

How to silence the conscience - Matthew 27 v24

EDT Bible Class and College Class - 20.04.25

Introduction

- Good Friday morning, crowd gathering, news spreading, Christ arrested in night! Tried! Guilty!
- Infectious excitement. Hasn't turned out as they hoped. No deliverance from Romans.
- Verdict given but problem. No authority to punish. Only Romans. So, to Pilate.

Who was Pilate?

- Roman governor of Judea under Emperor Tiberius from roughly AD 26–36.
- Maintain order and oversee Roman interests, including tax collection and judicial matters
- Insensitive to Jewish religious customs, provoking tensions, e.g. using temple funds to build an aqueduct
- Sees through Jewish leaders - envy.
- Questions Christ, impressed, innocent.
- Wife uneasy.
- Decides to release Christ but how without incurring anger of Jews?
- Plan, Barabbas, but people persuaded otherwise.
- Complete rejection as prophesied.
- What evil has he done? Crucify Him.
- Riot brewing.
- Had all power, soldiers, authority, but coward, feared crowd.
- Also loved position, meant to be keeping peace, if riot, word will get back to Caesar, lose job, even his life.

2

- Fear of Caesar greater than fear of God.
- You may be afraid to believe Christ is the Saviour.
You may fear what your friends will say and act.
Does this keep you from bowing before Christ?
- Jesus was Sacrificed justice to pacify Jews.
 - Wanted to do good but lacked the strength.
- Pilate could find no fault in Christ.
But washed his hands and sent Him to be crucified.
Fallen human nature - all of us.

The conscience

- Then - read key verse - washed hands. Matthew 27v24
When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it.
- Why? Symbolic. Not guilty, passing guilt to Jews.
- Trying to silence his conscience
- What is the conscience?
- Can't be seen by a doctor, it is a spiritual capacity
- God-given, moral awareness, God's law written in our hearts
- 'Policeman' of the soul
- Warns and allows, condemns and acquits
- Our conscience is precious, do you use it?
- For many, an irritation, we want to quash it

3

How people try to silence their conscience

1. Ignore it

- an alarm, background noise, annoying, blocked out, hardly aware of it
- drown it out, fill up our thoughts and time, never consider

2. Comparing with others

- Yes, I'm a sinner, but look at what they've done!
- I'm not so bad - but God's perfect standards

3. Pass responsibility

- he started it
- it wasn't just me
- Or, like Pilate, not doing anything
- sins of omission

4. Sear it

- do worse and worse sins, more extreme
- begin not to feel bad about 'small' sins any more
- like a hot iron searing you - that patch of skin is hardened to pain, doesn't feel pinpricks any more
- leprosy is a good example - patient losing pain

5. Reprogram it

- Atheism doing this in society today
- Change good to bad and vice versa
- Rejection of Holy standards of an unchanging God
- Morality not defined by us

How can guilt be removed?

- Has your conscience spoken to you? Felt your guilt?
- None of the above methods silence the conscience
- Subdue it for a time, corrupt it, desensitise it, but it will not go away

4

- Criminals turning themselves in after many years, why?
 - Each of us, sin record, video recording, but it cannot be wiped out
 - Conscience speaking, great blessing, God warning you of judgement
 - Face God, give account, witness is your conscience
 - Burden of guilt? Unease? How to remove?
 - Only one God-given way
 - Substitutionary atonement, sufferings, of Christ on Calvary
 - Go to Christ, He alone can wipe our record clean, take away guilt, forgive
 - How do we go? Prayer: praise, repent, plead, trust
 - Will He hear? Yes,
- Pilate responsible, but Christ went willingly, great love
- What will you do with Christ?
- Must do something? Pilate: crown Him or crucify Him.
- What is your response?