

# Pentwater Bible Church

*Gospel of Mark*

*Message 59*

*June 28, 2015*



The Crowning with Thorns by Gerard van Honthorst cir. 1662

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The Book of Mark

Message 59

Events Preceding the Crucifixion-Peter's Denial & Jesus Sent to Pilate

June 28, 2015

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Christ before Pilate by IL Tintoretto Cir 1565-67

Mark 14:66-15:5

<sup>66</sup> And as Peter was beneath in the palace, there cometh one of the maids of the high priest: <sup>67</sup> and when she saw Peter warming himself, she looked upon him, and said, And thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth. <sup>68</sup> But he denied, saying, I know not, neither understand I what thou sayest. And he went out into the porch; and the cock crew. <sup>69</sup> And a maid saw him again, and began to say to them that stood by, This is one of them. <sup>70</sup> And he denied it again. And a little after, they that stood by said again to Peter, Surely thou art one of them: for thou art a Galilean, and thy speech agreeth thereto. <sup>71</sup> But he began to curse and to swear, saying, I know not this man of whom ye speak. <sup>72</sup> And the second time the cock crew. And Peter called to mind the word that Jesus said unto him, Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. And when he thought thereon, he wept.

xv. <sup>1</sup> And straightway in the morning the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council, and bound Jesus, and carried him away, and delivered him to Pilate. <sup>2</sup> And Pilate asked him, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answering said unto him, Thou sayest it. <sup>3</sup> And the chief priests accused him of many things: but he answered nothing. <sup>4</sup> And Pilate asked him again, saying, Answerest thou nothing? behold how many things they witness against thee. <sup>5</sup> But Jesus yet answered nothing; so that Pilate marvelled (KJV).

## PETER DENIES THE LORD

Mark 14:66-68

*<sup>66</sup> And as Peter was beneath in the palace, there cometh one of the maids of the high priest: <sup>67</sup> and when she saw Peter warming himself, she looked upon him, and said, And thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth. <sup>68</sup> But he denied, saying, I know not, neither understand I what thou sayest. And he went out into the porch; and the cock crew (KJV).*

Peter was from Galilee and his accent was Galilean. His voice was unmistakable in Jerusalem. One of the High Priest's servant girls in the inner court yard saw *Peter warming himself* and in the light of the fire recognized him and then approached him and said, "*thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth.*" Peter who had a brash self confidence at the last supper telling Jesus that he would never deny Jesus (Mark 14:29-30) now wilts under pressure of a slave girl's question. The girl was actually guarding the gate to the inner courtyard (John 18:16) when she saw Peter. She saw him enter the yard after Jesus was taken to the upper room of the High Priest's palace. Peter's first denial came right after she confronted him. Peter immediately tried to protect himself and said, "*I know not, neither understand I what thou sayest.*" He was right in the palace courtyard with the soldiers and other servants. In other words he denied knowing Jesus and said he did not even understand what the girl asked. He was essentially saying that he had so little knowledge of this Jesus person that he did not know even who or what she was asking. Peter was placed in a real situation and acted in response to a challenging question from someone that was not a close friend. He wilted and *went out into the porch*. Just as Jesus had prophesied the cock crowed for the first time at about two in the morning. His faith was not so strong as he thought. He could cut off a soldier's ear when he was with the other apostles but away from them in a serious situation the true strength of his faith was tested and found to be weak.

Mark 14:69-70a

*<sup>69</sup> And a maid saw him again, and began to say to them that stood by, This is one of them. <sup>70</sup> And he denied it again (KJV).*

Another servant girl noticed him and immediately began broadcasting his relationship to Jesus to the others who were nearby in the courtyard. She did not question him as the first girl did. She said out loud, "*This is one of them.*" His response was simply that *he denied it again*.

Mark 14:70b-

*And a little after, they that stood by said again to Peter, Surely thou art one of them: for thou art a Galilean, and thy speech agreeth thereto. <sup>71</sup> But he began to curse and to swear, saying, I know not this man of whom ye speak. <sup>72</sup> And the second time the cock crew (KJV).*

The third and last accusation came about five or six in the morning by the people in the courtyard. They heard him speak and recognized his Galilean accent. One of them said, "*Surely thou art one of them:*" meaning Jesus close followers from Galilee. People from Galilee spoke an Aramaic dialect with noticeable differences in pronunciation (Matthew 26:73). This time Peter was so emphatic that he was not a follower of Jesus that he started to *curse and to swear*. He then denied Him a second time by saying, "*I know not this man of whom ye speak.*" This shows the cowardice

he displayed under pressure of the ungodly people in that palace courtyard during Jesus' trial. Peter's courage failed him in the hour of trial and he did exactly what Jesus said he would do. Peter's denial of Jesus gives us an interesting and informative insight into ourselves. Brash bragging of confidence without thinking things through gives us the idea that we are strong enough to withstand the influence of the ungodly. What generally happens in an encounter with the ungodly is a desire to conform to their habits and principles more so that challenging them. Even if we have thought that we could maintain our integrity with them we can easily see that dissipate as we bend to accommodate their ideas. The Bible makes it quite clear that we are to have no fellowship with unbelievers in the sense that we form a close frequent bond with them.

II Corinthians 6:14-18

*<sup>14</sup> Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? <sup>15</sup> and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? <sup>16</sup> and what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. <sup>17</sup> Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, <sup>18</sup> and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty (KJV).*

Christianity clearly says "a believer can have no fellowship with an unbeliever," and that "the friendship of the world is enmity with God." We are made aware of the danger to giving in to the fear of man over God (Galatians 1:10; I Thessalonians 2:4; Proverbs 29:25; John 12:43; Colossians 3:23; mAsts 5:29; Isaiah 2:22 etc.). Peter's time in the palace courtyard clearly also proved the proverb, which says not to trust in your own heart. If we follow the wisdom of God we will be delivered of evil. The Bible provides protection for us in many doctrines. It is not unkind to avoid regular fellowship with unbelievers; rather it is a protective mechanism that God has given us to separate us out from evil.

Proverbs 28:26

*He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool: but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered (KJV).*

The Bible also affirms the outcome of maintaining relationships with unbelievers.

I Corinthians 15:33

*33 Do not be deceived: "Bad company corrupts good morals." (NASB)*

Peter's actions proved what Jesus said about him. During the moment of trial he would fail. This would all change after the Resurrection and the birth of the Church on the day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit came and saved three thousand Jewish people. Peter genuinely became emboldened after that and was a strong evangelizer and steadfast in his faith despite many trials and persecutions. He never again denied the Lord.

Mark 14:72

<sup>72</sup> *And the second time the cock crew. And Peter called to mind the word that Jesus said unto him, Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. And when he thought thereon, he wept (KJV).*

Right after the last denial *the cock crew*. This time Peter remembered what Jesus had said about denying Him three times before the cock crowed twice. Peter saw Jesus looking down at him from the upper story where the trial was being conducted and he realized what had happened (Luke 22:61). Now the full impact of Jesus' prophecy to him flashed through his mind and he broke down and cried. Peter's failure is a strong message for today. Even when we think we are strong in the presence of the ungodly God's Word says otherwise. Fortunately Peter was forgiven by Jesus (Mark 16:7; John 21:15-19).

#### RELIGIOUS LEADER'S CONDEMNATION

Mark 15:1

<sup>1</sup> *And straightway in the morning the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council, and bound Jesus, and carried him away, and delivered him to Pilate (KJV).*

The Sanhedrin issued their verdict at dawn (Mark 15:1; Matthew 27:1; Luke 22:66-71). The entire group of seventy men plus the high priest issued their guilty verdict and the charge was blasphemy. Since they tried Him illegally at night they sought to provide some semblance of legality by having the decision affirmed during the daylight and get the Romans approval for an execution. They knew that they had to take Him to Pontius Pilate. From him they would petition the approval to have the Romans execute Jesus so they *carried him away, and delivered him to Pilate*. The Romans required approval for all capital crimes so as to maintain the Pax Romana. Pilate was woken up to the sounds of an angry mob outside his home.

A Roman governor could either affirm or rescind the Sanhedrin's death sentence (John 19:10). If the Jewish verdict was rescinded, a new trial before a Roman court was ordered and scheduled. In that trial the Sanhedrin would have to prove that the defendant had committed a capital crime under Roman law not Jewish Law. The Sanhedrin conviction of blasphemy (Mark 14:64) was not a punishable charge according to Roman law. Because of that the Sanhedrin substituted a charge of treason, using Jesus' acknowledgment that He was the Messiah into a traitorous political charge that He is "the King of the Jews" (Mark 15:2; Luke 23:2). They tried to convince the Romans that Jesus was a traitor who was stating that He was a "King" and therefore a potential insurrectionist and a threat to Rome and the Pax Romana.

#### JESUS BEFORE PONTIUS PILATE

Pontius Pilate was a Roman Governor in Samaria and Judea (West Bank today) from A.D. 26-36 and Jerusalem was located within Judea. His normal residence was in Caesarea on the Mediterranean Sea but he was in Jerusalem for the Passover. At that time there were thousands of Jewish pilgrims in Jerusalem. With the influx of worshippers there was a stronger chance of rioting than during other times of the year. Pilate stayed in a place called the Praetorium, which was his

Jerusalem headquarters. He had no love of the Jews and the attitude was mutual. Consider the tension of this meeting as Jesus an innocent man is brought by Jews who hated Jesus as well as the Romans to the Roman governor who disliked the Jews for a decision to execute Jesus.

Mark 15:2-3

*<sup>2</sup> And Pilate asked him, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answering said unto him, Thou sayest it. <sup>3</sup> And the chief priests accused him of many things: but he answered nothing (KJV).*

Now before Pilate with the new charge of traitor to Rome as the King of the Jews, *And Pilate asked him, "Art thou the King of the Jews"?* Pilate had complete and sole authority to render a decision. The trial would normally be held outdoors in public. It opened with a magistrate's indictment and then interrogation and testimony from the witnesses and the defendant as well. As soon as the magistrate heard all the evidence he would render the verdict and immediately follow with a sentence, which would be carried out quickly. There was no appeal. The Sanhedrin had issued a death sentence for blasphemy but changed it to treason for Pilate. Pilate did not take the Sanhedrin's sentence. He wanted to hear the testimonies himself. He asked Jesus directly if He was *the King of the Jews*. If this was true then this was a traitorous action that was underway against Caesar and had to be punished by death. Jesus answered in a rather cryptic way. Instead of saying yes He implied it. However His implication was that of the Spiritual King of a realm unknown to Pilate and the Sanhedrin as well (John 18:33-38). Pilate did not immediately see any criminal activity in this silent Jewish Rabbi in front of him. He could see that the Sanhedrin had a weak case and there was hardly any threat of this man inciting a rebellion against Rome. Now the *chief priests accused him of many things* to try and bolster their case against Him with Rome. Pilate knew the charges were weak and even false and he expected Jesus to say something in His own defense *but he answered nothing* as prophesied (Isaiah 53:7). Luke records their false charges.

Luke 23:2

*<sup>2</sup> And they began to accuse him, saying, We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cesar, saying that he himself is Christ a King (KJV).*

Their charges were:

1. Perverting the nation
2. Forbidding others to give tribute (taxes) to Caesar
3. Making Himself out to be the King

Jesus had no reason to delay the execution given that it was the reason He came to earth to die for the sins of mankind. There was another short trial that only Luke records. Pilate found out that Jesus was a Galilean so he sent Him to Herod Antipas the tetrarch of Galilee who was also in Jerusalem for Passover. Herod had Jesus dressed as a false king and demanded that He perform some miracle. He only mocked Jesus and returned Him to Pilate.

Mark 15:4-5

*<sup>4</sup> And Pilate asked him again, saying, Answerest thou nothing? behold how many things they witness against thee. <sup>5</sup> But Jesus yet answered nothing; so that Pilate marvelled (KJV).*

The religious leaders bring various charges against Jesus, which are not made clear here. Pilate quickly figures out that this accusation and trial is not about Jesus' guilt or innocence. It is about the *jealousy* and hatred of the priestly rulers, because Jesus is much more popular with the crowds than they are (v. 10). The charges themselves impress Pilate much less than Jesus' confident silence in the face of his accusers (v. 5). Pilate continued to be amazed at Jesus remaining silent with so much envy and hatred directed toward Him.

NEXT WEEK: MARK: ONE PRISONER MAY GO FREE

**Please call or e-mail with any questions or comments**

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