

GROWTH + GROUPS

NAVIGATE LIFE TOGETHER

Maranatha Chapel Sermon Based Study Guide
SB 08.06.2023

Pilate the Man - John 18:28-40

Receiving the Message and Relating to the Study

What insights, principles or observations stood out to you from this week's message? Discuss with your group.

Pastor Daniel tells us "The central figure in our story today is a man named Pontius Pilate. Pilate served as the governor of the region of Judea during the time of Jesus. For a long time, skeptics doubted that he was a real historical figure. However, in 1961, a stone was discovered in Caesarea that placed him as the governor of the region during the time of Jesus. It is known as the Pilate stone. The picture history paints of Pilate is that of a shrewd and cunning politician. He received his post the old-fashioned way. He married the emperor's daughter. His main job was to keep the peace in a region that was known for unrest. In our story, Pilate has been called on by the religious community to render a verdict concerning Jesus. Pilate didn't care about Jesus' guilt or innocence. What he did care about was remaining in good standing with Rome. As the story unfolds, that will become a major driving factor in how things play out." Let's get into our lesson...

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

1. What struck you most from Pastor Daniel's sermon?

Israel was occupied by Rome, and though the Israelites had many freedoms, Rome held the ultimate power to put someone to death. If the Jewish leaders of the day wanted Jesus to be executed, they would not only try him before their courts, but also before the court of Pilate

Digging Deeper in God's Word: Life Lessons

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ JOHN 18:28-32

1. What is your biggest take-away from verses 28-32?
2. How do you see Jesus demonstrating that He is in control in these verses?
3. In what areas of your life are you struggling to believe that Jesus is in control? How can this passage give you confidence in His control?

Hundreds of years before crucifixion had even been invented, the Old Testament prophesied about the nature of the death of God's Messiah. Jesus demonstrated His control not only of this situation, but even of the Roman government's occupation of Israel. It must have been so in order for Jesus to be crucified, or "lifted up." If Jesus had that degree of control in this situation, we can be confident He is not surprised or out of control of anything in our lives as well.

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ JOHN 18:33-39

1. Why does Pilate again ask Jesus if He is a king? How does Jesus respond to Pilate this time?
2. Where is the answer to Pilate's question "What is truth? (John 18:38)"
3. Why is it significant that Jesus told Pilate that He was born for this?

“PROMISES” in 2023

4. Look back at Pilate’s question in verse 38. Where do you see our culture asking that same question today? Why is it important that we have a firm answer to that question?
5. Why will standing on foundational truth nearly always come with a cost?

In Jesus’ response to Pilate, we once again see His control. Jesus was not a prisoner; He was there because this was His mission from the beginning. Though He might have seemed like the victim, Jesus was and is reigning in His kingdom of truth. We, as His followers, must build our lives on the foundational truth of God and His Word if we want to stand firm in this world.

AS A GROUP READ JOHN 18:38-40

1. Was Barabbas' only crime robbery (see Mark 15 and Matthew 27)?
2. Did Pilate know the Jews’ real motive for wishing to have Jesus killed?
3. How might his wife's message have influenced that impression?
4. Have you ever thought of yourself as being Barabbas? How does doing so help you understand the cost and benefit of the gospel?

Just as Barabbas, the one who should rightly be punished, was released, so are we released into freedom because of the death of Jesus. Jesus is in control, and He volunteers Himself to die in my place.

Applying God’s Word

What did you learn from this study and how does this personally speak to you? Discuss with your group.

I imagine Barabbas heart beginning to race as he heard the guard approaching his cell. But then, in a shocking twist of events, after opening the door to his cell, the guard released him from his shackles and told him he was free to go. ‘Wait, what? Why?’ Barabbas must have asked. Then came the answer, ‘Jesus took your place.’ That’s the gospel. The name Barabbas means, son of the father. He represents all of us. We were all created as sons and daughters of the father, but we went astray. Because of our sin, the sentence of death hung over our heads, but then Jesus, the true Son of the Father, came and took our place. We deserved death. But like Barabbas, we have been set free because of the One who took our place. That is the essence of the gospel message. The righteous for the unrighteous. The guilty for the innocent. The just for the unjust. His life for ours. Barabbas expected to die. He deserved to die. But then Jesus took his place.

1. What are some ways you have seen Jesus exercise His control this week?
2. In what situations are you being challenged to compromise foundational truth? How are you going to arm yourself this week to stand firmly?
3. What are some ways you can remind yourself that Jesus is in control this week?

PRAYER: As you close your group, thank God for His great love in which He sent Jesus to die in your place. Thank Him that Jesus is still in control and pray for any situations mentioned in your group in which your group is struggling to trust Jesus.

**‘And if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me. This He said, signifying what death He should die.’
{John 12:32-33}**