

Mount Olive Wednesday Night Bible Study and Prayer Meeting

February 2, 2022

John 18: 38 - 40, 19: 1

38 Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault at all.

39 But ye have a custom, that I should release unto you one at the passover: will ye therefore that I release unto you the King of the Jews? 40 Then cried they all again, saying, Not this man, but Barabbas. Now Barabbas was a robber.

19:1 Then Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged him.

After Pastor Tom prayed for joys and concerns, we read the Apostle's Creed once again. This answered the question that Pontious Pilate asked of Jesus in verse 38 - What is Truth? The Creed is a listing of all the basic Christian tenets in which we believe.

Then Pastor Tom read verses 38 through 40 and asked us what 3 main points we could draw from these 3 verses. Discussion came up with these:

- I. Truth
- II. No fault
- III. A Passover custom

I. Truth

For us, we believe that Truth is Jesus and Jesus is Truth. John answered Thomas in John 6:14 that He is the Way, the Truth and the Life. It is black and white. As Christians we believe this, but unbelievers believe that everyone's truth is different; it's whatever you believe at the time is the truth.

Absolute Truth is the same all the time. The world's definition of truth is situational, not absolute. It's what they want to believe in so it changes with each circumstance.

The danger in that type of truth can be:

- When you are going down the wrong road and you can't turn around.
- There will always be consequences
- Times have changed but God has not.

The first 5 books of the Bible containing history and law from God can be difficult to understand especially in light of 'modern times'. Some seminary professors do not teach the Truth in the Bible. Pastor Tom was challenged by these people.

II. No fault

Pilate said clearly in verse 38 that he found no fault in Jesus. The Jews had brought Jesus to Pilate because they could not put a man to death under Roman occupation. Yet Pilate had no dog in this fight so to speak; he could find nothing illegal that Jesus had done.

If there is no fault found in Jesus Christ, then He has to be exactly who the Bible has said He is: All God and All Man, born of a virgin, from Day 1 He lived a sinless, perfect life.

We have to believe that Jesus was crucified, died, was buried and descended into hell, rose again and sits on the right hand of God to judge...all this and more are stated in the Apostle's Creed.

Pastor Tom noted that if everyone believed all this and that Jesus is returning soon, the church would need reservations!

III. A Passover Custom

Passover is one of the most unique and important events of the Jewish calendar. The Seder meal (which has been presented at the church in the past) demonstrates the Jewish tradition of having no leaven in the household as was part of the first Passover in Egypt.

But the custom of releasing a prisoner on Passover is not written in the Old Testament.

Pilate asks the crowd to choose between Jesus or Barabbas. The world today asks us to choose between Jesus or something else (money, fame, addictions...) Jesus even declared that many are called to Him but few are chosen. This means that not everyone accepts Jesus even though many will hear the call. Some examples of this:

- All those people at evangelistic crusades who went forward to accept Jesus.
- People who have joined the church but have not fulfilled their vows.

These situations were illustrated in the Parable of the Good Soil that Jesus taught.

So concluding Chapter 18, the 3 concepts, Truth, Jesus' perfection, and the Choices we have, are essentials to what we believe in even if we don't fully understand them.

Verse 19:1

Then Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged him.

*The concept of Jesus being 'scourged' is very graphic when we take time to think about it. A scourge was also known as a 'cat-o-nine-tail' and was described as being hit with a 9mm firearm. It was a club or stick with leather straps attached at the top. Each of these straps had bits of bone or metal tied to the bottom end. When victims were hit with the bits, they ripped into their skin and also ripped when pulled out.

*The Romans were masters of torture. Mostly the crucifixions did not kill people. It was the torture beforehand or the fact that the Romans would break the legs of those on the cross to hasten the death. But for Jesus they did not. He said on the cross that He freely gave His life, no one took His life. Prophecies in Isaiah 50:6 and Isaiah 52:14 foretold this very event in the Messiah's life 500+ years before it happened.

Pastor Tom closed us in prayer.