

## 27:11

**And Jesus stood before the governor: and the governor asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews?**

Although Pilate is probably simply asking Jesus questions using His Own words, this is a real building upon a theme which begun with the genealogies and the wise men and carrying through the kingdom language of Matthew. Yes, this is the charge of the priests and elders, but it has a bigger picture, and that is the aim of Matthew. **And Jesus said unto him, Thou sayest.** Relatively simple response: If Jesus were an arrogant godless man, He who would say things like “I am the Greatest of All Time” and be unqualified to say so. The *New York Times* describes this man as one who started out as Nation of Islam in his religious walk which ended in his strange passage through four wives.<sup>1</sup> Oddly enough, Al Mohler recognized that this religion cares little for equality as Civil Rights leaders either overlook or find inconvenient to their cause.<sup>2</sup> Rather, in the middle of his “so called greatness”, he found that whites were inferior as products of a mad scientist in ancient history. As if his racism wasn’t enough, or his four wives and myriad Wilt Chamberlain/Magic Johnson-esque sexual escapades were not enough, he—in his so-called greatness—took part in a sport that allowed him to showcase his arrogance in “rope a dope” fashion—soaking up myriads of blows to the head, doubtless causing his life-ending disease. So much for self-ascribed greatness. With two great words, Christ says all that needs to be said.

## 27:12-13

**And when he was accused of the chief priests and elders, he answered nothing.** Tell me this isn’t powerful! Jesus is not trying to clear His name? This is so strange. It took so very little to get Jesus to respond if the correct question is asked—both with Caiphas and with Pilate. **13 Then said Pilate unto him, Hearest thou not how many things they witness against thee?** Here is a magnificent reminder to those of us who follow Christ: we owe the world precious little in the area of explanation. One would wonder if they within the hearing of Jesus would have put any stock in his words anyway. It is so tempting here to go to John for Jesus’ full revelation—at least as it pertains to the Scriptural revelation regarding Jesus’ response. Maybe believers should remind themselves that their audience is primarily in Heaven. Perhaps others should remember that 1 Peter 3:15 is about defending the “hope” found earlier in that same epistle. It is the resurrection of Christ and our assurance of life after death without condemnation—it is not this obsession or preoccupation with answering every misunderstanding the world has with us.

That is to say, we don’t need to explain why we’re not racist—unless it has to do with the Gospel. We don’t need to explain why we’re not anti-homosexual—unless we can tie it in with the Gospel. We don’t need to explain why we’re anti-liberal—unless we can connect it with the Gospel. Jesus said very little and it was in regards to His identity. May we be as selective as He.

**Hearest thou not how many things they witness against thee?** “Aren’t you agitated? Don’t you have a defense?” Pilate is always hearing creative ways to be excused from horrible deaths.

## 27:14

**And he answered him to never a word;** The ESV says “not even to a single charge.” **insomuch that the governor marvelled greatly.** Or as the NASB says, he was “quite amazed.” Eight times, Matthew tells us about people being amazed: Three times to the disciples; three times to the multitudes, once to Jesus. This is the only time in Matthew that someone **marvels greatly**. It could be that Pilate is looking for a way to calm this thing down by declaring Jesus acquitted or maybe, to have his hearing put on the calendar after the Passover? But Jesus gave him nothing!

This is a huge deal, and Pilate is **amazed**. Other than Jesus’ “you said it” response to the question of His claims to be King, He said precious little. Surely, a man who is about to die would declare his innocence, right? We would expect frantic avoidance of death—especially if we are dealing with a painful death. “He knew that self-preservation is of enormous importance to all human beings, and now he was giving Jesus the chance to preserve his life.”<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.nytimes.com/2016/06/04/sports/muhammad-ali-dies.html?\\_r=1](http://www.nytimes.com/2016/06/04/sports/muhammad-ali-dies.html?_r=1) [accessed June 7, 2016].

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.albertmohler.com/2016/06/06/briefing-06-06-16/> [accessed June 7, 2016].

<sup>3</sup> Jim Bishop *The Day Christ Died* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1957), 263.

The reality is that Matthew 16 already made a connection between the Lord's death and ours. We are reticent to embrace this...yet we've been singing it for years:

*Faith of our fathers, living still  
In spite of dungeon, fire and sword,  
O how our hearts beat high with joy  
Whene'er we hear that glorious word!  
Faith of our fathers! holy faith!  
We will be true to thee till death!*

Often we desire opportunity to answer, not because it is the Father's will, but because we fear death. We just want to be understood, when we are confronted the Pilates and priests of this life, so we can make it all make sense to the lost of this world. I am sorry, we are in two separate worlds. Look at Genesis 19:4 and you will find insane people who don't want to hear simple math. They are not interested in evidence leading to logical conclusions. They hear that "transgendered women are 49 times more likely to contract HIV" and the Elton Johns of modern day Sodom say things like "well, of course they are; they are rejected from the normal work place and forced into sex-related lines of work."<sup>4</sup> What? When we hear that "1/2 of transgendered people attempt suicide,"<sup>5</sup> and the normal person says something like "that is because they have sought refuge in surgery instead of a Savior," they reply with "no, it's because after all we have done to be accepted, we don't find any acceptance after being even better people in our newly assigned gender." When we say "studies by OHSU say that every sexual encounter increases suicide ideas by 18%"<sup>6</sup> and think that it's naturally a connection between debasing the value God placed in your heart and corruption of the design to become flesh with only one person, the world says "No, there is a mental problem leading to both." Sometimes, we don't answer all the questions because the world is not ready for the answer and sometimes we don't answer because their questions are all wrong!

Then, one must consider that Jesus could have given Pilate the correct answer after He gave him the correct question, but if He did this...how do we find a Gospel? When one says "God wants all to be saved," we immediately come back and delicately remind the person that "Yes and no, He does." There are certain things He did not do to procure the salvation of some.

#### **27:16**

**And they had then a notable prisoner, called Barabbas.** Acts 3:14 says he was a murderer.

#### **27:19**

**When he was set down on the judgment seat, his wife sent unto him, saying,** Even a pagan woman could see it.

#### **27:23**

**And the governor said, Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, saying, Let him be crucified.** Genesis 19:11 speaks of those Sodomites who groped for the door to get to those who struck them with blindness. Certainly these were insane men—blinded by their blood lust. Perhaps even Romans 1:21 where those who reject the knowledge of God have "darkened hearts." Moreover Ephesians 4:19 which speaks of those who have "blind hearts" being "past feeling."

#### **27:26**

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.cnn.com/2016/05/18/entertainment/elton-john-bathroom-bill-essay/> [accessed May 30, 2016].

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.theguardian.com/society/2014/nov/19/young-transgender-suicide-attempts-survey> [accessed May 30, 2016].

<sup>6</sup> <http://researchnews.osu.edu/archive/casualsex.htm> [accessed May 30, 2016].

**Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified.**

It should be pointed out promptly here that Barabbas goes free because Jesus remains silent. Christ suffers when He did not need to. Why? In the small picture: so he could die. In the larger picture...so the guilty go free. Certainly, we understand that we guilty ones go to Heaven rather than suffer the wrath of God because Jesus did not talk His way out of this calamity.

*1 Peter 2:20 For what credit is it if, when you sin and are beaten for it, you endure? But if when you do good and suffer for it you endure, this is a gracious thing in the sight of God. 21 For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. 22 He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. 23 **When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. 24 He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. 25 For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.***