

Palm Sunday ~ March 24, 2013



***Life Group & Family
Discussion Guide***

“Jesus on Trial”

John 18:28-40

Palm Sunday announced that Jesus is King. But in less than a week, the very people who shouted “Hosanna! Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!” in the streets of Jerusalem were screaming, “Crucify him!” This week we will discuss John 18:28-40. This passage describes the interrogation of Jesus by Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor of Judea.

The time is before dawn on Good Friday. The place is the Praetorium, Pilate’s official residence. Shortly Jesus will be flogged, condemned to die, and nailed to a cross. This “trial” before Pilate offers Jesus one last temptation to call angels to his defense and avoid the cross. But Jesus submits to the false charges against him and sets his face toward Calvary.



DISCUSS WITH YOUR LIFE GROUP:

1. **Read John 18:28-40.** What strikes you most about Jesus in this passage? What do you think of Pontius Pilate?

2. Notice the irony in verse 28. The Jewish religious leaders who brought Jesus before Pilate could not enter the home of a Gentile during Passover. Yet they brought false charges against Jesus and condemned him, a righteous man, to die. They also submitted to the laws of the state (vs. 31), while disobeying the laws of God against false testimony and murder. What was underneath their animosity against Jesus Christ?

3. What are some practical implications of Jesus' words in verse 36, "My kingdom is not of this world"?

4. How would you answer Pilate's question in verse 38, "What is truth?"

5. Why is it significant for our salvation that no basis of charges against Jesus was found by Pilate?

6. How is the release of the prisoner Barabbas a glimpse of the gospel? Share one way you, like Barabbas, have been freed by Jesus.



DISCUSS WITH YOUR FAMILY:

1. There are several good movies about Jesus that contain the scene of his trial before Pilate. Watch this scene together as a family and discuss how it made everyone feel.
2. This week's passage brings up one of the most important questions that could ever be asked: Why did Jesus have to suffer? If God wanted to forgive us, why couldn't he just sweep our sins off the record books and spare his Son the agony of a trial, torture, and crucifixion?
3. Many people today can identify with Pontius Pilate. He had no idea that there is such a thing as truth. His question in verse 38, "What is truth?", is a question being asked by countless numbers of people. Parents, explain to your child the concept of relativism. Relativism says that there is no such thing as objective, propositional truth. Rather, truth is whatever a person wants it to be. Something can be true for me if I believe it to be true, while the same thing may not be true for you. How does relativism show up in your child's school, or in your neighborhood, or at work?
4. How can we as Christians share the truth about Christ in a culture that denies the reality of truth?
5. How do you suppose Barabbas felt when he found out Jesus was going to take his place on the cross?

SERMON NOTES