquarters, so that they would not be defiled, but could eat the Passover.

- The day for Roman officials started early so is around 6 a.m.
- Jewish leaders have concern for meticulous adherence to the Mishna
- Being in a Gentile home required 7 days for purification
- These Jews are entrenched in religious form and appearance, but their hearts are not humble and dependent on the Lord
- Jewish leaders repeatedly violated their law in the arrest and trial of Jesus

Jewish leaders deliver Jesus to Pilate charging Him with a capital offense (18:28-32)

29 So Pilate went outside to them and said, “What accusation do you bring against this man?”

- Pilate wants them to express their formal charges

30 They answered him, “If this man were not doing evil, we would not have delivered him over to you.”

- They assume Pilate will “rubber stamp” their court proceedings against Jesus
 - Pilate arrogantly resents that they think he’s a “rubber stamp”
- 31 Pilate said to them, “Take him yourselves and judge him by your own law.”*
- Pilate is a ruthless and arrogant man in his own right and shows that he can resist being their puppet
 - Sensing their insolence, he puts the ball back in their lap (“judge him by your own law”)

Jewish leaders deliver Jesus to Pilate charging Him with a capital offense (18:28-32)

The Jews said to him, "It is not lawful for us to put anyone to death."³² This was to fulfill the word that Jesus had spoken to show by what kind of death he was going to die.

- They reveal they have determined Jesus committed a capital offense
- The Jewish leaders want Jesus to be crucified showing their repudiation of His Messianic claims
 - Deuteronomy 21:22–23
 - They want to show the people that Jesus is cursed by God
- This is the eternal plan of God previous depicted by Jesus
 - John 3:14
 - John 12:32
- God is in ultimate control of these happenings
- Jesus came to be our sin-bearer
 - Galatians 3:13
 - 2 Corinthians 9:15

Pilate examines Jesus regarding the charges of a capital offense against Rome (18:33-38a)

³³ So Pilate entered his headquarters again and called Jesus and said to him, “Are you the King of the Jews?”

- Pilate is aware that in addition to violations of Jewish law, Jesus is charged with attempting to usurp the throne of Rome

³⁴ Jesus answered, “Do you say this of your own accord, or did others say it to you about me?”

- Knowing Pilate’s perspective is important for Jesus to be able to answer truthfully

³⁵ Pilate answered, “Am I a Jew? Your own nation and the chief priests have delivered you over to me. What have you done?”

- Pilate wants to know if the actions of Jesus set Him in opposition to the throne in Rome – a capital offense

³⁶ Jesus answered, “My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from the world.”

- Jesus presents no earthly army; therefore, He poses no human threat to the Jews or the Empire
- Jesus does not say His kingdom has no power of influence on the earth, but His power and influence are not displayed in typical earthly ways
- Jesus, as King of kings and Lord of lords, is on a mission
- Jesus is a ruler unlike any in this world

Pilate examines Jesus regarding the charges of a capital offense against Rome (18:33-38a)

³⁷ Then Pilate said to him, “So you are a king?” Jesus answered, “You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice.”

- The essence of the ruling authority of Jesus is truth
 - Not truth as opposed error, but truth as the form and foundation of all of life
 - John 1:14
 - John 4:24
 - John 14:6
 - Jesus, and His gospel mission, is the structure and foundation supporting all of life
- By His grace and power, He brings His people into the light of truth, enabling them to benefit from the stability and strength He supplies
 - Matthew 7:24–27
- Jesus is a King who lives to truly free and empower His people

³⁸ Pilate said to him, “What is truth?”

- Pilate, being spiritually dead, misses the point
 - The question should not be “What is truth?” but “Who is truth?”
 - Without the who – Jesus – there is no understanding or ability regarding the what – teachings of biblical direction
- Pilate dismisses Jesus and His communication as irrelevant and insignificant
- He also dismisses that Jesus is any threat to Rome

Pilate declares Jesus innocent while the Jews demand His condemnation (18:38b-40)

After he had said this, he went back outside to the Jews and told them, "I find no guilt in him.

- Pilate goes outside to all the Jews gathered in the courtyard announcing that he sees no grounds for the charges

³⁹ But you have a custom that I should release one man for you at the Passover. So do you want me to release to you the King of the Jews?"

- Pilate miscalculates the influence of his strategy
 - Pilate does not realize the power the Jewish leaders have as influencers of the people's thoughts, feelings, and decisions
 - Their pious corruption spreads easily
- Pilate asks the people if they want him to release the King of the Jews, assuming they will say yes

⁴⁰ They cried out again, "Not this man, but Barabbas!" Now Barabbas was a robber.

- The ruling authorities have sown their wicked seeds of influence
 - Matthew 27:20
- Criticism and negativity have incredible destructive power
- Yet behind it all, God's eternal plan of redemption moves our Savior closer to the cross

Questions to Consider

- In what ways are you numb to sensitivity to God because of heartless forms and functions?
- What areas of your life need an emersion in the living and abiding presence of Jesus?
- How does the repugnance of your sinfulness strike you, knowing Jesus bore the curse of God against you to save you?
- As one born of God and truth, how is your life daily benefiting from the strength and stability Jesus provides?

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