

So, Pilate went outside to them and said, "What accusation do you bring against this man?" They answered him, "If this man were not doing evil, we would not have delivered him over to you." (John 18:29-30)

I. Evil Hypocrisy

- a. At the evil scheming of the Jewish leadership, Jesus will be put to death by the Roman leadership. Let's examine this situation and see how hypocritical the Jews were.
- b. The Jewish leaders were careful to *observe* the Law even while they were guilty of breaking it.
- c. They wanted to remain spiritually clean but could not see that they were wallowing in sin.
- d. The Jewish leaders sinned by bearing false witness. (Prov. 6:16-19, 19:5; Matt. 19:18)
- e. They sinned by bribing Judas to conspire against Jesus. (Exodus 23:8; Ezek 22:12)
- f. The leaders sinned by causing another brother to stumble. (Malachi 2:8; Matt 18:6)
- g. Where did the 30 pieces of silver come from? Did it come from the temple treasury?
- h. They were so blinded by their own treachery they could not see that they were sinning against God. (Matt 15:12-14)
- i. Jesus was not a threat, but they wanted Him to look like a political criminal and for Pilate to believe Jesus was undermining Roman authority.

II. Voices From the Crowd

- a. Pilate was the procurator (Governor) of Judea (AD 26-36) during the time of Jesus' public ministry.
- b. Jesus was the only one with moral authority at His own trial.
- c. Though there was no basis in Roman or Jewish law for the execution of Jesus, Pilate yielded to political pressure and compromised his conscience.
- d. *My kingdom is not of this world* (v.36). In other words, yes, I am a king, but not the way you think I am.
 1. Jesus did not triumph by military might, but by speaking peace. He did not conquer with political power, but with the power of love.
- e. It was customary to release a prisoner (often a political prisoner) at the Passover festival. "No, not Him! Give us Barabbas!"
- f. Pilate and the Jewish leadership had no commitment to truth. The world becomes a very dark place when it is corrupted by injustice, fear and when there is no commitment to truth.

III. Practical Application

- a. What kind of crowd would cry out, *Give us Barabbas*? He was a murderer, felon, traitor, and an offender of Jewish law.
- b. Lesson #1 - "God shows His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."
 1. Barabbas must die or Christ must die, but only One is prepared to die for the guilty.
 2. A guilty man went free that day. The innocent man was condemned to death.
- c. Lesson #2 - Too often the world is more willing to put up with murderers, thieves, and liars than with Christians. The crowd preferred the *criminal* over the *Christ* (v.39-40) (Rom 1:21-32)
- d. The crowd did not want *kingdom truth*. They did not want a king who would rebuke their sins and expose their hearts. Make sure that you are not in this crowd. (Rom 2:12-14)