

John 18:19-19:16 – Jesus tried and sentenced

Journey to the cross

- We all have a desire for justice. To see the guilty pay for their wrong and the innocent free.
 - When injustice is done people are scandalised. They riot and protest.
 - It's the theme of many films and tv programs
 - Prison break – the way they get you to connect with two of the main characters is through sympathy for the injustice they have experienced.
- Christianity is the best example of injustice yet Jesus was willing.
 - At the heart of Christianity is Christ
 - An innocent man who pays the price for guilty people to save them
 - That is what these trials show us.
 - Jesus faced 5 trials in total. All show an innocence, but the outcome is death

Trial 1&2 – Annas and Caiaphas

- These men were Jewish leaders, high priest who had much power and many important responsibilities.
 - They found Jesus guilty in their religious trial
 - Guilty of teaching the truth.
 - How is that guilt you may ask?
- They claimed it was blasphemy because they refused to believe Jesus was who he claimed to be.
 - Jesus through his teaching and miracles claimed and showed himself to be God.
 - The only thing Jesus was guilty of was being who he claimed to be. He was telling the truth and they didn't like it as it didn't fit what they wanted.
 - Jesus was setting people free from the oppression of living life under the law and the Jewish leaders didn't like it.
- Yet they lacked the political ability to do anything - v31
 - So, they take him to Pilate

Trial 3 – Jesus before Pilate

- The Jewish leaders bring Jesus before Pilate and accuse him of three things
 - Misleading the nation
 - the most subjective
 - What they really have a problem with is that Jesus is teaching people the truth about God and how God wants them to live which goes against their religious traditions and institutions.
 - Jesus came to remove the law by fulfilling it and the Jewish leaders didn't like it.

- If anything, it's the Jewish leaders who are in the wrong and misleading people on what a godly life looks like, but they throw the accusation at Jesus.
 - Jesus came to set people free not mislead them.
 - Forbidding people from paying taxes to Caesar
 - blatantly false
 - Luke 20:25, Mark 12:13-17 – give to Caesar what is Caesar's
 - Jesus does the opposite. He commands Christians to submit to rulers and authorities.
 - Calling himself a king
 - true but not in the sense the Jewish leaders implied
 - A heavenly king. Jesus didn't seek an earthly kingdom.
 - But they know this will get Pilate's attention as it is a challenge to his position in the way they present it.
- Pilates questions
 - Pilate not interested in religious law or traditions.
 - But the Jewish leaders have got into his head and he is wondering if Jesus was trying to rebel against Rome? Did Jesus want to be a king and take Pilate's place/people.
- Unsure what to do Pilate tries to pass the buck
 - V31 take him yourself and judge him
 - In Luke's gospel we see Pilate finds out that Jesus is a Galilean so would come under the jurisdiction of Herod.
 - So, Pilate hands Jesus over to be tried by Herod – we don't see that here by Luke tells us in chapter 23 of his gospel.

Trial 4 – Herod's trial

- Herod ridicules Jesus
- He sought a spectacle from Jesus
- He bombarded Jesus with questions
- He allowed false accusations to fly
- He treated Jesus with contempt
 - Yet he found him not guilty
 - And hands him back to Pilate
 - Had to be this way to fulfil the scriptures
 - The Jews would have stoned Jesus to death not hung him on a cross – that was roman
 - The prophecies said Jesus would die on a cross.

Trial 5 – Jesus returns to Pilate

- Pilate and Jesus have this dialogue

- Pilate points to the fact it's not his idea to put Jesus on trial but the Jewish leaders, Jesus' own people.
- They discuss Jesus' Kingship – that it is not of this world
 - Jesus cannot deny his Kingship
 - He is King of the world.
- Pilate declares Jesus innocent.
 - Wants to punish him to ensure he isn't trying to start a rebellion against Rome but ultimately wants to release him as he has broken no laws.
 - Jesus wasn't a threat to Rome but to the religious traditions
 - He sees through the lies of the Jewish leaders.
- This should have ended the trial but the Jewish leaders wouldn't accept it and keep pushing for Jesus to be killed.
 - They aim at showing his as a political threat
 - J.C Ryle quote - false witness and slander are the two favourite weapons of the devil but when he finds that he cannot stop God's work his next device is to blacken the character of God servant and to destroy the value of their testimony.
 - This is what the Jewish leaders did to Jesus.
 - False witness, slander and character assassination to get Jesus killed because they didn't like the message Jesus brought.
 - Jesus wasn't a threat to Rome but He was going to end their religious traditions.

Jesus is sentenced

- Jesus is tried and despite being an innocent man is falsely accused, mocked, beaten and killed.
 - Pilate finally gives in and an innocent man is sentenced to one of the most horrific deaths possible.
 - Why does God allow it to happen? Why is Jesus prepared to die?
 - To save us
 - The innocent for the guilty.
 - Jesus died as an innocent man on behalf of mankind
 - God's salvation plan is fulfilled.
 - Its why Jesus came to this world.
 - Men of this world, rulers, people in authority find Jesus not guilty. He was the perfect sinless man who died on a cross to forgive us.

Application

As we come to the end I was to finish with two questions

- Who are you in this story? Don't make the same mistakes they made!

- None of us can associate with Jesus – none of us are innocent!
- Pilate or Herod maybe?
 - You have look at Jesus and realise who he is but fail to act on it
 - You can understand who Jesus is but you are not living in response to what Jesus achieved for you because of the cost and implication on your life.
 - The pressure of the Jewish leaders swayed Pilate how is the world swaying you?
 - The offers of this world are nothing in comparison to the delight of knowing Jesus.
- The religious leaders
 - Set in your ways and you don't like your life challenged by how Jesus calls you to live?
 - You have been a Christian a while and you are ignoring where God is calling you to change.
 - Get rid of living by the law and live in the freedom Jesus offers
 - How in your life are you lying to yourself about God to stop you having to live the life Jesus calls you too?
 - How are you appeasing your conscience about not living how you should be by denying who God truly is?
- A bystander/part of the crowd?
 - I urge you to come to a decision this easter as to who Jesus is.
 - Put on trial the life of Jesus for yourself by reading a gospel.

An innocent man, Jesus, was tried, sentenced and died in you place to forgive you from your sin. Who is Jesus to you?