

## Friday 15-April-22 [Good Friday] King Jesus' Suffering & Death

### Matthew 27:11-56

#### Jesus Before Pilate

<sup>11</sup> Meanwhile Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?"

"You have said so," Jesus replied.

<sup>12</sup> When he was accused by the chief priests and the elders, he gave no answer. <sup>13</sup> Then Pilate asked him, "Don't you hear the testimony they are bringing against you?" <sup>14</sup> But Jesus made no reply, not even to a single charge—to the great amazement of the governor.

<sup>15</sup> Now it was the governor's custom at the festival to release a prisoner chosen by the crowd. <sup>16</sup> At that time they had a well-known prisoner whose name was Jesus Barabbas. <sup>17</sup> So when the crowd had gathered, Pilate asked them, "Which one do you want me to release to you: Jesus Barabbas, or Jesus who is called the Messiah?" <sup>18</sup> For he knew it was out of self-interest that they had handed Jesus over to him.

<sup>19</sup> While Pilate was sitting on the judge's seat, his wife sent him this message: "Don't have anything to do with that innocent man, for I have suffered a great deal today in a dream because of him."

<sup>20</sup> But the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowd to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus executed.

<sup>21</sup> "Which of the two do you want me to release to you?" asked the governor.

"Barabbas," they answered.

<sup>22</sup> "What shall I do, then, with Jesus who is called the Messiah?" Pilate asked.

They all answered, "Crucify him!"

<sup>23</sup> "Why? What crime has he committed?" asked Pilate.

But they shouted all the louder, "Crucify him!"

<sup>24</sup> When Pilate saw that he was getting nowhere, but that instead an uproar was starting, he took water and washed his hands in front of the crowd. "I am innocent of this man's blood," he said. "It is your responsibility!"

<sup>25</sup> All the people answered, "His blood is on us and on our children!"

<sup>26</sup> Then he released Barabbas to them. But he had Jesus flogged, and handed him over to be crucified.

### **The Soldiers Mock Jesus**

<sup>27</sup> Then the governor's soldiers took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole company of soldiers around him. <sup>28</sup> They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, <sup>29</sup> and then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on his head. They put a staff in his right hand. Then they knelt in front of him and mocked him. "Hail, king of the Jews!" they said. <sup>30</sup> They spit on him, and took the staff and struck him on the head again and again. <sup>31</sup> After they had mocked him, they took off the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him.

### **The Crucifixion of Jesus**

<sup>32</sup> As they were going out, they met a man from Cyrene, named Simon, and they forced him to carry the cross. <sup>33</sup> They came to a place called Golgotha (which means "the place of the skull"). <sup>34</sup> There they offered Jesus wine to drink, mixed with gall; but after tasting it, he refused to drink it. <sup>35</sup> When they had crucified him, they divided up his clothes by casting lots. <sup>36</sup> And sitting down, they kept watch over him there. <sup>37</sup> Above his head they placed the written charge against him: THIS IS JESUS, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

<sup>38</sup> Two rebels were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left. <sup>39</sup> Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads <sup>40</sup> and saying, "You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! Come down from the cross, if you are the Son of God!" <sup>41</sup> In the same way the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders mocked him. <sup>42</sup> "He saved others," they said, "but he can't save himself! He's the king of Israel! Let

him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him. <sup>43</sup> He trusts in God. Let God rescue him now if he wants him, for he said, 'I am the Son of God.'" <sup>44</sup> In the same way the rebels who were crucified with him also heaped insults on him.

## **The Death of Jesus**

<sup>45</sup> From noon until three in the afternoon darkness came over all the land. <sup>46</sup> About three in the afternoon Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "*Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?*" (Which means "*My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?*").

<sup>47</sup> When some of those standing there heard this, they said, "He's calling Elijah."

<sup>48</sup> Immediately one of them ran and got a sponge. He filled it with wine vinegar, put it on a staff, and offered it to Jesus to drink. <sup>49</sup> The rest said, "Now leave him alone. Let's see if Elijah comes to save him."

<sup>50</sup> And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit.

<sup>51</sup> At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook, the rocks split <sup>52</sup> and the tombs broke open. The bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life. <sup>53</sup> They came out of the tombs after Jesus' resurrection and went into the holy city and appeared to many people.

<sup>54</sup> When the centurion and those with him who were guarding Jesus saw the earthquake and all that had happened, they were terrified, and exclaimed, "Surely, he was the Son of God!"

<sup>55</sup> Many women were there, watching from a distance. They had followed Jesus from Galilee to care for his needs. <sup>56</sup> Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of Zebedee's sons.

## Sermon: King Jesus' Suffering and Death

It would be good to have your **Bibles opened up to Matthew 27** – starting at verse 11.

There's a **sermon outline** – if you want to take notes.

Let me **ask God for His guidance and understanding**

Let's pray...

## Context (Palm Sunday to Good Friday)

Last Sunday – we **remembered** and **celebrated** – **Palm Sunday**

King **Jesus rode** into **Jerusalem** – **welcomed as King** – and was greeted with words of –

*“Hosanna in the Highest, Blessed is He who comes in the Name of the Lord!”*

But **what a difference a few days make** –

What has happened from Palm Sunday to the following Friday?

1. Well - one of Jesus' twelve disciples – **Judas** – **agrees to betray Jesus**
2. Then Jesus has His **last meal with His 12 disciples** (Matt 26:17-30)
3. And Jesus **predicts Peter** will **deny** being Jesus' friend **three times** (Matt 26:31-35)
4. Jesus **prays** in the **Garden** of Gethsemane – knowing He is going to His **death** (Matt 26:36-46)
5. Then Judas arrives with the chief priests and elders – who **arrest Jesus** (Matt 26:47-55)
6. Jesus is taken to the **High Priest – Caiaphas** – where He is **charged with blasphemy** for claiming to be the Son of God (Matt 26:64-68) and then taken to the **Roman Governor Pontius Pilate**.

What a **difference a few days makes**

In those few days – Jesus has been **falsely accused, mistreated, betrayed** by one disciple and pretty much **deserted** by the rest of the 12 disciples.

He's pretty much going it **alone!**

And it's **about to get worse**

I'm sure we've **heard the story** of Jesus trial, crucifixion and death – **many times**

So, this morning – I'd like us to look at the **response to King Jesus' suffering and death** – from the main characters in the story – and from that hopefully –**we can see what our response should be this morning!**

In ANY narrative in the Bible – it's **worth asking ourselves** – what would we have done? – and who are we most like? – and ultimately – **what should our response really be?**

[PowerPoint 1-Responses]



## The Disciples' Response

First then – the **disciples'** response

- Well – **Judas betrayed Jesus** – He was overcome by **greed** and **coaxed by Satan** (Luke 22:3) to betray Jesus for **30 pieces of silver**

- Judas' betrayal teaches us to guard against small, gradual failings that gain strength and power in our lives and that could open the door to more deadly influences. Judas' betrayal is also a great reminder that appearances can be deceiving. People may seem like they love and follow Jesus – but they don't really.
- Then there's Peter – He means well – He genuinely wants to follow Jesus – even die with Him – but Peter's fear gets the better of Him – and when it comes to walking the talk – He can't do it – and He denies knowing Jesus. But would we be any better – if we were in Peter's shoes?
- Then there's the disciples in the garden – they can't even stay awake and pray with Jesus on His last night with them? But would we be any better – if we were there? I fall asleep when praying sometimes? Jesus understood their spirit was willing but their flesh was weak!
- By the time Jesus is crucified – **only one of the twelve is at the cross** – that's John – the rest have deserted Him (see Matt 26:56)
- Again, where would we be? At the cross? Hiding? Running for the hills?

### Pontius Pilate's Response

Second – there's the response of Pontius Pilate

- Pilate is amazed by the way Jesus conducts Himself when He is brought before him
- When Pilate asks Jesus if He is King of the Jews
- Jesus simply says "*You have said so*" – literally "*the description is yours*"

- Pilate can't believe the **strength of character of Jesus** as He doesn't reply to the false accusations
- And **Pilate knows** deep down that the **charges** laid against Jesus are **false** – and Pilate knows Jesus is **no threat to Roman rule**
- Even **Pilate's wife** (v19) – having had a **dream** about Jesus - says **Jesus is an innocent man** and **warns** her **husband** not to not have anything to do with Jesus - but Pilate doesn't listen to his wife
- Instead, **Pilate hopes** to be able to **release Jesus** – because there was a **tradition** at the time of the **Passover festival** – to **release** one **prisoner** that the **crowd** **named** – Pilate **hopes** the **crowd** will **choose Jesus** - so he can gain favour with the crowd
- But **Pilate** is in a **sticky situation**
- The **Jewish leaders want Jesus dead** – and have said Jesus has **broken both Jewish religious law** by blaspheming (which Pilate doesn't care about) – but according to the Jewish leaders – Jesus has also **broken Roman rule** – by saying He is a King – and so cleverly they can say to Pilate – in John 19:12 – *“If you let this man [Jesus] go, you are no friend of Caesar. Anyone who claims to be a king opposes Caesar”*
- If Pilate was to release Jesus – who claims to be a King – and Emperor Caesar got to hear about it - Pilate would not only be no friend of Caesar – He'd be sent to some remote outpost and never heard of again – or worse still – he might even be executed!
- So, for Pilate – he has a choice of his **career** or Jesus?
- It might be worth asking ourselves this morning – what have we chosen ahead of Jesus at times?  
(pause)

- Of course, **Pilate** – **chooses** His **career** – and **releases** the terrorist **Barabbas** instead –
- The release of Barabbas instead of Jesus is **full of irony**
  - The One who refused to be violent – **Jesus** - is **crucified**
  - The One who is violent – **Barabbas** – is **set free**
  - **Barabbas'** name **means “son of a father”** – so there are two “sons of a father” here – **Jesus** and **Barabbas** –
  - But Barabbas full name is **Jesus Barabbas** (v16) – but some manuscripts drop the name Jesus – after all we can't have a criminal called Jesus – can we?
  - But that's the whole point of **Jesus coming and identifying with sinners**
  - Here we have two sons of a father, two men named Jesus, one of them - rebels and kills - the other suffers and saves
  - All of us are **called to choose between these two ideals** – **follow the bad way** [Barabbas] - or follow the good way [Jesus]
  - On that first Good Friday – the innocent one ended up on the cross meant for the guilty one – and the guilty one walked free
  - An **amazing picture of what the cross of Jesus means** – innocent Jesus took guilty Barabbas' place - but **Jesus also took our place too!**

(pause)

- **Pilate** tries to shirk any responsibility for Jesus' death and to **wash his hands** of Jesus' blood – but can he really? Isn't Pilate the one in charge? Not the people? Not the religious leaders?
- Ultimately, it's **Pilate who gives the order for Jesus to be scourged and crucified!**

- At the end of the day, **Pilate listened to the falsehoods** of the religious leaders and the crowd – and not the **truth of Jesus**? **Pilate** was the **ultimate people pleaser** so he could keep his job?
- Who are we **trying to please**? **God** or **people**? (Galatians 1:10)

### Religious Leaders' Response

Third – there's the response of the **religious leaders**

- The **religious leaders** were also in a **sticky situation**
- **Jesus had gained enormous popularity** – and they don't like it – and can't stop it!
- In John 12:19 – the religious leaders concluded *“this is getting us nowhere. Look at how the whole world has gone after him”*
- If Jesus continued to be this popular – there was a chance the people would rebel against the Roman rule – and then the Roman leaders would put greater restrictions on the Judaism religion **which would then affect the religious leaders' power and status**
- So rather than admitting Jesus **IS** telling the truth
- They come up with two false charges
  - A **religious charge** – that Jesus was **blaspheming** by saying He is the Son of God – and having the power and authority of God
  - And a **political charge** (to be dealt with by the Romans) - that **Jesus claimed to be a King** – which meant He was against the emperor!
- To make sure their plan worked the religious leaders
  - Organised **false witnesses** & testimony against Jesus (Matt 26:59-60)
  - They **paid Judas** to betray the Lord (Matt 27:14-16)
  - They **boxed Pilate** into a **corner** – so he couldn't release Jesus

- They **persuaded the crowd** to ask for Barabbas to be released and for Jesus to be executed (Mark 15:11 and Matt 28:20)
- People can go to great lengths to avoid believing in Jesus...

## The Crowd

### Fourth – there's the response of the **Crowd**

- The **crowd** have **fallen for the lies about Jesus** and been persuaded by the religious leaders – so they cry out “*Crucify Him! Crucify Him!*”
- Foolishly – the crowd say “*Jesus' blood is on them and their children*” (Mark 27:25) – and that's precisely what happens to their children when the Romans destroy **Jerusalem 40 years later (AD 70)** – what **foolish and ignorant words!**
- Some of the **crowd** even **hurl insults at Jesus** on the cross (vv40-42)
- Yet despite their foolish and ignorant and hurtful words – there's **still time for these same people to repent and say sorry to Jesus!** Such is **Jesus' grace and mercy** to all who genuinely come to Him

## The Roman Soldiers' Response

### Fifth – there's the response of the **Roman soldiers**

- The **soldiers** are **cruel**
- They **mock** Jesus as King – putting a purple **robe** on Him and a **crown of thorns**
- And they pretend to **worship Him as King**
- They **spit** on Him and **strike** Him on the **head** repeatedly
- They do this because they have no idea who Jesus is
- Many people today – **reject Jesus** because they've never really taken the time to listen to who He is and why He came?

## Simon from Cyrene's Response

### Sixth – Simon from Cyrene

- When someone is crucified – the **Romans** made them **carry their own wooden cross** to the place of execution
- **Jesus is unable to carry His cross** – because He has been so severely mistreated and scourged
- Instead, a man named **Simon** carries it
- **Simon** is a **picture** and a **reminder** of what Jesus told His disciples
- Back in **Matt 16:24** - **Jesus said to his disciples**, *“Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me”*.
- As Jesus' disciples – we must **be prepared to carry our cross** – it may mean being mistreated, falsely accused, misunderstood – perhaps even be **persecuted** or die?
- **As He suffered greatly for us** – we are called to suffer in some way for Him!

## The Centurion's Response

### Seven – there's the response of the **Roman Centurion**

- The **Roman Centurion** – who remember is not even a Jew – but a Gentile - like the Magi (Matt 2:1-12) and the centurion (Matt 8:8-12) and people of Nineveh (Matt 12:41) and Pilate's wife (Matt 27:19)
- He's **seen many crucifixions** and **seen many a battle scene**
- But **He witnesses the manner of Jesus' death** – He **hears Jesus' words** – He **watches as Jesus breathes His last breath** – He **observes the darkness at midday until 3pm** – He **sees the earthquake** and all that happened after it - and He **rightly concludes** that Jesus – *“Surely was the Son of God!”*

- But there's one thing the centurion gets wrong – He should have said “*Jesus IS the Son of God – not WAS” – but the centurion doesn't realize that Jesus' death is not the end.*

### The Women's response

Eighth – there's the response of the **women**

- The **women don't say anything**
- There are **watching from a distance**
- But v55 says they have **faithfully followed Jesus from Galilee** – that's about **150km**
- They haven't betrayed Him – nor denied Him – not deserted Him – they are there at the cross – and will also be at His tomb later.
- Sometimes our witness to Jesus – is not through words – but through perseverance and dedication– through faithful actions – and through example.

### Jesus' Response

Ninth – there's **Jesus'** response

- He **prays for the cup of suffering to be taken away** – but He says He will do the Father's will and go to the Cross
- He is **silent when falsely accused** – He **does not react** – He **doesn't retaliate** – He **doesn't argue** –
- He simply trusts the Father
- From the Cross:
  - Jesus cries out - *Father forgive them – they do not know what they are doing*  
[Luke 23:34] – still giving those who had Him killed a chance to repent and be saved

- Jesus cries out to the thief next to Him – *“To day you shall be with me in Paradise”* [Luke 23:43] – showing there’s always time to repent and put our faith in Jesus!
- Jesus cries out – *“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me”* [Mark 15:34 and Matt 27:46]– showing the depth of His suffering – and showing at that moment – the **Father turning His back on Jesus the Son** – and **the sin of the world was placed on Jesus** – *God made him who had no sin to be sin for us* (2 Cor 5:21)
- Jesus cries out – *It is finished* [John 19:30] – He has finished the job He was sent to do – and removed the punishment for our sin – and He **has satisfied the wrath of God for the sin of the world** – it is finished with!
- Then Jesus **willingly gave up His Spirit** (v50)
- Everything Jesus did on that first Good Friday – **fulfilled OT prophecy upon OT prophecy** (particularly Psalm 22, Psalm 69 and Isaiah 53)

### Our Response?

Tenth – what about our response then on this Good Friday – 2000 or so years later

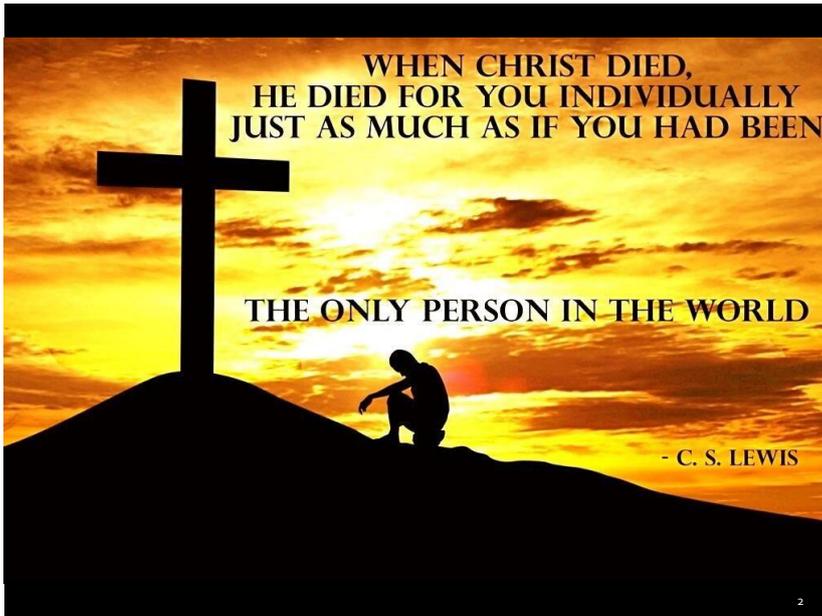
- It would be easy to say – thank goodness I’m not like the religious leaders or like Judas or like Pilate or like the disciples or like the crowd
- But - If we examine ourselves this morning
- I expect like me – we can see times when we’ve acted like the various characters in the narrative
- We’ve let Jesus down – or put other people or things before Him – or we’ve kept silent about being a follower of Jesus so we didn’t get any flack or have to suffer– or perhaps we’ve pleased people instead of pleasing God?

- What I'd like us all to consider this morning is that **Jesus' death on that cross** – is **not just an historical true event** –
- It has to be a personal event for each one of us
- When I was **11 years old** – at a **RC primary school**
- My **teacher took** the whole **class** to the **movies** just before Easter
- The movie was **“The Greatest Story Ever Told”**
- I was **deeply moved** by what happened to Jesus
- I saw it as a true historical event – and I could not comprehend how anyone could be so cruel to such a wonderful man like Jesus
- But it's not enough for me to see it as true historical event –
- It's not enough for me to see – quite rightly how cruel and unfairly Jesus was treated
- I have to recognize that **personally** – I'm a **sinner** – and that **Jesus died for ME** – **for MY sin** – even the sins I haven't committed yet –
- I **have** to see that I need **to repent of my sins** – and **say a heartfelt sorry to God** – and **believe that Jesus died for ME to be forgiven**
- It **took** me another 22 years after seeing that movie - to work that bit out
- Why?
- Because no-one bothered to explain to me – that **Jesus died for ME personally!**
- The **centurion could see Jesus was the Son of God**
- That's not enough – it has to be **personal** –

[PowerPoint 2 - CS Lewis]

As CS Lewis puts it:

[[Read Quote](#)]



SO, friends I encourage each of us – to explain to our family and friends (to all) that **Jesus died** for each one of us – **personally** – so our sins could go unpunished and be forgiven.

Let's pray...

*Father God – Thank You for the events of that first Good Friday – that in your grace and mercy – you allowed your Son to lay down His life for the punishment of our sins to be paid for.*

*Help us to respond this morning – by sharing this truth with all we meet.*

*In Jesus Name, AMEN.*

### **Benediction**

Let me finish with how the Apostle Paul puts it in **Romans 5:6-8**

*<sup>6</sup> You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. <sup>7</sup> Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. <sup>8</sup> But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. **AMEN!***