

**JOHN 19:1-8**  
**BEHOLD THE MAN!**

Please turn in your Bibles this morning to John chapter 19 as we continue our in-depth study of the Gospel of John.

As we have seen over the last several weeks, Jesus was arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane and He has faced three religious trials.

The first was before Annas the previous High Priest but still the power behind the scenes, the people still looked to him for direction.

Then Jesus went to Caiaphas who was the acting High Priest and the son-in-law of Annas.

And finally, Jesus went before Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin who found Him guilty of blasphemy, of claiming to be God, and they sent Him to Pilate so He could be put to death!

Keep in mind that Pilate and Rome could care less about their religious beliefs and thus, they could not bring Jesus before Pilate with those charges. Again, it didn't matter to Pilate.

Luke tells us the charges that they came up with to have Pilate put Jesus to death. In Luke 23:2 we are told, **“And they began to accuse Him, saying, ‘We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to pay taxes to Caesar, saying that He Himself is Christ, a King.’”**

Remember, early in the morning, probably around 6 am, the Jewish religious leaders brought Jesus to Pilate, and we see the start of the three civil trials that Jesus faced.

These trials were before Rome or Rome's representatives. And we need to understand that Rome ruled with an iron fist! Thus, the charges against Jesus were serious.

What we see here is the first civil trial before Pilate. It was during this first civil trial that Pilate found out Jesus was from Galilee, so he sent Him to Herod who oversaw that region.

Keep in mind that Herod was in town for the Feast of Passover.

That was the second civil trial before Herod. And Herod wanted to be entertained by Jesus, to put on a show for him and when Herod didn't get anywhere, he sent Jesus back to Pilate for the third and final trial where this case will be decided.

Now, one more point before we move on. To know the flavor of a tea bag you have to pour hot water upon it.

How true that is with people. You tend to find out what they are like when hot water, in a sense, is poured out upon them. You find out their flavor.

And that is what we will see with Pilate, with the Jewish religious leaders. As hot water is poured out upon them, their true flavor will come out.

I have called our study this morning – ***BEHOLD THE MAN!***

It is what Pilate says about Jesus as he brought Him before the Jewish religious leaders and the crowd of Jewish people that had gathered.

I have broken down the verses we will be looking at this morning into the following main points. They are,

***TRYING TO APPEASE MAN – JOHN 19:1-3***

***BEHOLD THE MAN – JOHN 19:4-5***

***THE CONFLICT – JOHN 19:6-7***

***THE FEAR OF MAN – JOHN 19:8***

With that as our background, let's begin reading in John chapter 19 beginning in verse 1 and let's see what the Lord has for us as we study His Word and look at this topic – ***BEHOLD THE MAN!***

## **JOHN 19**

### **VERSES 1-3**

As Pilate examined Jesus, remember what he said, **“So Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowd, ‘I find no fault in this Man.’”** Luke 23:4. (See also, John 18:38, 19:4, 19:6)

And he will say it again a few more times before this trial is over. There was nothing that Jesus did that should have put Him to death according to Roman law. With Rome he was innocent but with the Jewish religious leaders, He was guilty of blasphemy, and they wanted Him dead!

And what we see here is that Pilate is trying to appease man or these Jewish religious leaders. He already had two strikes against him as the Jews complained to Rome about what he did against them, and one more and he was going to be removed. That is why he is so cautious, why he did not just let Jesus go!

And we even see this in John 18:38, where Pilate said to the Jewish religious leaders, **“.. ‘I find no fault in Him at all.’”**

So Pilate has already decided that Jesus was not guilty, but now he is going to have Him scourged!

Why have Him scourged if He is innocent? Why didn't Pilate just release Him?

Because the Jewish religious leaders and the Jewish people wanted Jesus crucified, with this scourging, Pilate could appease them, and again, to stay out of trouble with Rome. He thought a good scourging would satisfy their wanting Jesus dead!

The boiling water is being poured out upon the life of Pilate and the flavor that is coming out in his life is one of buckling under the pressure of the crowd. Instead of doing what was right, Jesus was innocent, he subjects Jesus to this third-degree punishment, this scourging with the hope that the people will look at the broken, the beaten body of Jesus and tell Pilate to let Him go.

Never buckle to the pressure of the people, fear the Lord and obey Him!

Now we might not understand that brutality of scourging because it is not done today, which is good. But with this scourging the prisoner was tied by his wrist to a post with his feet just dangling off the ground, exposing his back.

The whip or flagellum was made-up of 12 or 13 thongs with a lead ball attached to each one. Also attached to these were pieces of bone, glass and-so-on, things that would rip the flesh open when it was struck down upon the back.

The blows would start out light and they would come down harder and harder each time unless you confessed your crime or crimes. Then they would lighten up and it was the ultimate third degree to get a person to confess their crime.

This was so brutal of a punishment that 60% of those that were scourged, had those 39 lashes come down upon them, died!

Barclay makes this point, ***“It literally tore a man’s back into strips. Few remained conscious throughout the ordeal; some died; and many went raving mad.”***

And Eusebius tells of martyrs who *“were torn by scourges down to deep-seated veins and arteries, so that the hidden contents of the recesses of their bodies, their entrails and organs were exposed to sight.”*

Interestingly enough, all we are told of this brutal punishment is that they **“took Jesus and scourged Him.”**

And here is the problem for Jesus. As each blow was coming down harder and harder upon Him, all He had to do was confess His crime.

But for Jesus, He had nothing to confess, He was innocent.

And Isaiah tells us **“He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth.”** Isaiah 53:7.

He was silent because He was innocent and thus, He took the full blow of those 39 lashes! And in saying that, I think you can understand why He had a hard time carrying the cross beam for the cross to Calvary! He was so weak.

Also, we are told in Isaiah 50:6, **“I gave My back to those who struck Me, And My cheeks to those who plucked out the beard; I did not hide My face from shame and spitting.”**

And in Isaiah 53:5 we are told, **“But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed.”**

That is what our Lord has done for us, at least part of it. There is still Calvary to go.

And, like I have said, those 39 lashes that came down upon Jesus were the full blow, as hard as they could go, they didn't lighten up because Jesus had nothing to confess. He was innocent, and Pilate even said that!

And it doesn't end with this!

In Matthew 27:27 we are told that a "cohort" or "garrison" of Roman soldiers, 600 men, mocked Him, spit upon Him, placed a crown of thorns upon His head, a symbol of sin, and placed a purple robe on Him as well as beat Him up.

Now let's think about this for a minute.

Who wears crowns?

Kings wear crowns.

But this crown is much different, it is a crown of torture!

These thornbushes in the region have long, hard, sharp thorns, mostly 6 inches long but some can be as long as 12 inches!

Thus, as it was placed on the head of Jesus, it cut into His flesh! And it was kept on His head, probably until He was taken off the cross when He died!

Not only that, but they put a purple robe on Him. That is what a King would wear and yet, it was a way to mock Jesus who was supposed to be a King!

And a common practice with these Roman soldiers with their prisoners is that they would show the prisoner their fists.

Then they would blindfold the prisoner and all the soldiers would hit him with their fist but one.

Then they would remove the blindfold and if the prisoner was still conscious, they would have him guess which soldier did not hit him.

And they could never guess the right one and this continued on until the prisoner was beaten to a pulp!

Also, the verb tenses in the Greek text in John 19:3 indicates that the soldiers repeatedly came to Him, mocked Him, and beat Him with their hands. If there were 600 of them, they probably came in groups and each group did this to Jesus!

The forces of hell were having a heyday in Pilate's Hall.

Remember what we read in Isaiah 50:6, **“I gave My back to those who struck Me, And My cheeks to those who plucked out the beard; I did not hide My face from shame and spitting.”**

And in Isaiah 52:14 we are told, **“Just as many were astonished at you, So His visage was marred more than any man, And His form more than the sons of men.”**

He was so beaten and bloodied that Isaiah tells us that He no longer looked like a man!

Can you imagine the creator of heaven and earth mocked and beaten like that for us!

And, in knowing that, knowing how beaten and bloodied Jesus was at this point, I think you will understand what Pilate says next and why he said it.

Just keep in mind what Pilate is trying to do here, he is – ***TRYING TO APPEASE MAN!***

He knows that Jesus is innocent.

In Matthew 27:19, listen to this warning that Pilate was given by his wife. We are told, **“While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent to him, saying, ‘Have nothing to do with that just Man, for I have suffered many things today in a dream because of Him.’”**

Pilate is in a very difficult situation because he is never really going to appease man. And as we will see when we finish our study this morning, the problem for Pilate and for many today is – ***THE FEAR OF MAN!***

But remember that Jesus is now a bloody mess, and Pilate is going to bring Him before the crowds of people that want Him to be crucified, and as he does, he will say – ***BEHOLD THE MAN!***

Let's read on and see what that is all about.

#### VERSES 4-5

Now we have covered this a few minutes ago, but I don't think we realize the brutality that was placed upon our Lord and Savior.

In fact, the New Testament leaves out some of the gruesome details that the Old Testament speaks of, several hundred years before these things even came to pass!

What do I mean by that?

Listen carefully to another thing that they did to Jesus!

In Isaiah 50:6 we are told, "**I gave My back to those who struck Me, And My cheeks to those who plucked out the beard; I did not hide My face from shame and spitting.**"

Here we are told that Jesus had a beard and they plucked it out, pulled it out!

Can you imagine what that felt like!

I remember several years ago, before I was really gray, I was sitting down, and my wife was with me and all of a sudden I felt this excruciating pain upon my head.

As I looked, I saw that my wife's hand was close by.

So I said to her, "***What are you doing?***"

And do you know what her reply was?

Her reply was "***I saw a gray hair and was just taking it out!***"

She doesn't do that anymore or I would be bald!



Now when I think of that and then I think of what Jesus went through, they don't compare!

These soldiers were grabbing handfuls of His beard and pulling it out, and I can't even imagine what that must have been like.

Man, if I was God, I would have toasted these guys way before this!

But Jesus just kept taking it all. He came to finish the work that God the Father sent Him to do!

And remember what we read in Isaiah 52:14 where we are told, "**Just as many were astonished at you, So His visage was marred more than any man, And His form more than the sons of men.**"

I think you get the point here, but just in case you don't, The Living Bible puts it this way, "**Yet many shall be amazed when they see him-yes, even far-off foreign nations and their kings; they shall stand dumbfounded, speechless in his presence. For they shall see and understand what they had not been told before. They shall see my Servant beaten and bloodied, so disfigured one would scarcely know it was a person standing there. So shall he cleanse many nations.**"

Remember that first Rocky movie when he was boxing Apollo Creed! Rocky goes the distance in this boxing match, something that he was not supposed to do. And his face was beaten, it is bloodied, his eyes were swollen.

And when I think of that, it does not even compare to what our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ looked like!

Our Lord, our Savior, the Creator of Heaven and Earth who became flesh and dwelt among us was so beaten up, so bloodied, so battered that His face did not even resemble that of a man, let alone a King!

It is at this point, in this condition that we read in John 19:4-5, **“Pilate then went out again, and said to them, ‘Behold, I am bringing Him out to you, that you may know that I find no fault in Him.’ Then Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. And Pilate said to them, ‘Behold the Man!’”**

Now here is a question for you to think about. What did Pilate mean when he said to this crowd of Jews, **“Behold the Man!”**?

It is an interesting question.

Some say he was being sarcastic, ***“Look at this King, this man, he is nothing!”***

Others would argue and say he said something like this, ***“Look at this man, look at all he has taken, look at his condition, and yet, he is innocent and he is silent, this is truly a man!”***

We don’t know but I will say this, whatever way Pilate said this, whatever Pilate meant by it, he was more moved by the crowds than the person of Jesus Christ because he is going to be influenced by them instead of by Jesus!

So, Pilate goes before the Jewish religious leaders and the crowds of Jewish people and tells them that he is going to bring Jesus out to them.

And Pilate wants them to know that He is innocent, He did not confess to any crimes even though He was beaten so badly.

And Pilate is trying to instill in their minds that they should release Jesus, He is innocent!

Then Pilate comes back to them with Jesus, who was beaten and bloodied, disfigured from all of this.

Think about it, He did not look like a King but the walking dead, a defeated man with a crown of thorns on His head!

And I believe Pilate thought the people would have compassion on Jesus now and let Him go.

And when Pilate displays Jesus before them, he tells them, “**Behold the man!**”

Now let me share with you what I think Pilate meant by what he said. You don’t have to agree with me on this, but it does fit the picture of Pilate and what he was trying to do.

*“Literally, from the precedence of Greek classical examples, this can be translated “the poor man” or “the poor creature.” Pilate was saying, “Look at this poor, bruised, bleeding creature. Haven’t you hounded him enough?”* (R. Kent Hughes, John, p.432)

One writer put it like this. He wrote, *“The man is contemptuous. Pilate is saying in effect ‘Here he is – the poor fellow. Can you really think that such a caricature of a king is really a danger either to Israel or Rome?’”* (Tasker)

And again, I think Pilate wanted the people to look at Jesus and say to Pilate, *“Okay, He has had enough. Let Him go!”*

And Warren Wiersbe put it like this. He wrote, *“Pilate declared that he found no fault in Jesus, but his words only aroused their hateful passions more. ‘Behold the man!’ carries the idea, ‘Look at this poor fellow! Hasn’t He suffered enough? Take pity on Him and let me release Him.’”*

Keep in mind we have not even talked about the brutality of the cross, we will get to that as we continue on in our study of John chapter 19.

So as you look at all that Jesus endured, all that He went through, the beatings, the scourging’s, the pulling out of His beard, punching Him in the face, do you think God loves you?

When I hear people say that God does not love them, I realize that they truly don't know how much He really does love them. All He endured for them!

How much are you willing to endure to see someone come to saving faith?

Jesus sacrificed all so that we could live with Him, so that our relationship with God the Father could be restored and He did it all out of His love for us!

It is as Paul wrote in Romans 5:8, **“But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”**

While we were miserable, wretched sinners, God loved us so much that He gave His life for us. Never forget that.

And if you lose sight of that love He has for you, picture in your mind what Jesus looked like before these Jewish religious leaders and the crowds of Jews that had gathered! He was bloodied, beaten, I am sure it was difficult for Him to stand and Pilate, trying to get them to have pity on Jesus, says – ***BEHOLD THE MAN!***

Now as you picture this, what the Jewish religious leaders and the Jewish crowds were seeing, you think that they would have had compassion upon Jesus.

But look at how the crowds responded as we read on.

Remember what we talked about as we opened up our study. The hot water and the tea bag. Well, the hot water is being poured out upon their lives and the flavor of their life is being seen in their words and actions of both Pilate and these crowds!

In other words, we are going to be looking at – ***THE CONFLICT!***

VERSES 6-7

When you read all that is going on here you can clearly see that this is nothing more than a mob mentality here.

Again, remember the tea bag and the hot water that is poured out upon it. Whatever is in the tea bag, when that hot water is poured out, will clearly be tasted.

That is what we see here. As this hot water has been poured out upon their lives, we see the flavor that is coming forth. And that flavor that is coming forth is anger, hatred, bitterness, murder. And thus, it is not good!

Now I have to believe that some of the Jews in the crowd, as they saw this beaten and broken man, just wanted to let Him go! But the Jewish religious leaders were too powerful, and you did not want to cross them!

One commentator said, *“Some pity may have stirred in the crowd, but the priests and their immediate dependents silenced it by their yell of fresh hate at the sight of the prisoner.”* (Maclaren)

And keep in mind that Pilate has said that Jesus is innocent of any crime and yet, in their minds, they still want Him dead.

In fact, they could care less if Jesus is King or not, the bigger issue to them was that Jesus, being a man, made Himself equal with God. And because of that, they wanted Him dead!

We see that in John 19:7, as they tell Pilate, **“... ‘We have a law, and according to our law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God.’”**

And please understand that this is from the Law of God. If someone blasphemed the name of the **LORD**, they were to be put to death. And if you claimed to be Almighty God, that was blasphemy!

It is as Leviticus 24:16 tells us, **“And whoever blasphemes the name of the LORD shall surely be put to death. All the congregation shall certainly stone him, the stranger as well as him who is born in the land. When he blasphemes the name of the LORD, he shall be put to death.”**

The only problem was that Jesus just didn't just claim it, He is Almighty God!

It is as He said in John 8:24, **“Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am [He], you will die in your sins.”**

If you do not believe that Jesus is God, you will die in your sins!

In John 8:58 we are told, **“Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM.”**

The only people confused about this are those that reject what He was and is saying, that He is ***GOD!***

You see, He did claim to be God and He is! In fact, His whole ministry He was teaching that and that is what made the Jewish religious leaders so crazy, that He, being a man, made Himself equal with God. And like I have said. It was not just a claim, He is Almighty God and thus, He is innocent of Blasphemy!

And here is something strange. Pilate tells these Jews, **“You take Him and crucify Him, for I find no fault in Him.”** John 19:6.

But the Jews did not have the right to put anyone to death, capital punishment was taken away from them by Rome. So why did he say that to them?

Probably, ***“Pilate must have realized that the Sanhedrin could not execute the sentence. His apparent relegation of Jesus to them was an act of sarcasm.”*** (Tenney)

So as they see this broken, this beaten, this bloodied man standing before them, what do they say?

Listen carefully to what the crowds said in John 19:6, as we are told **“Therefore, when the chief priests and officers saw Him, they cried out, saying, ‘Crucify Him, crucify Him!’”**

Do you see what hatred does, it leads to death!

The crowds were out of control being influenced by the religious leaders, it was a mob mentality as I have said and they were now being led by their flesh, their emotions instead of by God.

Where are you at this morning with Jesus?

Are you angry with Jesus because He claims to be God, the only way of salvation?

If you are, those feelings are based on pure emotion and not in truth, just like with the religious leaders we have read about here in John 19.

Now that may anger some of you but hear me out.

C. S. Lewis, who was a former agnostic, says this in his book *Mere Christianity* regarding the evidence for the identity of Jesus. And these are powerful words. He wrote,

I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him: “I’m ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don’t accept His claim to be God.”

That is the one thing we must not say.

A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher.

He would either be a lunatic – on a level with the man who says he is a poached egg – or else he would be the Devil of Hell.

You must make your choice.

Either this man was, and is, the Son of God; or else a mad man or something worse.

You can shut Him up for a fool, you can spit at Him and kill Him as a demon; or you can fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God. But let us not come up with any patronizing nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to.

- C. S. Lewis, Mere Christianity

You see, there is no neutral ground here. You either believe that Jesus is God and paid in full the penalty for your sins or you don't.

The thing is, you then cannot call Him a good teacher if you reject Him as God, He was not a moral person because He lied or He is insane for making those claims.

Obviously, when you look at the evidence, both those statements are wrong and Jesus is God who did pay in full the penalty for our sins, the evidence supports it!

Do you remember the slogan for the state of Missouri?

It is known as *“The Show Me State!”*

I like that and that is how we should be with the Bible. You can listen to teachers, you can listen to what others say and write, you can even have your own ideas. But in the end –

***SHOW ME IN THE SCRIPTURES!***

With that said, let me show you why we can trust the Word of God, the Bible and not just believe what others are saying or you may be thinking. We have the truths of God found in the Word of God, and remember what Jesus said in John 17:17, **“Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.”**

But what is the evidence?



Here is just a little evidence, we can spend a long time looking at this. And if you want more information on the Bible, look at our Foundation of Faith series dealing with those studies on the Bible.

There are 66 books in the Bible.

They have been written over a fifteen-hundred-year time span.

They have authored by over 40 different people from various backgrounds – kings, military leaders, peasants, philosophers, fishermen, tax collectors, poets, musicians, statesmen, scholars, and shepherds.

They have been written in different places - wilderness, dungeons, hillside, palace, prison, traveling, in exile.

They have been written at different times – war, peace and prosperity.

They have been written during different moods – in heights of joy and in depths of despair, during times of certainty and during times of uncertainty and confusion.

They have been written on three continents – Asia, Africa and Europe.

They have been written in three different languages – Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek.

They have been written in a wide variety of literary styles.

They are addressing hundreds of controversial issues – marriage, divorce, homosexuality, adultery, parenting, God and-so-on.

And yet, there is one unfolding story that does not contradict itself and that is God's redemption of man predicted in the Old Testament and coming to pass in the New Testament in the person of Jesus Christ!

It is as Norman Geisler and William Nix put it, *“The ‘Paradise Lost’ of Genesis becomes the ‘Paradise regained’ of Revelation. Whereas the gate to the tree of life is closed in Genesis, it is opened forevermore in Revelation.”*

To say that there is no evidence for God or Jesus Christ is just foolish, you have to suppress the truth not to believe, and many do that.

You see the Bible is ¼ or 25% prophetic in nature.

There are over 300 prophecies of Jesus Christ’s first coming that were completely fulfilled in Him down to the tiniest detail!

Not only that but there are over 500 of His second coming that are still to come.

And there are many other prophecies that have come to pass!

These prophecies are not vague or broad in nature, but very specific. For example, His birth in Bethlehem and since there were two Bethlehems it is specific about which one. It speaks specifically of the way He was to die. It speaks of the things He was to do when He was alive and-so-on. You can check them out for yourself if you have a hard time believing.

If you are still having trouble, which is hard for me to believe, but if you are, listen to how William Ramsay was convinced and converted as he looked at the evidence.

Over 150 years ago, William Ramsay, a young English scholar, went to Asia Minor with the expressed purpose of proving that the history given by Luke in his gospel and the Acts was inaccurate.

His professors had confidently said that Luke could not be right, and he believed them.

He began to dig in the ancient ruins of Greece and Asia Minor, testing for ancient terms, boundaries, and other items which would be a dead giveaway if a writer had been inventing this history at a later date as claimed.

To his amazement, he found that the New Testament Scriptures were accurate to the tiniest detail.

So convincing was the evidence that Ramsay himself became a Christian and a great biblical scholar.

We still look upon Sir William Ramsay's books as being a classic as far as the history of the New Testament is concerned.

- Science Returns to God

And so, "**Behold the Man!**"

Look upon Him, come to know Him, for He was beaten and crucified for you, to pay in full the penalty for your sins and He is telling you not to look with disdain or sarcasm or just ignore God, maybe letting peer pressure cause you to reject Him, but receive Him as your Lord and Savior, ask Him into your life and He will forgive you of your sins!

Now, for those of you who know the Lord, are believers, maybe you have become complacent in your walk, maybe too common is the Word of God that you just read over it matter-of-factly!

God is calling to you this morning through His Word – "**Behold the Man!**"

What do I mean by that?

I mean you need to look at the Man, at Jesus, listen carefully to these words, let them pierce your heart and see the love that God has for you.

You see, we can get so accustomed to our spouses that we just take them for granted and we don't cultivate that love anymore.

What happens to a relationship like that?

It grows cold, indifferent, it will fall apart!

Thus, God is saying to us that we need to keep falling in love with Him, over and over and over and over again, as the song goes!

Look at this conflict that is going on here. We see it with these Jewish religious leaders and the crowds of Jews that had gathered. And they knew their Scriptures, they knew about what the Scriptures said regarding the Messiah and how Jesus fulfilled those things. But envy, hatred, cold hearts, indifference, caused them to come against the One who loved them and was going to die for them so that they could live with Him!

And what we see next is that the Jews throw it back into Pilate's hands, which is interesting because it looks like they are driving Pilate to do these things, and they truly were!

Listen to what Pilate says, and as you listen, understand the dilemma that he is facing.

That is why I have called this verse – ***THE FEAR OF MAN!***

### VERSE 8

Remember the Jews response to letting Jesus go. They said, “. . . . ‘We have a law, and according to our law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God.’” John 19:7.

There is no way that the Jews were going to let Pilate release Jesus. They wanted nothing to do with letting Jesus go, they wanted Him to be crucified!

And again, as you read this who seems to be in charge between Pilate and the Jewish religious leaders?

It seems like the Jewish religious leaders are in charge here and they are telling Pilate what he needs to do with Jesus!

And it is out of all of this that we see that Pilate is fearful.

Think about that for a minute. Pilate has all the power of Rome behind him and now this leader is afraid.

And please understand this was not just being a little afraid, not even close. He was *“exceedingly afraid,”* that is what these words are saying here.

Why is that?

One of the reasons was that he did not want to get in trouble with Rome again. He had two strikes against him with Rome as the Jews complained about him. And now this! He did not want to get strike three and have Rome throw him out of his position!

But I think there is more to it than just that.

I think Pilate was fearful to put a man to death who is not claiming to be a King of this world, but a King over all – *ALMIGHTY GOD!*

And he may not fully understand all that was going on, but he knew something was not right here. He knows that Jesus is innocent, there is no fault in Him at all and yet, he is being forced to put Jesus to death!

Remember what we read back in Matthew 27:19. We are told, **“While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent to him, saying, ‘Have nothing to do with that just Man, for I have suffered many things today in a dream because of Him.’”**

His wife is saying you need to let this Man go, He is innocent!

All this information that Jesus should not be put to death because He was innocent, that He should be released from this trial and ultimate crucifixion, and yet, the crowds of people drove Pilate instead of God leading him!

What does this tell us about Pilate?

That Pilate – ***FEARED MAN MORE THAN HE FEARED GOD!***

One commentator put it like this in regard to Pilate. He wrote, *“He was a weak-willed man who, like many politicians, hoped to find a happy compromise that would please everybody. The Chinese teacher Confucius defined ‘cowardice’ as ‘to know what is right and not do it.’”*

That was Pilate.

For us, each person has to decide for themselves what they are going to do with Jesus.

But let me also say this. Don’t let the crowds of people make the decision for you because too much is at stake as Pilate will find out!

Remember what Solomon said in Proverbs 29:25, **“The fear of man brings a snare, But whoever trusts in the Lord shall be safe.”**

The Amplified Bible puts this verse like this, **“The fear of man brings a snare, but whoever leans on, trusts in, and puts his confidence in the Lord is safe and set on high.”**

And lastly, The Living Bible puts this verse like this, **“Fear of man is a dangerous trap, but to trust in God means safety.”**

Make no mistake about it, the fear of man causes people to yield to human pressure and many times it results in evil or just keeps a person from doing what is right. Think about the number of people that have heard the Gospel message but because of what their family, what their friends might say, they reject Jesus and end up in Hell because of the fear of man!

And make no mistake about it, this is so important for us to understand. The fear of man will trip us up, but the fear of God will bring us to safety!

Our security needs to be found in the Lord because if we are not safe in Jesus, then the pressures of family and friends, the pressure from this world, will lead you to bondage.

I will give you an example of when I was a teenager and what peer pressure caused me to do.

I really never liked the taste of alcohol. I don't know why; I just never had a taste for it.

When I was a teenager, I worked at a movie theater, and I was way under the drinking age of 21. I was probably 16 years old at this time.

As an usher we had those red suits and even blue ones with the white shirt and the black bow tie – clip on!

Don't laugh, it was cool! Not really.

We also had a locker room to change in.

For whatever reason, my locker was the place to stash all the alcohol. Again, I just didn't like to drink and now I was in charge of the alcohol.

And guess what! Even though I hated drinking, I drank because of the pressure I felt to drink from my friends who worked at the movie theater!

In other words, peer pressure caused me to do something that I really didn't even want to do and that is how it works.

Don't let the fear of man drive you. Let the fear of the Lord guide you in all that you do!

Once again, the saddest example to me is found in those that have gone to Hell because they were afraid of what their family or friends might say if they came to Jesus and trusted Him as Lord and Savior!

Let me share this with you in regard to the fear of the Lord and the fear of man. We are told in regard to the fear of man,

It is always disastrous. Man-fearing is the deadly drive to be liked by others - to please others at all costs.

The love of human praise and recognition can take you where you do not want to go and cause you to give what you never wanted to lose.

It begins in our childhood, as we desperately seek the approval of others on the school playground - the lure of popularity. And most people (most) never outgrow this playground passion.

Everyone wants to be liked, noticed, approved of, recognized. This is natural, designed by God to drive us to Him (for only He can give what our hearts desire).

But, if we are not careful, we will look to others for this satisfaction. In so doing, we allow them to become our god - living to please them, which is idolatry of the first order.

When we look to man for our ultimate approval, we live our lives pushed by every whim of current human fad and political correctness. Others literally determine our behavior.

We compromise for popularity. It affects our work, our recreation, our religion, our emotions, and our joy.

When we think we are approved by others, we are temporarily happy. To lose this supposed acceptance is devastating. We become addicted to people's elusive opinions, each high and low fueling the addiction even more.

The tragic reality is that people's love is imperfect and always limited. We simply cannot find our soul's satisfaction there, so we learn to live with a constant ache.

Convinced that we must be liked, we try harder, look to the next new relationship, or fall into deeper despair.

The only remedy is to trust in the Lord. We must look to Him and let Him satisfy our heart, for His love *IS* perfect and complete.



He who does this is exalted. He is lifted up to a higher plane of living, far above the world's opinion and the drive for popularity and recognition.

Several versions translate this phrase to say that this man is "*safe*." He has risen above the deadly snare of man-fearing. . . .

In those arms, the need for others' approval fades into oblivion. The apostle whom Jesus loved rested on this heavenly breast. "*We have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us,*" John said. And "*perfect love casts out fear*" (1 John 4:16,18).

Why do you do what you do?

Are you driven, deep in your soul, by a restless desire to be liked by others? To receive their approval and recognition?

Look deep and long, for the seeds of this deception may be rooted and growing underneath almost everything. See this idolatry, this man worship, for what it is, and understand its deadly snare.

Then ask God to show you His perfect love. Pursue this understanding in the Scripture, experience it in prayer and genuine worship, and lean into Him.

Continually repent of looking to anyone else.

Let Him be the one God you live for and love.

Run home and be safe.

- <http://bit.ly/3HGblBu>

In other words, "**The fear of man brings a snare, But whoever trusts in the Lord shall be safe.**" Proverbs 29:25.

May we not forget that!

Pilate tried to appease man because he was fearful of man. And that did not work, and it does not work. We must trust in the Lord, allow Him to guide us and direct us in spite of what man may say about us or how they may treat us.

We are not dead fish floating down the river. We are alive and moving against the currents of this world and that is only going to be accomplished when you rest in the Lord, trust in Him and don't allow the fear of man to trip you up!

As I begin to close this morning, please understand this.

That no matter where you are at this morning, don't leave here ignoring these truths of God because He was beaten, bloodied, mocked, spit upon for only one reason, His love for you – and thus, remember those words – **“Behold the Man!”** and let them be a powerful influence in your life of God's love for you!

Listen to these words from our former President, Ronald Regan.

He said this,

Meaning no disrespect to the religious convictions of others, I still can't help wondering how we can explain away what to me is the greatest miracle of all and which is recorded in history.

No one denies there was such a man, that he lived and that he was put to death by crucifixion.

Where . . . is the miracle I spoke of?

Well consider this and let your imagination translate the story into our own time – possibly to your own hometown.

A young man whose father is a carpenter grows up working in his father's shop. One day he puts down his tools and walks out of his father's shop. He starts preaching on the street corners and in the nearby countryside, walking from place to place, preaching all the while, even though he is not an ordained minister.

He does this for three years.

Then he is arrested, tried and convicted.

There is no court of appeal, so he is executed at age 33 along with two common thieves.

Those in charge of his execution roll dice to see who gets his clothing – the only possessions he has.

His family cannot afford a burial place for him so he is interred in a borrowed tomb.

End of story?

No, this uneducated, property less young man who . . . left no written word has, for 2000 years, had a greater effect on the world than all the rulers, kings, emperors; all the conquerors, generals and admirals, all the scholars, scientists and philosophers who have ever lived – all of them put together.

How do we explain that? . . . unless he really was who he said he was.

- Ronald Regan

Think about this.

Socrates taught for 40 years, Plato for 50, Aristotle for 40, and Jesus for only 3.

Yet the influence of Christ's 3-year ministry infinitely transcends the impact left by the combined 130 years of teaching from these men who were among the greatest philosophers of all antiquity.

Jesus painted no pictures; yet, some of the finest paintings of Raphael, Michelangelo, and Leonardo da Vinci received their inspiration from Him.

Jesus wrote no poetry; but Dante, Milton, and scores of the world's greatest poets were inspired by Him.

Jesus composed no music; still Haydn, Handel, Beethoven, Bach, and Mendelssohn reached their highest perfection of melody in the hymns, symphonies, and oratorios they composed in His praise.

Every sphere of human greatness has been enriched by this humble Carpenter of Nazareth.

- Henry G. Bosch

I think the best way to close this morning is by echoing the words of Jesus as He said, **“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.”** John 3:16-18.

And so, ***“BEHOLD THE MAN!”***