

Thursday, March 23rd, 2023

Lent 2023



Sermons Preached
By Jesus' Enemies

PRESERVICE SONGS: "The Good Shepherd"—Fernando Ortega
"No Matter What"--Ryan Stevenson

PASTOR'S GREETING

THE INVOCATION

THE PASSION HISTORY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST – LESSON FOUR

As soon as it was day, the council of the elders of the people met together, both chief priests and experts in the law. They brought Jesus into their Sanhedrin and said, "If you are the Christ, tell us." But he said to them, "If I tell you, you will not believe, and if I ask you, you will not answer me or release me. But from now on, the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the power of God." They all said, "Are you then the Son of God?" He said to them, "I am what you are saying." Then they said, "Why do we need any more testimony? For we ourselves have heard it from his own mouth!" Then the chief priests with the elders and experts in the law, together with the whole Sanhedrin, reached a decision. They bound Jesus, led him away, and handed him over to Pontius Pilate, the governor.

Then when Judas, who had betrayed him, saw that Jesus was condemned, he felt remorse. He brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders and said, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood." But they said, "What is that to us? That's your problem." He threw the pieces of silver into the temple and left. Then he went out and hanged himself. The chief priests took the pieces of silver and said, "It is not lawful to put these into the treasury, since it is blood money." They reached a decision to buy the potter's field with the money, as a burial place for foreigners. So that field has been called The Field of Blood to this day. Then what was spoken through Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled: They took the thirty pieces of silver, the price the sons of Israel had set for him, and they gave them for the potter's field, just as the Lord commanded me.

Early in the morning, the Jews led Jesus from Caiaphas to the Praetorium. They did not enter the Praetorium themselves, so that they would not become ceremonially unclean. (They wanted to be able to eat the Passover meal.) So Pilate went out to them and said, "What charge do you bring against this man?" They answered him, "If this man were not a criminal, we would not have handed him over to you." Pilate told them, "Take him yourselves and judge him according to your law." The Jews said, "It's not legal for us to put anyone to death." This happened so that the statement Jesus had spoken indicating what kind of death he was going to die would be.

They began to accuse him, saying, "We found this fellow misleading our nation, forbidding the payment of taxes to Caesar, and saying that he himself is Christ, a king." Pilate asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" "It is as you say," Jesus replied. The chief priests accused him of many

things. When he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he answered nothing. Pilate questioned him again, "Are you not going to answer anything? See how many charges they are bringing against you!" But Jesus still did not answer anything, so Pilate was amazed.

Pilate went back into the Praetorium and summoned Jesus. He asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus answered, "Are you saying this on your own, or did others tell you about me?" Pilate answered, "Am I a Jew? Your own people and chief priests handed you over to me. What have you done?" Jesus replied, "My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would fight so that I would not be handed over to the Jews. But now my kingdom is not from here." "You are a king then?" Pilate asked. Jesus answered, "I am, as you say, a king. For this reason I was born, and for this reason I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice." "What is truth?" Pilate said to him.

After he said this, he went out again to the Jews and told them, "I find no basis for a charge against him." But they kept insisting, "He stirs up the people, teaching all through Judea, beginning from Galilee all the way here." When Pilate heard this, he asked if the man was a Galilean. When he learned that he was under Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod, who was also in Jerusalem during those days. When Herod saw Jesus, he was very glad. For a long time he had wanted to see him, because he had heard many things about him. He hoped to see some miracle performed by him. He questioned him with many words, but Jesus gave him no answer. The chief priests and the experts in the law stood there, vehemently accusing him. Herod, along with his soldiers, treated him with contempt and ridiculed him. Dressing him in bright clothing, Herod sent Jesus back to Pilate. Herod and Pilate became friends with each other on that day. Before this they had been enemies of each other.

SONG: "The Old Rugged Cross"—Alan Jackson

On a hill far away stood an old rugged cross
The emblem of suffering and shame
And I love that old cross where the dearest and best
For a world of lost sinners was slain
So I'll cherish the old rugged cross
Till my trophies at last I lay down
I will cling to the old rugged cross
And exchange it some day for a crown
To the old rugged cross I will ever be true
It's shame and reproach gladly bear
Then he'll call me some day to my home far away
Where his glory forever I'll share

And I'll cherish the old rugged cross
Till my trophies at last I lay down
And I will cling to the old rugged cross
And exchange it some day for a crown
I will cling to the old rugged cross
And exchange it some day for a crown

THE MESSAGE: John 19:12–16

From then on, Pilate tried to set Jesus free, but the Jewish leaders kept shouting, “If you let this man go, you are no friend of Caesar. Anyone who claims to be a king opposes Caesar.”

When Pilate heard this, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judge’s seat at a place known as the Stone Pavement (which in Aramaic is Gabbatha). It was the day of Preparation of the Passover; it was about noon.

“Here is your king,” Pilate said to the Jews.

But they shouted, “Take him away! Take him away! Crucify him!”

“Shall I crucify your king?” Pilate asked.

“We have no king but Caesar,” the chief priests answered.

Finally Pilate handed him over to them to be crucified.

So the soldiers took charge of Jesus.

SERMON OUTLINE

John 19:12–16

“We have no king but Caesar.”

Introduction: Sometimes our words "prove too much." The words of the Sanhedrin do that in our Scripture text.

1. Context: In two interviews with Jesus Pilate is convinced Jesus is innocent.
2. But the Jews play off Pilate's cowardice. "Everyone who makes himself a king opposes Caesar."
3. Application: Throughout history the enemies of God have tried to portray Christians as enemies of the state. Not true! The biblical principles for Christians in their attitude toward the government always cut two ways.
4. So Pilate caves to the Jews' demands. And with bitter sarcasm he says, "Behold your king!" (It was true.)
5. And with hypocrisy and irony the Jews reply, "We have no king but Caesar." (It was true.)

Conclusion: We apply this text to our lives today as we review our attitudes toward all authority over us.

THE OFFERING:

“Abide With Me” by Atrim Mennonite Choir

THE PRAYERS

SONG: "We'll All Bow Down"—Lenny LeBlanc

1. Princes and paupers
Sons and daughters
Kneel at the throne of grace
Losers and winners
Saints and sinners
One day will see His face
And we all bow down
Kings will surrender their crowns
And worship Jesus
For He is the love
Unfailing love
He is the love of God
2. Summer and winter
The mountains and rivers
Whisper our Savior's name
Awesome and holy
A friend to the lonely
Forever His love will reign
And we all bow down
Kings will surrender their crowns
And worship Jesus
For He is the love
Unfailing love
He is the love of God
3. He's the light of the world
And Lord of the cross
And we all bow down
Kings will surrender their crowns
And worship Jesus
Worship Jesus
Worship Jesus
For He is love
Unfailing love
He is the Love of God

LUTHER'S EVENING PRAYER:

I thank you, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, your dear Son, that you have graciously kept me this day. Forgive me all my sins, and graciously keep me this night. Into your hands I commend my body and soul and all things. Let your holy angel be with me, that the wicked foe may have no power over me. Amen.

THE APOSTOLIC BLESSING

THE DOXOLOGY: "Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow" by the Vagle Brothers

ANNOUNCEMENTS

POSTSERVICE SONG: "O Sacred Head, Now Wounded"