

## **The Gospel According to Luke**

Luke 23:1-12

**Reading:** Matthew 27:1-14

**Parallel Passages:** Matthew 27:1-14, Mark 15:1-5 and John 18:28-38

Sermon #100  
November 8, 2020

### **Christ and King**

From last week's text, we learned that Jesus is Divine, the Christ, Son of Man and Son of God. The religious leaders were concerned with the fact that Jesus declared Himself to be God's Son and this threatened their power. They determined that this claim could not be true, even though their investigations gave evidence of Jesus' claim to be true. In their blindness of heart, they committed blasphemy against God by claiming it was Jesus' claim, that He was sent by God the Father that was blasphemy. We learned that when Luke records this he is also declaring Jesus to be God because one cannot blaspheme a mere man; blasphemy is only against God. Jesus is God's Son and today we discover that He is also God's King. It was the claim that Jesus is the Son of God that created such uproar with the Jews. They were not willing to see the truth, they condemned Jesus because He was not the kind of Messiah they wanted, which is also true for many today. The Jews wanted a political leader who would usher in heaven on earth. They wanted things to be like they had been during the time of King David. Many people wanted someone who would overthrow Rome and restore power to them. They wanted to be in charge and wanted a Messiah that would do that for them. Many in the crowds only wanted Jesus if He could give them what they wanted. Some things do not change, for this true for many today.

The ruling counsel of the Sanhedrin had just condemned Jesus and sentenced Him to death. But there is one problem; they could not carry out the death sentence without it being sanctioned by Rome because the Jews have no authority in any

civil matters. So, notice how quickly these Jews priests and leaders switch gears. They know that they have no power to kill Jesus legally. It must be done by or sanctioned by Rome. They also know that Rome could care less about Jesus' claim to be the Son of God. So, they switch the charges to be more in line with what Rome would care about. No longer is being the Son of God an issue but being a King. Being a King might possibly be a threat to Caesar and Rome and be something Pilate would care about.

### ***Pray***

As we begin this morning, I want you to take note of 3 things; Jesus cannot be ignored, He cannot be used and it is not about what Jesus can get for those in power but about His glory.

### **The King Who Cannot Be Ignored** (v. 1-5)

The plan to murder Jesus and end his threat to the power the priests and Sanhedrin runs into a problem. How can they fix it and how can they get rid of Jesus? Reading Luke 23 beginning at verse 1, “*Then the whole company of them arose and brought him before Pilate.*”<sup>2</sup> *And they began to accuse him, saying, ‘We found this man misleading our nation and forbidding us to give tribute to Caesar, and saying that he himself is Christ, a king.’*<sup>3</sup> *And Pilate asked Jesus, ‘Are you the King of the Jews?’ And he answered him, ‘You have said so.’*<sup>4</sup> *Then Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowds, ‘I find no guilt in this man.’*<sup>5</sup> *But they were urgent, saying, ‘He stirs up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, from Galilee even to this place.’ ”*

The first truth we recognize is; in one way or another, Jesus must be dealt with in one's life; everyone acknowledges Him as the Christ or rejects Him. There

are some who think their lives are just fine without Jesus. They have no interest in talking about Jesus or exploring if the evidence confirms Jesus is the Christ. In reality they fear there might be a God and Jesus might be God's Son and that would interfere with their plans, just as the Sanhedrin feared. The sad reality is that these people will eventually face God and experience His wrath for all eternity in a real place called hell. As both Isaiah in chapter 45 (v. 23) and Paul made clear, <sup>9</sup> "God has highly exalted *Jesus* and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, <sup>10</sup> so that **at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,** <sup>11</sup> and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Philippians 2:9-11) "Under the earth" is referring to the dead who are in hell and they will bend their knee and bow in acknowledgement that Jesus is the Son of God and yet, they are condemned and will never be allowed in His presence.

Jesus cannot be ignored, as much as some try. One cannot be neutral when it comes to Jesus. To ignore Jesus is not neutral – it is a choice to reject the Son of God who came to offer salvation to the world. Jesus is King of the eternal kingdom. The writer of Hebrews lays out the choice of each and every person in chapter 12, as he contrasts the earthly and the heavenly. <sup>22</sup> "But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, <sup>23</sup> and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, <sup>24</sup> and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel." Jesus and the new covenant of God are before each and every person. Each must choose!

Continuing in verse 25, "See that you do not refuse him who is speaking. For if they did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, much

less will we escape if we reject him who warns from heaven.<sup>26</sup> At that time his voice shook the earth, but now he has promised, *(in Haggai 2:6-9)* ‘Yet once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heavens.’<sup>27</sup> This phrase, ‘Yet once more,’ indicates the removal of things that are shaken—that is, things that have been made—in order that the things that cannot be shaken may remain.<sup>28</sup> Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe,<sup>29</sup> for *(as Moses said in Deuteronomy 4:24)* **our God is a consuming fire.**” (Hebrews 12:22-29) No one can be neutral when it comes to Jesus. Pilate wanted to be rid of Jesus because even after the warning of his wife *(in Matthew 27:19)* he desired position and fame more than God and eternal truth. Pilate did not want to be involved, he did not want to deal with Jesus, so he sends Him away, but God will not be ignored.

Some seek Jesus for what Jesus can do for them. This is the message of many TV evangelists, like Joel Osteen, “Live Your Best Life Now” because Jesus will give it to you. Jesus owes you a better marriage and career instead of you owing Jesus everything. Or the Prosperity Christianity of Benny Hinn and Kenneth Copeland and many others; following Jesus will gain you wealth – if, if you have enough faith. These pastors, evangelists and others are the Sadducees and Herods of our day using Jesus for their gain. Herod was interested in Jesus because he not only saw Jesus as entertaining but for what he hoped to get from Jesus. Herod cared nothing for Jesus as the Christ but for what Jesus could do for him.

In our text today, it is clear Jesus does not exist so we can get things from Him. Jesus is the One who matters. He is the King who demands our worship. The clear fact is that Jesus causes division. You cannot follow Christ and be best friends with those who do not. He will not allow it. You cannot live with one foot in the world and one foot in the church for very long. Jesus demands that either we

worship Him or be enemies with Him, He will not tolerate anyone who is lukewarm.

The Jews state 3 charges against Jesus, reading at verse 1 of chapter 23, “Then the whole company of them arose and brought him before Pilate.<sup>2</sup> And they began to accuse him, saying, ‘We found this man misleading our nation and forbidding us to give tribute to Caesar, and saying that he himself is Christ, a king.’<sup>3</sup> And Pilate asked *Jesus*, ‘Are you the King of the Jews?’ And he answered him, ‘**You have said so.**’” There charges are; **Sedition against Rome**, not paying and teaching others **not to pay the annual tribute tax** and assuming **the title of King**. All of these charges they thought would be something the civil authorities would care about.

Their initial charge was that this man is trying to bring down our nation. He is teaching the people contrary to Roman rule. This is not a complete lie. Jesus was teaching about another kingdom. From the very beginning of His ministry He preached the Kingdom of God and Heaven. He did not teach on how to be a good Roman citizen but how to be a good citizen in God’s Kingdom. The Jewish leaders were hoping from the point of view of the secular Roman world, Jesus would be considered as misleading the nation. Jesus taught a different and more significant purpose for living than simply being a Roman citizen. As recorded in Matthew’s gospel account, “From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, ‘**Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.**’” (Matthew 4:17) Jesus’ message was not; seek forgiveness from Rome and begin obeying their laws as a good citizen, but repent and start living under God’s rule. So, from the standpoint of Rome’s authority, Jesus was teaching the people about another kingdom. They saw Him as leading the people away from Rome and towards an empty religion to false God. Pilate cared only about Roman authority.

The chief priests and the Sanhedrin openly lied to accomplish their plan of murdering Jesus, saying in verse 2, “We found this man misleading our nation and forbidding us to give tribute to Caesar, and saying that he himself is Christ, a king.” What Jesus did teach was people are to pay Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God and he taught this in the presence of the scribes and chief priests. Back to chapter 20 of Luke, <sup>19</sup>“The scribes and the chief priests sought to lay hands on him at that very hour, for they perceived that he had told this parable against them, but they feared the people. <sup>20</sup> So they watched him and sent spies, who pretended to be sincere, that they might catch him in something he said, so as to deliver him up to the authority and jurisdiction of the governor. <sup>21</sup> So they asked him, ‘Teacher, we know that you speak and teach rightly, and show no partiality, but truly teach the way of God. <sup>22</sup> Is it lawful for us to give tribute to Caesar, or not?’ <sup>23</sup> But he perceived their craftiness, and said to them, <sup>24</sup> ‘Show me a denarius. Whose likeness and inscription does it have?’ They said, ‘Caesar’s.’ <sup>25</sup> He said to them, ‘Then render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.’” (Luke 20:19-25)

Next, the Jewish leaders tell Pilate that Jesus is claiming to be a king. Again, this is a half-truth, which is a lie; Jesus did claim to be King of another world. In Matthew we read Jesus’ response to Pilate, <sup>36</sup>“Jesus answered, ‘My kingdom is not of this world. ...’” (Matthew 18:36) Both Old Testament prophets Daniel (7:13-14) and Isaiah (9:6-7) foretold Jesus as King, but nowhere up to this trial had Jesus declared Himself King, even though He is. Again, what we observe; Jesus is truth and the Jewish leaders are liars serving the “father of lies”. (John 8:44) Jesus is not a political threat but He is a threat to the corrupt religious leaders of Israel. So, these leaders declare to Pilate that Jesus was teaching people to rebel against Rome, which is a lie. They claim Jesus was teaching people not to pay their taxes

to Rome; another lie. They say, Jesus is declaring Himself King over Rome, the third lie. To get the fuller picture we leave Luke and go to John chapter 18, you might want to go John chapter 18 and read along with me. Beginning in verse 28, “Then they (*the chief priests and members of the Sanhedrin*) led Jesus from the house of Caiaphas to the governor’s headquarters. It was early morning. They themselves did not enter the governor’s headquarters, so that they would not be defiled, but could eat the Passover.” Notice that these Jewish leaders would not enter into Pilate’s house because they believed this would defile them so that they could not celebrate the Passover. It does not register that they are defiled as liars and for conspiring to murder. For these Jewish leaders, entering into a Roman’s house is obviously far worst and could separate them from God, but lying and murder was OK.

Continuing in verse 29, “So Pilate went outside to them and said, ‘What accusation do you bring against this man?’”<sup>30</sup> They answered him, ‘If this man were not doing evil, we would not have delivered him over to you.’” What they are saying, in effect, to Pilate is, the charge we are laying against Jesus is not that important. We want you as the civil authority to put this man to death for us. Do not seek evidence, Pilate you are the law, so kill him for us. Pilate wants none of this religious conflict and responses back in verse 31, “‘Take him yourselves and judge him by your own law.’ The Jews said to him, ‘It is not lawful for us to put anyone to death.’”<sup>32</sup> This was to fulfill the word that Jesus had spoken to show by what kind of death he was going to die.<sup>33</sup> So Pilate entered his headquarters again and called Jesus and said to him, ‘Are you the King of the Jews?’<sup>34</sup> Jesus answered, ‘Do you say this of your own accord, or did others say it to you about me?’<sup>35</sup> Pilate answered, ‘Am I a Jew? Your own nation and the chief priests have delivered you over to me. What have you done?’<sup>36</sup> Jesus answered, ‘My kingdom

is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from the world.” We observe in this exchange, Jesus explains to Pilate what type of King He is. He tells Pilate that His kingdom is not of this world but of a different world. It is at this point Pilate is not interested in hearing any more. In reality, Pilate could care less if Jesus were the King of Mars as long as He does not pose a threat to Roman rule or to his rule over Judea.

Continuing in verse 37, “Then Pilate said to him, ‘So you are a king?’ Jesus answered, ‘You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice.’”<sup>38</sup> Pilate said to him, ‘What is truth?’ After he had said this, he went back outside to the Jews and told them, ‘I find no guilt in him.’” Luke stresses the same thing John does when he reports that Pilate comes out, because the Jews were still outside, and declares Jesus innocent of the charges brought before Him. Pilate heard the truth Jesus spoke and Jesus is without sin and even a pagan governor can see that for he says, “I find no guilt in him.” In Luke, Pilate says to both to the chief priests and the growing crowds, “I find no guilt in this man.”<sup>5</sup> But they were urgent, saying, ‘He stirs up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, from Galilee even to this place.’” Ah, so we understand, the real truth, Jesus is a threat to the scribes and priests, not to Rome.

Their indictments against Jesus were shrewd. This took some planning. These Jews were very good at playing the politicians for their advantage. A close study of all the Gospels reveals that at least three different times, Pilate declares Jesus to be innocent of all charges. It seems though, Pilate, in many ways, was a weak leader and could not stick to a decision. He thought Jesus innocent and his wife knew Jesus was innocent. But, eventually, he would give in to their demands



and crucify Jesus. Maybe this is because Pilate and the Jews had a history. There was no love lost between them, Pilate detested the Jews and they hated him too. On one occasion we have already read about in chapter 13 of Luke is an indication of this hatred, “There were some present at that very time who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.” (Luke 13:1) This is referring to the incident when some Galilean worshippers were posing a threat to Rome as they were stirring up a rebellion. They were at the temple worshipping and Pilate sent his army in violating the temple and killed all of them in the temple area. The fact that their blood mingled with the blood of their sacrifices was horrible to the Jews and the fact that Pilate violated the temple compound created a deep hatred for him. The religious leaders, no doubt, remembered this and thought that if they could get Pilate to think that Jesus was doing the same thing, creating rebellion like those earlier Galileans had done; then Pilate would very quickly give the order to have Jesus put to death.

What is ironic is that the very charges the Jews were leveling against Jesus, they themselves were doing at that very moment. The language suggests that they were on the outside of Pilate’s mansion in sighting people against Rome if they did not put Jesus to death. This was the last thing Pilate needed. Any more disruption from his jurisdiction could cause Tiberius to intercede and possibly remove him from office. He wanted more than anything for the Jews to be quiet and go away. To rid himself of this mess, Pilate thought, since Jesus was a Galilean that he could send him away to Herod who was tetrarch over the area of Galilee and who was in Jerusalem for the Passover Celebration.

## **The King Who Cannot Be Used** (v. 6-11)

Pilate realizes he can rid himself of Jesus, or can he? Reading at verse 6, “When Pilate heard this, he asked whether the man was a Galilean. <sup>7</sup> And when he learned that he belonged to Herod’s jurisdiction, he sent him over to Herod, who was himself in Jerusalem at that time. <sup>8</sup> When Herod saw Jesus, he was very glad, for he had long desired to see him, because he had heard about him, and he was hoping to see some sign done by him. <sup>9</sup> So he questioned him at some length, but he made no answer. <sup>10</sup> The chief priests and the scribes stood by, vehemently accusing him. <sup>11</sup> And Herod with his soldiers treated him with contempt and mocked him. Then, arraying him in splendid clothing, he sent him back to Pilate.”

Jesus was taken to the cruel Herod, the same tetrarch who had John the Baptist beheaded over his preaching. Later, Herod would have James, the half-brother of Jesus put to death. He was cruel through and through. Herod was in Jerusalem for the Passover, which was convenient for Pilate, who was a good politician and saw his opportunity to ignore or offload the problem of Jesus.

Luke wants us to notice something here; Herod was a wicked Jewish leader. If anyone would have a problem with the charges of the Jewish priests and with their claims against Jesus it would have been Herod.

Herod Antipas, was a 1st-century ruler of Galilee who bore the title of tetrarch (*ruler of a quarter*). Herod was the ruler over the area where most of Jesus’ public ministry had taken place, yet it seems, he had never before seen Jesus. Now, there before him stood our Lord, beaten and bloody. The Jews were shouting His crimes over and over in Herod’s presence. Surely, the Jews must have thought they would get somewhere with Herod. Because Jesus would not answer or do any signs for Herod; he had his soldiers join in the beating and mocking

Jesus. They dressed Jesus in kingly clothes in order to make fun of Him and then sent Him back to Pilate.

What is important is that even the wicked and perverse Herod did not find Jesus guilty of any crime and certainly not a crime deserving death. So rather than Jesus entertaining him with a magic trick, Herod was entertained as they beat and mocked Jesus. Herod sends Jesus back where He came from, back to Pilate.

### **The King Who Must Be Reckoned With** (v. 12)

Verse 12 is interesting, “[And Herod and Pilate became friends with each other that very day, for before this they had been at enmity with each other.](#)” Why would Luke add this small bit of information? Luke adds this seemingly out of place bit of trivial politics for a very significant reason. What is his reasoning? This event of Jesus’ various trials and times of questioning are prophesied about in the Book of Psalms. Reading from Psalm 2, “[Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain?](#) <sup>2</sup>[The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD and against his Anointed, saying,](#) <sup>3</sup>[‘Let us burst their bonds apart and cast away their cords from us.’](#)” These two rulers who were enemies come together because they both can agree that Jesus is a problem. Rather than Jesus uniting enemies to God, these two refused to worship Jesus so they were reconciled to each other and continued to be God’s enemies.

So, the truth is simple and straight forward; **Jesus is God the Father’s anointed King who must be reckoned with.**

### **The King Who Is The Christ**

Jesus faced Governor Pilate and Pilate found no fault in Him. Jesus faced wicked Herod and Herod found no reason He should be put to death. Jesus was

innocent of all charges. He remained silent before Herod standing in His royal robe dripping with blood. He was found innocent and it is this innocence that is infinitely important for us. Jesus is pure and sinless. Even a false court could not make the charges stick. But beloved, something we must also recognize; ***we are not innocent and sinless either.*** Without Jesus as one's Lord and Savior – there is no hope, our sin convicts us to judgment.

The prophet Isaiah says, <sup>3</sup>“He was despised and rejected by men ... one from whom men hide their faces ... and we esteemed him not. <sup>7</sup> He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth.” (Isaiah 53:3 and 7) For those of us God has called and who believe in Jesus as the Christ, He is the example of how we are to live. Peter instructs us, <sup>21</sup>“For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. <sup>22</sup> He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. <sup>23</sup> When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. <sup>24</sup> He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. <sup>25</sup> For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.” (1 Peter 2:21-25)

We must realize that Jesus has to be reckoned with. We cannot ignore Him, like Pilate or use Him to our ends like Herod. He is King with all authority. Every human will bow before this King of Majesty and worship. Some will do it as His people, but others will do it as His enemies but all will fall to the ground because of His majesty.

Beloved, I hope you know the real Jesus and worship Him. He cannot be ignored or used, or gotten rid of. He is King and we are to bow before Him and worship. Amen!