

Mark 15:1-14 – Christ Endured a Civil Trial for You

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: Adherents to all religions teach that you must be sorry for yours sins! But there is one important distinction between all other religions and what the Bible teaches. No other religion, other than Christianity, teaches that there is a real penalty for sins: death!

You can see that other religions don't believe in a real penalty for sins because they are taught they can remove their sins by their own human actions: giving some money to the poor, burning some incense, repeating some prayers, or making pilgrimages. What makes this worse for other religions is when they have done these things they feel like they have done something religious and their sins are really gone! How cunning the sneaky snake is! He **makes people believe they are not as bad** or **that they can meet God's demands by themselves.**

But God demands death for justice. And that is why Jesus came! He had to be arrested, charged, tried, and convicted for the elect so they could go free from God's severe justice. Today you will see the details of how Jesus was tried (in your place) and led to his death for you.

Our headings are:

Jesus was Civilly Charged for You

Jesus was Civilly Tried for You

Our goals are: **You will see the degree of your guilt and the price of your freedom in Jesus Christ so that you will love him better.**

Jesus was Civilly Charged for You

1 And as soon as it was morning, the **chief priests held a consultation** with the elders and scribes and the whole Council. And **they bound Jesus and led him away and delivered him over to Pilate.**

1. The Lord Jesus was arraigned- formally charged-by the chief priests.

They consulted with one another to make sure they agreed on the charges to make before Pilate. This would ensure they would get their desire, to kill Jesus. **These chief priests even got the advice of other leaders and historians.**

(The Jews did not have the power of capital punishment so they had to go to Rome.)

2. This formal charge was necessary according to law.

This was not a mob killing. The Jewish leaders therefore cannot excuse themselves from blood-guiltiness. Jesus was legally charged with capital crimes by the lawful authorities. They officially charged Jesus Christ with blasphemy.

Mark 14:63 Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, "What further need do we have of witnesses? 64 "You have heard the blasphemy! What do you think?" And they all condemned Him to be deserving of death.

3. But the Jewish leaders did not charge him with blasphemy alone.

With what else did they charge him?

a. They charged Jesus with subversion of the state. They knew the Roman leader might not care about their religious law.

b. They charged Jesus with refusing to pay taxes.

Luke 23: 2 And they began to accuse Him, saying, "We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to pay taxes to Caesar, saying that He Himself is Christ, a King."

These two charges met the Roman standard for death.

What wicked leaders of the covenant people of God! They were selling out their own! But this was not new.

Ezekiel 22:26 "Her priests have violated My law and profaned My holy things; they have not distinguished between the holy and unholy, nor have they made known *the difference* between the unclean and the clean; and they have hidden their eyes from My Sabbaths, so that I am profaned among them.

It was because of the wickedness of the priests that Judah went into Babylonian captivity. (Lam 4:13)

4. While the charges against Jesus were legal, there was nothing moral about the process of charging him.

a. The Jewish leaders had illegally arrested Jesus the night before. (John 18:12) That was the Romans' job.

b. The Jewish leaders met and took Jesus between 4:00AM and 6:00AM to Pilate, showing a zeal for sin.

c. The Jewish leaders did this on a special worship day - the day after the Passover, the 1st day of the Feast of the Unleavened Bread. The Jews should have been thinking of the lamb they had set aside for 4 days...and of their freedom through the blood of the lamb. Instead, they wanted to shed the blood of the Lamb of God.

d. The Jewish leaders knew there was conflict in the testimony against Jesus but sinfully proceeded anyway.

Mark 14:56 For many bore false witness against Him, but their testimonies did not agree.

4. Lessons:

a. Jesus was legally charged and in being charged, he took your place. You should have been charged for breaking God's law! Praise God that Jesus was willing to go through being civilly charged for you!

b. With this act of charging Jesus and turning him over to Pilate, the Jews were officially breaking covenant with God.

(This is important.) They were saying that they didn't want their king and they were turning the kingdom over to the Gentiles. The Jews (the Scarlet Harlot) were going to sit on the lap of the Beast. (This is the picture of the Jews and Rome in Revelation.) God did not break covenant with the Jews by leaving them. They left him; they rejected him as king.

This is why God gave the covenant to another-one more worthy. You (Gentiles) are now in covenant with God. Luke 13. They were choosing Pilate like they chose King Saul. They knew he would be bad for them, but they didn't care.

1 Samuel 8:7 And the LORD said to Samuel, "Heed the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them.

c. Don't be fooled by men in religious clothing or men in religious positions. Without Christ they are no different, and are even worse than men in the world, for they are hypocrites.

d. Keep the covenant the Lord established with you and your children. Ignore it at your own peril. Don't reject your only hope of salvation.

Jesus was Civilly Tried for you

2 And Pilate asked him, "**Are you the King of the Jews?**" And he answered him, "You have said so." 3 And the chief priests accused him of many things. 4 And Pilate again asked him, "Have you no answer to make? See how many charges they bring against you." 5 But Jesus made no further answer, so that Pilate was amazed.

1. Pilate then began the process of examining the accused, Jesus Christ, in a legitimate criminal proceeding after the chief priests brought the charges.

This is important because it was the **job of the priests to bring the sacrifice and examine it** before it was sacrificed to make sure it was perfect. The Jewish priests were unknowingly fulfilling the law, confirming that the perfect Lamb of God was the true sacrifice for sins.

Deuteronomy 15:21 "But **if there is a defect in it**, if it is lame or blind or has any serious defect, **you shall not sacrifice it** to the LORD your God.

2. Pilate then asked Jesus two questions ("Are you the king of the Jews?" and "Have you no answer to make.") but Jesus answered only 1 of them.

Jesus confirmed that he was the King of the Jews. Though the Jewish leaders had

accused him of many things **he remained silent concerning the other question.** Wasn't he wrong to refuse to answer the judge? No, he wasn't wrong to refuse to answer. There was no adjuration (oath) demanded by Pilate.

There are 2 reasons for his silence.

a. It was **up to the court to prove guilt.** No one was allowed to force a man to testify against himself. God required this in order to stop the state from torturing people for confession.

b. Jesus did not speak **because he was guilty of great sins – your sins.** Silence gives consent.

6 Now at the feast he used to release for them one prisoner for whom they asked. 7 And among the rebels in prison, who had **committed murder in the insurrection,** there was a man called Barabbas. 8 And the crowd came up and began to ask Pilate to do **as he usually did** for them. 9 And he answered them, saying, **“Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?”** 10 For he perceived that it was out of **envy that the chief priests** had delivered him up. 11 But the chief **priests stirred up the crowd** to have him release for them Barabbas instead.

3. Pilate knew that the Jewish leaders envied the Lord.

Seeing the Lord's innocence, and wanting to release him, Pilate then tried to use a loophole to set Jesus free. How? He usually released a political prisoner to try to placate the Jews at that time of their great feast. So what was his trick he tried to use to set Jesus free?

Pilate asked the crowd directly if they wanted a murderer and insurrectionists free of whether they wanted a man who only claimed to be king, but posed no danger, free. He did not take a political prisoner as he normally did. He thought this might swing the crowd against the Jewish priests.

Any reasonable person would have rejected the evil Barabbas and released Jesus!

4. The Jews rejected Pilate's offer because the priests stirred up the people to do so

The people then demanded the release of the murderer and insurrectionist Barabbas. They did this against their own self-interest. **An insurrectionist could bring must judgment on them and their children.** And he did! This was the catastrophe of AD70.

12 And **Pilate again said to them,** “Then **what shall I do with the man you call the King of the Jews?”** 13 And they cried out again, “Crucify him.” 14 And Pilate said to them, **“Why, what evil has he done?”** But they shouted all the more, “Crucify him.”

5. Pilate pleaded a second and third time for the people to provide hard evidence against the Lord.

Instead of providing evidence (How could they? They had none.) the leaders simply stirred

up the people to act like a mob. They cried out louder: Crucify him, crucify him! How remarkable!

The priest could find nothing wrong with Christ.

The people could find nothing wrong with Christ.

Pilate could find nothing wrong with Christ.

Yet, **what a beautiful picture: Jesus was the perfect sacrifice**...he was fit to die...and everyone knew it! Three witnesses found nothing against him. He wasn't lame, or blind, or spotted. He was perfect, and waited to die, taking your place.

5. Lessons:

a. Jesus was proved to be innocent when he was examined by the priests, the people, and Pilate. (And remember, the testimony presented to the council was contradictory.) And as a result **the guilty went free because the innocent was sacrificed! Amazing!** The wicked didn't even know they were helping sinners as they worked to sacrifice the Lamb of God.

b. Many leaders deceive people so that they go against their own self-interests! (And it is not always about the money.) Look how many people are **advocating for socialism** that has never even worked! Look how women fight for the **right to kill their own babies!** Look how many people advocate for the **right to destroy their own bodies** by destructive drugs! And this is true in the churches as well. Look how many **women fight for the right to not be subjected to their husbands!**

c. Look at the failure s of civil leaders how they bring judgment on citizens. If Pilate had not crucified Jesus, the Jewish nation would not have been destroyed in AD70 by the Romans. Washing his hands did not free Pilate from the guilt. If you wash your hands in blood it doesn't become clean.

Conclusion:

Jesus was legally (not morally) accused and tried in your place. All of this innocent accusation, condemnation, and abuse had to be done as punishment for you, the guilty one – you, Barabbas. It should give you a first glimpse of what your sins deserve, and from what you were saved.

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ:

1. Take a moment to think of the great price (Jesus' accusation, trial and death) of your salvation.

2. Then praise God without ceasing – daily – for taking responsibility for your sins.

3. Know that Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, and atheists will go to hell. They have no one to take responsibility for their sins so they have to pay for it themselves.

4. Only you, the Christian, have the answer to their lives. Take that message to them so that they might live.

Finally, if Jesus does not take responsibility for you, you have to take it for yourself. If you take responsibility for yourself, you will spend eternity in hell. That is not where you want to be. So ask God to count Christ's work fully as your own.