

**A Declaration of Those Things Which Are  
Most Surely Believed Among Us  
An Expository Study of the Gospel According to Luke  
Chapter 23- **Luke 23:1-25**  
341- The Love of the World; The Condemnation of Jesus  
and The Sovereignty of God- Part 3**

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March 19, 2017

**Luke 23:1-25**

**1** Then the whole body of them got up and brought Him before Pilate.

**2** And they began to accuse Him, saying, "We found this man misleading our nation and forbidding to pay taxes to Caesar, and saying that He Himself is Christ, a King."

**3** So Pilate asked Him, saying, "Are You the King of the Jews?" And He answered him and said, "*It is as you say.*"

**4** Then Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowds, "I find no guilt in this man."

**5** But they kept on insisting, saying, "He stirs up the people, teaching all over Judea, starting from Galilee even as far as this place."

**6** When Pilate heard it, he asked whether the man was a Galilean.

**7** And when he learned that He belonged to Herod's jurisdiction, he sent Him to Herod, who himself also was in Jerusalem at that time.

**8** Now Herod was very glad when he saw Jesus; for he had wanted to see Him for a long time, because he had been hearing about Him and was hoping to see some sign performed by Him.

**9** And he questioned Him at some length; but He answered him nothing.

**10** And the chief priests and the scribes were standing there, accusing Him vehemently.

**11** And Herod with his soldiers, after treating Him with contempt and mocking Him, dressed Him in a gorgeous robe and sent Him back to Pilate.

**12** Now Herod and Pilate became friends with one another that very day; for before they had been enemies with each other.

**13** Pilate summoned the chief priests and the rulers and the people,

**14** and said to them, "You brought this man to me as one who incites the people to rebellion, and behold, having examined Him before you, I have found no guilt in this man regarding the charges which you make against Him.

**15** "No, nor has Herod, for he sent Him back to us; and behold, nothing deserving death has been done by Him.

**16** "Therefore I will punish Him and release Him."

**17** [Now he was obliged to release to them at the feast one prisoner.]

**18** But they cried out all together, saying, "Away with this man, and release for us Barabbas!"

**19** (He was one who had been thrown into prison for an insurrection made in the city, and for murder.)

**20** Pilate, wanting to release Jesus, addressed them again,

**21** but they kept on calling out, saying, "Crucify, crucify Him!"

**22** And he said to them the third time, "Why, what evil has this man done? I have found in Him no guilt *demanding* death; therefore I will punish Him and release Him."

**23** But they were insistent, with loud voices asking that He be crucified. And their voices *began* to prevail.

**24** And Pilate pronounced sentence that their demand be granted.

**25** And he released the man they were asking for who had been thrown into prison for insurrection and murder, but he delivered Jesus to their will.

To the Glory of God

Now I want to remind you that there are actually three things going on here as Jesus stands before Pilate:

1. The Love of the World in Pilate
2. The Condemnation of Jesus by the Crowds
3. The Sovereignty of God

And several years after the Resurrection, this same Dr. Luke quoted the Apostles as they were praying about these issues all working simultaneously together in **The Acts 4:27&28:**

**27 "For truly in this city there were gathered together against Your holy servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel,**

**28 to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose predestined to occur.**

So, the men who led the Church during its very first years believed and taught that the evil actions of unsaved and wicked men, *including* the Murder of Jesus Christ, were carried out under the predestined Purpose of God Who works all things after the Counsel of Him.

In reality, "Evil" is *not* a force that roams freely throughout the earth, but it is merely a tool that God uses to further His Own Good Will in both saving all of His elect and damning the non-elect.

So, we're going to take some time to go through this together and my goal is that three things will become clear in your mind:

1. The Great Danger of Loving This Present Evil World
2. Condemning Jesus only Condemns Yourself
3. God is absolutely Sovereign in the Death of His Son

Now, last week, we saw how that loving the world is so very dangerous, because it illustrates a heart that has not been born from above. And the best Passage that describes this is found in **1 John 2:15-17**, so let's go there one more time:

**15 Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.**

**16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.**

**17 The world is passing away, and *also* its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever.**

Now most people would really have to ponder what the Apostle is writing here, because on the surface, it would seem that "love" is a good thing. I mean, even God Himself is Love (**1 John 4:8; 16**). So, if love is good, and God is love, why is John telling us that for us to love the world means that God's Love is not in us? Doesn't John remember what he himself wrote in his own Gospel record?

### **John 3:16**

**For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.**

So, if God so loved the world that He gave Jesus, then why is John telling us not to love the world? Is the Greek word for "world" in **John 3:16** different from **1 John 2:15**? No, it's the same word: "kosmos". So, why is John forbidding us to do what God Himself did? Listen to John's logic:

### **1John 2:16&17a**

**16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.**

**17 The world is passing away, and *also* its lusts...**

So, we see that the "world" that John is forbidding us to love is *not* the dirt or the trees or the mountains that God created, and it isn't even the people that God made in His Image and Likeness, even though many of them are sinful. No, the danger is in the "World system" that exists as a result of the Fall and that continues to function in complete rebellion to God. And *that* "world" has three characteristics:

1. The lust of the flesh
2. The lust of the eyes
3. The boastful pride of life

... and John said that these three things are:

**... not from the Father, but is from the world**

... and then John said:

**The world is passing away, and *also* its lusts...**

So, having these three attributes abounding unhindered in your life indicates that God's Love is not in you, and therefore, you are not saved. But we must understand that it isn't that *some* lost people love

the world while others don't. No, loving this present evil world in these three characteristics is what it means to be lost to begin with. It is the default setting of all who have not been born from above. So, being a "world-lover" is merely another way of understanding the depravity of fallen Man. And, as I told you last week, Ian Murray has the best quote I've ever read about this when he said:

“Worldliness is departing from God. It is a “man centered” way of thinking; It proposes objectives which demand no radical breach from man’s fallen nature. It judges the importance of things by the present and material results. It weighs success by numbers. It covets human esteem. It wants no unpopularity. It knows no Truth for which it is worth suffering. It declines to be a fool for Christ sake. Worldliness is the mind-set of the unregenerate. It adopts idols. It is at war with God.”

And the point of bringing this up in this series is to show you that Pontius Pilate was not saved, that his love of these three things meant that God’s Love had never visited him, and therefore, what he is doing in sentencing Jesus to death was the result of his *own* unconverted and wicked heart. And that is why Dr. Luke recorded this in **The Acts 4:27:**

**For truly in this city there were gathered together against Your holy servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel,**

Now look closely at what Dr. Luke wrote here. He says that Herod and Pontius Pilate and the Gentiles and people of Israel:

**were gathered together against Your holy servant Jesus, whom You anointed**

... and the way this is phrased in the Greek shows us that these wicked, worldly people gathered together against Jesus, *in accord with their own desires*. In other words, this “gathering” was *willful* on their part; they voluntarily *chose* to gather together against Jesus; they *wanted* to gather together against Jesus. So, this is a conscious act of their fallen and depraved will. And that means that these people were fully culpable in this horrendous sin. And that means that God *could* and He

*did* damn them for the evil that they did. But then, look at what Luke wrote in the very next verse:

### **The Acts 4:28**

**to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose predestined to occur.**

Now the Old Testament contains hundreds of Prophecies concerning the Messiah, including the town of His Birth and the genealogy of his parents. And included in these Prophecies is the indisputable fact that God desired for Deity to take on human flesh, be born of a virgin, be subjected to all sin and yet never fail, and then be crushed under the weight of God's Fury against all of God's elect.

So, Jesus came to die. He was born to die. The Lord didn't come the first time to be accepted by the masses, or to be loved or wanted or even admired. No, Jesus was born to be rejected and to appear to the average person as though God Himself had forsaken Him. Listen to the Prophecy of Isaiah that was written 500 years before Jesus was born:

### **Isaiah 53:2-12**

**2 ...He has no *stately* form or majesty That we should look upon Him, Nor appearance that we should be attracted to Him.**

**3 He was despised and forsaken of men, A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; And like one from whom men hide their face He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.**

**4 Surely our griefs He Himself bore, And our sorrows He carried; Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, Smitten of God, and afflicted.**

**5 But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being *fell* upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed.**

**6 All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But the Lord has caused the iniquity of us all To fall on Him.**

**7 He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He did not open His mouth; Like a lamb that is led to slaughter, And like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, So He did not open His mouth.**

**8 By oppression and judgment He was taken away; And as for His generation, who considered That He was cut off out of the land of the living For the transgression of my people, to whom the stroke *was due?***

**9 His grave was assigned with wicked men, Yet He was with a rich man in His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor was there any deceit in His mouth.**

**10 But the Lord was pleased To crush Him, putting *Him* to grief; If He would render Himself *as* a guilt offering, He will see *His* offspring, He will prolong *His* days, And the good pleasure of the Lord will prosper in His hand.**

**11 As a result of the anguish of His soul, He will see *it and* be satisfied; By His knowledge the Righteous One, My Servant, will justify the many, As He will bear their iniquities.**

**12 Therefore, I will allot Him a portion with the great, And He will divide the booty with the strong; Because He poured out Himself to death, And was numbered with the transgressors; Yet He Himself bore the sin of many, And interceded for the transgressors.**

It was God's Will for Jesus to take on the sins of all of God's Elect and be punished by the Wrath of God as though those sins were His. And that is why Isaiah said:

**... the Lord was pleased To crush Him, putting *Him* to grief ...**

Now, a few years ago, I preached a series on "That Which Pleases God". And in that series, I told you that this Passage doesn't say that God simply crushed Jesus, but that God was *pleased* to crush Jesus. In other words, crushing Jesus, even though He was entirely innocent, brought *pleasure, delight, and joy* to God.

And so, this goes way beyond even being the Will of God. Crushing Jesus for my sins and your sins brought Pleasure to the Father! God the Father *rejoiced* and *delighted* at the crushing of His Own Son!

Now why was that? The common answer is that, "*This is how much He loved me*". I absolutely rejoice at God's Love and elevate it and magnify it and wonder after it more than most. But I reject that this is the final or the best or the most important reason why God took such Pleasure in crushing Jesus. The Apostle Paul wrote about this in **Ephesians 1**, so go there with me:

**Ephesians 1:3-6**

**Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.**

So, the End for which Jesus died, the Cause, the Purpose as to why God went to such great lengths to take on flesh and live down here as a Suffering Servant for 33-1/2 years and be crushed under the weight of Eternal Wrath against the sins of those He chose to save from before the foundation of the world is summed up in one simple but profound statement:

**...to the praise of the glory of His grace**

So, God's Grace has a "glory" to it. And yet, that Glory is not seen or manifested or displayed unless there exists someone who needs it, because God Himself surely doesn't.

So, in His marvelous Wisdom, God created Man. And He allowed Man to fall, so that God may redeem them by what He alone does for them. And as God redeems wicked sinners, the Glory of God's Grace is seen and displayed. And as God's Amazing Grace is displayed through the saving of wicked rebels, that Glory is acknowledged and it is marveled at and it is praised. And *that* is why it pleased God to crush Jesus.

Now this means that it was God's predetermined Purpose for these men to gather together against Jesus. And so, even though they all *voluntarily chose* to do this, God was very busy, working to sovereignly *allow* these evil men to carry out the wickedness that was already in their hearts. Even though God *could* have sovereignly *intervened* and stopped them, He chose to "step aside" and *allow* evil men to carry out the evil intentions of their own hearts on Jesus, so that the Son of Man would be killed, so that the Glory of God's Grace would be praised by rescuing sinful rebels.

Now, many people in the modern Church rejoice at the concept called "Human Self-Determinism", or "Human Free Will". And these



people seldom, if ever miss an opportunity to uphold and magnify this concept. And this concept basically says that while God is Sovereign, He has chosen to carry out His Sovereignty through the “means” of Human Self-Determinism” or “Human Free Will”.

So, once people exercise their “will”, once they make a “choice”, or once they determine in themselves to “do” something, God voluntarily *limits* His Own Will and Purposes and He stands aside while these people carry out their choice. And this concept goes on to say that God so values “Human Self-Determinism”, it is so sacred to God, that God will not violate it and will, in fact, allow men to perish in hell rather than act decisively against Man’s Will.

So, in the case of Salvation, this concept teaches that all God can do is *offer* Eternal Life through His Son, Jesus Christ, and invite everyone to come and drink of this Water of Life, but individuals must either take God up on His Divine Offer and be saved, or reject that “Offer” and remain damned. And so, even though God desires that everybody be saved, He *can’t* save them unless fallen, sinful, frail, and mortal human beings choose to *allow* God the privilege of saving them.

And, in this case of these men gathering together against Jesus, this concept says that Pilate and Herod and the Gentiles, along with the people of Israel, voluntarily chose to have Jesus killed, and because God so values Human Self-Determinism, He is powerless to stop them.

Now Self-Determinism makes sense on some level, and it is easy to teach and easy to learn. And this is so true that today, the Concept of Self-Determinism is *the* single most popular and most vigorously defended doctrine of the modern Church. And so, what’s wrong with a doctrine that so many people believe and teach and love and defend today? Well, just one, God’s Word doesn’t teach it. The Bible has *never* taught Human Self-Determinism. In fact, the Bible teaches *against* it.

Dr. Luke didn’t say that God so valued Human Self-Determinism that He passively stepped aside to allow evil men to gather together against Jesus. No, Luke was moved along by God the Holy Spirit to say that the reason these wicked man carried out their evil intentions on Jesus was:

**to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose predestined to occur**

And that means that God is Sovereign, not Man. It means that God is decisive, not Man. It means that God is in control, even in this, and not Man. It means that the only reason that evil men can carry out their wicked intentions in the earth against another evil person or against a saint of God, or against Jesus, is because God has chosen to *allow* them.

And many times, God chooses *not* to allow it. And in those cases, God chooses to actively and sovereignly *intervene* in the lives of evil people to forcefully *stop* them from carrying out the evil that was in their hearts to do. Other times, God chooses to *govern* Man's evil intentions to the point where He allows *some* of the evil they intend to do to be carried out while prohibiting the rest.

One of the best examples of God choosing to sovereignly *intervene* in the evil intentions of wicked people and *stop* them from carrying out the evil that was in their hearts to do was in the very first Sermon that Jesus preached back in **Luke 4**, so please turn there with me, **Luke 4**:

#### **Luke 4:14-29**

**14** And Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about Him spread through all the surrounding district.

**15** And He *began* teaching in their synagogues and was praised by all.

**16** And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up; and as was His custom, He entered the synagogue on the Sabbath, and stood up to read.

**17** And the book of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Him. And He opened the book and found the place where it was written,

**18** ***"THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME, BECAUSE HE ANOINTED ME TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO THE POOR. HE HAS SENT ME TO PROCLAIM RELEASE TO THE CAPTIVES, AND RECOVERY OF SIGHT TO THE BLIND, TO SET FREE THOSE WHO ARE OPPRESSED,***

**19** ***TO PROCLAIM THE FAVORABLE YEAR OF THE LORD."***

**20** And He closed the book, gave it back to the attendant and sat down; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on Him.

**21** And He began to say to them, **"Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."**

**22** And all were speaking well of Him, and wondering at the gracious words which were falling from His lips; and they were saying, "Is this not Joseph's son?"

**23 And He said to them, "No doubt you will quote this proverb to Me, 'Physician, heal yourself! Whatever we heard was done at Capernaum, do here in your hometown as well.'"**

**24 And He said, "Truly I say to you, no prophet is welcome in his hometown.**

**25 "But I say to you in truth, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the sky was shut up for three years and six months, when a great famine came over all the land;**

**26 and yet Elijah was sent to none of them, but only to Zarephath, *in the land of Sidon*, to a woman who was a widow.**

**27 "And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian."**

**28 And all *the people* in the synagogue were filled with rage as they heard these things;**

**29 and they got up and drove Him out of the city, and led Him to the brow of the hill on which their city had been built, in order to throw Him down the cliff.**

Now, notice that at the beginning of His Ministry, Jesus was well received. Luke writes that Jesus was:

**praised by all**

And even as He read the first 1-1/2 verses of **Isaiah 61**, their only response was:

**And all were speaking well of Him, and wondering at the gracious words which were falling from His lips; and they were saying, "Is this not Joseph's son?"**

It was only when Jesus began to *explain* what the Prophet Isaiah meant by what he wrote 500 years earlier that they became outraged. It was when Jesus told these extended family members that the only way that God could save them was if they were unworthy, wicked sinners, then they got angry with Him. Only when Jesus began to tell them the Truth about how God visited pagan Gentiles under the Old Covenant and blessed them ahead of the Jews, did they re-act this way:

**28** And all *the people* in the synagogue were filled with rage as they heard these things;

**29** and they got up and drove Him out of the city, and led Him to the brow of the hill on which their city had been built, in order to throw Him down the cliff.

The exercise of their own Free-Will, their Human Self-Determinism, their Choice, their Desire was to throw Jesus off the cliff and kill Him. But what happened? Did God stand by, *helpless* to intervene? Was God *paralyzed* by the exercise of their "free-will"? Did God so value Human Self-Determinism that He was obligated to allow them to carry out their desires, even against His Own Will? No. Look at the next verse:

**Luke 4:30**

**But passing through their midst, He went His way.**

Now this doesn't mean that Jesus got lost in the crowded scuffle. This is not describing a mob scene where Jesus escapes unnoticed. No, this is a miracle. It is a Divine Intervention. This is Jesus, in His absolute Deity and His complete Omnipotence, just walking right through them. Why? How? Because it was not time for evil men to triumph over Him, and therefore, God acted decisively to violate their will and stop them.

And this Truth is again illustrated by what Jesus Himself said about this in **John 10:17-18**:

**17 "For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life so that I may take it again.**

**18 "No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father."**

So, until Jesus laid down His Life, on His Own initiative, He was immortal and *could not* be taken or be killed. Now why is that? Jesus said:

**I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father.**

So, the only reason Jesus is standing before Pilate right now is because it is time for Jesus to lay down His Life. And because it is time, God sovereignly *allows* the evil intentions of these wicked men to flourish against His Own Son, but only to the degree that it furthers God's predetermined Purpose to crush Jesus with the sins of all of God's elect imputed to Him.

But, even at that, God is very carefully *governing* all of the atrocities that are taking place against Jesus as these terrible people beat the sinless Lamb of God without mercy. God is very busy, actively making sure that Jesus does not die until the Father can impute the sins of all of God's elect on Jesus, while He is suspended between earth and heaven on the Cross, and until God Himself can pour the full Fury of His Wrath against those sins on the Darling of the Trinity and God can take pleasure in crushing His Son.

And so, the reality is that right now, as Jesus stands before this merciless tyrant, who has put untold numbers of people to death, He, not Pilate, is in complete Authority. And the serenity and calmness that Pilate sees in Jesus, and the complete absence of any fear in His Eyes, troubles this evil man and Luke writes:

**Luke 23:4**

**Then Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowds, "I find no guilt in this man."**

Now part of this was in the fact that Pilate despised the Sanhedrin and knew that these religious frauds had trumped up these charges against Jesus. But part of this was in the fact that Pilate was so impressed with Jesus, he wanted Him to live. And so, Pilate pronounced his verdict on Jesus:

Not guilty

These Jewish hypocrites brought Jesus to Pilate so he would render his Judgement. And so, he did. And normally, that would have been it. For all intents and purposes, Jesus Trial was over at this point.

Pilate had heard the case, he had examined the accused, and he had rendered his verdict. "Not guilty!" And yet, the Trial goes on. And my question is, "Why?" Normally this would have been the end of the matter.

Now I understand why the Jews wanted to keep going, they wanted Jesus dead. But why is Pilate entertaining this obvious breach in legal protocol? Why doesn't he just end it right here? He has pronounced Jesus to be innocent, so why doesn't he send Jesus and the Sanhedrin away? And, what is even more strange, is that Pilate rendered his Judgement against Jesus three different times. He did it first here in verse 6. And then he did it again in verse 14 when he said:

**... You brought this man to me as one who incites the people to rebellion, and behold, having examined Him before you, I have found no guilt in this man regarding the charges which you make against Him.**

... and then, when the people *insisted* that he pronounce death on Jesus in verse 22, Pilate said:

**Why, what evil has this man done? I have found in Him no guilt *demanding* death; therefore I will punish Him and release Him.**

So, even though Pilate was standing in the position of being the Judge, he saw the Innocence and the Righteousness of Jesus. And this wicked, pagan ruler, who normally showed no mercy to anyone who stood before him, literally became somebody who was pleading Jesus' Cause. And this illustrates the second Point in this series:

Condemning Jesus only Condemns Yourself

You see, human beings *cannot* condemn Jesus. Sinful, fallen people *cannot* condemn Jesus. Jesus is God. And in every sense of that word, Jesus' Purity and Innocence and Righteousness and Sinlessness is pristine. So, Jesus *cannot* be judged by other men. He *cannot* be truthfully accused of a single sin. He *cannot* be condemned by any of His creatures. Jesus Himself said this in **John 8:46a**:

**Which one of you convicts Me of sin?**

... and the answer is: Nobody. Because, it is *impossible* for anyone to find any fault in Jesus. Jesus is the only sinless Man Who ever lived and who will ever live. Every other human being, whether he is a godly Prophet or an anointed Apostle or a dedicated Pastor or a wicked man, like Pilate, all humans are sinners who deserve nothing but God's Wrath and Condemnation. Nobody deserves Forgiveness and nobody deserves Heaven. And, the only people who can be saved, believe that.

Those who try to stand in Judgment against Jesus only judge *themselves* unworthy of Eternal Life. Those who find fault with Jesus only cut themselves off from the only Man Who can forgive their sins and rescue them from God's Wrath. Those who condemn Jesus only condemn themselves and doom themselves to Everlasting Punishment.

Because, no one can lay claim to being sinless, except Jesus. And that means that Jesus is alone. No one even comes close to Jesus. He is, in every sense, an "exclusive". And that means that part of being saved is to know and believe in the sinlessness of Jesus Christ. Because only a sinless High Priest can offer a sinless Sacrifice to wash away the sins of God's people. The writer of **Hebrews** said:

#### **Hebrews 7:24-27**

**24** but Jesus, on the other hand, because He continues forever, holds His priesthood permanently.

**25** Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

**26** For it was fitting for us to have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens;

**27** who does not need daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the *sins* of the people, because this He did once for all when He offered up Himself.

And then this writer told the Jews who wanted to go back to their animal sacrifices, that if they reject Jesus and put their trust in anyone or anything else:

#### **Hebrews 10:26**

**... there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins,**

So, it is Jesus or nobody. There is no other option, no other path to Heaven, no other way for anyone to be forgiven and pardoned. A wicked, unworthy sinner runs to Jesus and bows before Him and confesses his horrible sins, and he repents of those sins, and he puts his faith and trust in Jesus, personally, and in His finished Work, or he dies in his sins and spends eternity in a lake of fire.

The notion that people need more proof in order to believe, or that if only they could see a sign or a miracle and they would believe is ludicrous, when they have a sinless Lamb standing before them. And so, all of those present that day, all of those who stood in judgment against Jesus, were *not* judging Jesus, they were judging *themselves*. They were not condemning Jesus, they were condemning *themselves*.

Now Luke tells us that the Jews began to see that Pilate was being swayed by Jesus, and so, they began to say,

**Luke 23:5**

**He stirs up the people, teaching all over Judea, starting from Galilee even as far as this place.**

And this was the opening that Pilate wanted. He knew that the Jews were simply trying to use him to carry out their wishes on this Man. And Pilate was also very impressed with Jesus on a personal level. And so, he didn't want to be the one to "pull the trigger" and have Jesus killed. So, Luke writes in **Luke 23:6-7:**

**6 When Pilate heard it, he asked whether the man was a Galilean.**

**7 And when he learned that He belonged to Herod's jurisdiction, he sent Him to Herod, who himself also was in Jerusalem at that time.**

Now Pilate is "washing his hands" of Jesus the first time and sends Him over to Herod to let Herod do the "dirty work" of condemning Jesus. But, Lord willing, next week, we will see that this effort by Pilate to escape being the one to condemn Jesus failed. And we will see how God actively governs this entire situation to place Jesus before Pilate again, even though it was not his normal place. And He did so, because God had chosen Pontius Pilate, above all the other people on earth, to be the one to condemn the Son of God to die.



So, Lord willing, next week, we will *conclude* this amazing series on:

The Love of the World; The Condemnation of Jesus and The Sovereignty of God

Amen. Let's pray.

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The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your pace. Soli Deo Gloria. For the Glory of God alone.