

What Would You/Me Do With Jesus?

Text: John 18:33-40 (AMP)

33 So Pilate went into the Praetorium again, and called Jesus and asked Him, “Are You the King of the Jews?”

34 Jesus replied, “Are you saying this on your own initiative, or did others tell you about Me?”

35 Pilate answered, “I am not a Jew, am I? Your own people and their chief priests have handed You over to me. What have You done [that is worthy of death]?”

36 Jesus replied, “My kingdom is not of this world [nor does it have its origin in this world]. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would be fighting [hard] to keep Me from being handed over to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this world.”

37 So Pilate said to Him, “Then You are a King?” Jesus answered, “You say [correctly] that I am a King. This is why I was born, and for this I have come into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth [who is a friend of the truth and belongs to the truth] hears and listens carefully to My voice.”

38 Pilate said to Him [scornfully], “What is truth?”

And when he had said this, he went out to the Jews again and told them, “I find no guilt in Him [no crime, no cause for an accusation].

39 But you have a custom that I release someone for you at the Passover. So shall I release for you the King of the Jews?”

40 Then they all shouted back again, “Not this Man, but Barabbas!” Now Barabbas was a insurrectionist.

Theme: John 20:31 – ‘But these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name.’

Not just to inform us, but to challenge us.

Introduction

Family, we are stepping into one of the most pivotal moments in history.

The Roman governor Pilate, Jewish religious leaders, and an angry crowd all find themselves face-to-face with Truth Himself—Jesus Christ.

Each makes a decision about what to do with Jesus.

And the real question for us today is: What will each of US do with Jesus?

Backdrop Overview

To understand John's account, let's piece together what Matthew, Mark, and Luke recorded before Pilate's interrogation:

- **Judas betrays Jesus for 30 silver coins—the price of a dead slave (Exodus 21:32).**
- **Illegal night trials were held by Jewish leaders, breaking their own laws.**
- **False witnesses contradicted themselves; Jesus declared Himself the Son of God, quoting Daniel 7.**
- **Peter denied Jesus three times; Jesus still looked at him with compassion (Luke 22:61).**
- **Pilate tried to avoid condemning Jesus, knowing He was innocent, even warned by his wife**

(Matthew 27:19 While he was seated on the judgment seat, his wife sent him a message, saying, "Have nothing to do with that righteous and innocent Man; for last night I suffered greatly in a dream because of Him.").

- **Pilate sends Jesus to Herod, who mocks Him and returns Him. Pilate and Herod became friends over rejecting Jesus**

(Luke 23:12 Now that very day Herod and Pilate became friends with each other—before this they had been enemies).

- **John skips these details to focus on Jesus' personal encounter with Pilate.**

The question remains:

"What Will YOU/Me Do With Jesus?"

John 18:33-40

- **Pilate's Question**
 - **Jesus' Responses: One by One**
 - **The Deeper Points**
 - **What it Means for Pilate, the Jewish Leaders, and Us Today**
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◆ **John 18:33 – Pilate's First Question:**

"Are You the King of the Jews?"

Pilate isn't interested in theology; he's asking:

"Are You a political threat to Rome?"

He's trying to assess whether Jesus is a rebel.

◆ **Jesus' First Response (v. 34):**

Jesus replied, "Are you saying this on your own initiative, or did others tell you about Me?"

Explanation:

Jesus flips the question!

He's exposing Pilate's motives:

- **Are you personally curious, Pilate?**
- **Or are you being used by the Jewish leaders?**

Points Being Made:

1. To Pilate:

- **This isn't just a legal question—it's a personal one.**
- **What do YOU believe about Me, Pilate?**

2. To Jewish Leadership (Indirectly):

- **Their accusations are manipulating Pilate.**

3. To Us Today:

- Is your view of Jesus shaped by others' opinions—or have you sought the truth for yourself?

◆ Pilate's Retort (v. 35):

"I am not a Jew, am I? Your own people and nation handed You over. What have You done?"

Pilate distances himself.

He basically says:

"Look, I don't care about Jewish religious squabbles. Why do they hate you so much?"

◆ Jesus' Second Response (v. 36):

"My kingdom is not of this world... My kingdom is not from here."

Explanation:

Jesus gives Pilate the answer he didn't expect:

- **"Yes, I am a King—but not the kind of king you're used to."**
- **No armies, no political schemes, no earthly rebellion.**

Points Being Made:

1. To Pilate:

- Jesus poses no political threat.

But... Jesus' Kingdom is greater than Rome.

2. To Jewish Leaders (Indirectly):

- They reject Jesus because He's not the Messiah-King they wanted (a conqueror).

3. To Believers Today:

- Jesus' reign isn't limited by governments, culture, or borders.

He's King of hearts and eternity.

We often try to fit Jesus into *our worldly categories (politics, power, control)—but His Kingdom is beyond all that.

◆ Pilate's Follow-up (v. 37a):

"So then You are a King?"

Pilate is still thinking earthly terms.

He's trying to figure out, "What kind of King exactly?"

◆ Jesus' Third Response (v. 37b):

"You say correctly that I am a King. For this reason I was born, and for this I have come into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the Truth hears My voice."

Explanation:

1. YES, I am a King—but here's My mission:

-Not to conquer by force, but to testify to Truth.

-Truth isn't an idea—it's embodied in Jesus Himself.

Points Being Made:

1. To Pilate:

- You're face to face with the Truth, Pilate.

Not political truth, but eternal, divine truth.

2. To Jewish Leaders:

- They rejected the Truth because it challenged their self-righteousness.**

3. To Us Today:

- Truth isn't subjective.**

Jesus is Truth—unchanging, personal, powerful.

In a world obsessed with “my truth” and shifting standards, Jesus stands as THE truth.

Let's stay HERE:

John 18:37 (AMP):

“You say correctly that I am a King. For this reason I was born, and for this I have come into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the Truth hears My voice.”

1) To the Unbeliever: There are people who flat out don't believe in God, His existence, His Trinity

Who they are:

They may not believe in Jesus' divinity, the Bible, or God at all. They might see Jesus as just a historical figure or moral teacher.

In this verse:

Jesus is standing before Pilate, who represents unbelief, worldly power, politics, and human authority. Instead of defending Himself to save His life, Jesus says:

“I was born to testify to the Truth.”

What is the Truth? It's not just facts or morality—it's ultimate reality, the way things really are. Jesus' message is that life isn't random, and power doesn't rest in governments or kings but in God's eternal truth, there is life after death:

God exists.

God's Kingdom is not of this world.

Jesus came to show us who God is and how to live in line with His truth and have life ETERNAL.

For an unbeliever, Jesus is saying:

"You've been listening to voices about power, success, survival—but there's a deeper reality. If you're willing to open your ears to something bigger, you'll start to hear it in Me."

It's not vague—it's an invitation to pause, think and ask:

"What if Truth isn't what I thought it was?"

2) To the Open/Curious:

Who they are, these are the people who are:

They're searching, questioning, maybe even religious but unsure. They're intrigued but haven't fully committed.

In this verse:

Notice Jesus doesn't force or argue. He simply states:

"Everyone who is of the Truth hears My voice."

This is personal—it's about a heart posture. Jesus is inviting the curious to ask themselves:

"Do I really want the truth—even if it challenges me, even if it's uncomfortable?"

For the open-minded person, Jesus is saying:

"I'm not hiding. If your heart is genuinely seeking truth, you'll recognize something in Me. Listen closely."

3) To the Believer:

Who they are:

They already trust Jesus, but maybe struggle to explain His kingship or the idea of 'Truth.'

In this verse:

For believers, Jesus' statement is an identity reminder and a mission:

Jesus is King. But not like human kings—His kingdom is built on truth, love, sacrifice, and eternal life. Don't like King, Kingdom terminology?

Jesus is our life creator, look at reality, our right now, Jesus is saying your right now is built on my creative source -TRUTH - built on LOVE, mine for my creative, built on MY SACRIFICE to fix what is broken in this life, it's a requirement, a fix you can't do, so don't "DIE" trying, built on life eternal with Me your creator.

Truth isn't relative or flexible, not your powerless "My Truth". Jesus Himself said earlier: "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life." (John 14:6)

Hearing His voice means ongoing alignment—tuning out lies, fears, and distractions to stay connected to Him.

Jesus is telling believers:

"Your job is to live in and speak the truth of who I am. Others will recognize that truth through how you live and love."

How Believers Can Clearly Explain This to Others:

Simple 3-Step Breakdown:

Jesus is King—but His kingdom is not built on force, politics, or popularity. It's built on eternal truth.

Truth isn't just information—it's a person: Jesus Himself. He shows us who God is and what life is really about.

Those who sincerely want truth will recognize His voice. It's a matter of heart, not just head knowledge.

Truth = reality as God designed it.

Jesus came to reveal reality, not just religion.

People either recognize His voice because they're open to truth—or they reject it because they're clinging to lesser "truths" (power, pride, fear, etc.).

◆ Pilate's Dismissal (v. 38a):

"What is truth?"

Pilate shrugs it off—classic cynicism.

He has power, but no anchor.

He's face to face with Truth Incarnate, and walks away.

John 18:38 – Pilate's Dismissal

Pilate shrugs off, 'What is truth?' He cynically dismisses Jesus' words, avoiding responsibility.

But Pilate doesn't stop there.

Now, desperate to avoid condemning Jesus, he offers the people a way out—a choice.

- **Pilate: Indifference, avoidance of real commitment.**
 - **Jewish Leaders: Hardened hearts, manipulation of truth.**
 - **Believers Today: Don't walk away from Truth—embrace it.**
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◆ John 18:39 – Pilate's Offer: A Customary Release

"But you have a custom that I release someone for you at the Passover; so then do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?"

Explanation:

- **Every Passover, Pilate releases one prisoner to the crowd—a symbolic gesture of goodwill.**
- **Pilate thinks Jesus is the obvious choice.**
- **Why not? Jesus is harmless, clearly not guilty, even intriguing.**

💡 **Hidden Insight:**

Pilate repeatedly tries to avoid responsibility.

- He knows Jesus is innocent.
- He knows the Jewish leaders are driven by envy (Matthew 27:18).

He's passing the decision to the people.

♦ John 18:40 – The Crowd's Shocking Response:

"Then they shouted back again, 'Not this Man, but Barabbas!' Now Barabbas was a robber."

Explanation:

Who was Barabbas?

- A violent criminal.
- Gospel of Mark says: "A rebel and murderer" (Mark 15:7).
- A man guilty of exactly what they accused Jesus of—insurrection.

They chose rebellion over righteousness.

🔑 **What's REALLY Happening in Verse 40?**

1. Pilate offers a choice:
 - o Jesus (innocent, truth-filled, eternal King)
 - o Barabbas (guilty, violent, temporary freedom)
2. The people choose Barabbas. Why?
 - o Short-term gain:

Barabbas promised force, action, rebellion.

- o Blindness & manipulation:

The religious leaders stirred the crowd (Matthew 27:20).

- o Rejection of truth & conviction:

Jesus exposed their hearts. Barabbas fit their desires.

Deep Gospel Connection:

Here's the stunner:

- **Barabbas walks free because Jesus is condemned.**
- **Jesus literally takes his place.**
- **That's substitution!**

Barabbas = Us.

- o **We're guilty.**
- o **We deserve judgment.**
- o **But Jesus stands in our place.**

Conclusion – What Will You/Me Do With Jesus?

**Pilate washed his hands,
the leaders clung to power,
the crowd chose rebellion.**

But John recorded all this for one purpose:

Every betrayal, false trial, and rejection fulfills God's plan.

> 'These are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name.' (John 20:31)

- **Will you walk away like Pilate?**
- **Reject Jesus like the leaders?**
- **Choose temporary rebellion like Barabbas?**
- **Or will you believe and have life in His name?**