

WHEN GOD GOES SILENT

Text: John 18:28-19:9

This was the first and only time that Pilate and the Lord encountered each other face to face. The religious leaders and elders of the Jews brought Jesus bound to Pilate to be judged. Pilate didn't want to deal with Jesus at all. He first told the Jews that brought him "Take ye him, and judge him according to your law" but they refused because they replied "It is not lawful for us to put any man to death" because they did not want to defile themselves before the Passover. Pilate comes back into the judgment hall and has a dialogue with Christ that makes him uncomfortable.

Pilate: "Art thou the King of the Jews?"

Jesus: "Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me?"

Pilate: "Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me: what hast thou done?"

Jesus: "My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence."

Pilate: "Art thou a king then?"

Jesus: "Thou sayest that I am a king, To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice."

Pilate "What is truth?"

Pilate didn't see anything wrong with Jesus at all, certainly nothing worthy of death. He tries every way in the world to get the Lord off his hands. He tried to release him according to the custom of the Jews at Passover, but they cried for Barabbas. When he found out Jesus was from Galilee, he sent him to Herod hoping that he would take the responsibility. Jesus stood before Herod completely silent. He wouldn't answer his questions or perform any miracles for him, so Herod mocked Jesus and sent him right back to Pilate.

Pilate then had Jesus scourged, meaning he was brutally beaten and mocked by the Roman soldiers hoping that would satisfy the Jews and he could let Jesus live. When he brought him out beaten and bloody with a crown of thorns and a purple robe on, he cried "Behold the man!"

Then the Jews said something that really unnerved Pilate: “We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God.” **John 19:8** When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he was the more afraid; meaning he was already afraid. So, he goes right back in before Jesus and asks him “Whence are thou?” but Jesus went silent!

Why did Jesus not answer him? Because God is the one who determines how much light every individual gets. We are in darkness because of sin, but when God allows us to understand what we really are (sinners) and who Jesus really is (Savior) that is called “light”.

When God turns light on, He demands a response: He wants you to believe what He has revealed to you and respond in faith. Jesus revealed to the woman at the well that she had previously had 5 husbands and was with a man now that was not her husband. He also revealed to her that she needed living water to satisfy her. He revealed to Nicodemus that he must be born again if he wants to enter the Kingdom of God. When light is turned on, time is of the essence.

The more light a person receives, the greater the judgment on them for their unbelief:

Matthew 11:20-24 Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not: Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you. And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee.

Jesus stopped answering Pilate because he already knew what he would do and he was having mercy on him by not giving him more light! John 19:12-16 And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him: but the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar. When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha. And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King! But they cried out, Away with *him*, away with *him*, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar. Then delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led *him* away.

What happens to a person when God stops speaking to them?

- **Their heart hardens - Hebrews 3:7-8** Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice, Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness:
- **Their understanding is darkened - Ephesians 4:17-18** This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:
- **Their conscience is seared and they are given over to iniquity - Ephesians 4:19** Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. **Romans 1:28** And even as they did not like to retain God in *their* knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;