

Jesus and the Rulers

Ray Stedman

I. Introduction.

A. Text: Mark 15:1-20.

B. The cross has an amazing power in our lives.

III. Four questions.

A. Why did Pilate marvel at the silence of Jesus?

1. The charges against Jesus: perverting the nation, forbidding the payment of tribute to the Romans, and wanting to be another king.
2. Jesus' response shows that He was not challenging the authority of Rome, which frustrated the priests trying to accuse Him.
3. Pilate saw through the empty charges knowing that the priests were envious of Jesus.
4. Pilate marveled at Jesus' silence.
 - a. It is possible Pilate knew that He was innocent and wanted to deliver Him.
 - b. If Jesus had only given a word, He could have been delivered.
 - c. However, Jesus gave him no word on which he could free Him.
 - d. The silence of Jesus effectively exposed the true enmity of the priests.

B. Why did the crowd choose Barabbas instead of Jesus?

1. When given a choice, the crowd chooses to release Barabbas—a murderer—instead of Jesus.
2. Ironically, his name means “son of the Father,” and some manuscripts tell us that this man was also named Jesus.
3. The crowd must have been disappointed in Jesus because He did not accomplish all that they wanted.
4. God's ways are not our ways.

C. Why did Pilate scourge Jesus before the crucifixion?

1. This was a last attempt by Pilate to awaken sympathy for Jesus.

2. The cross again brings out the hidden things of darkness, exposing the evil expediency of man.

D. Why did the soldiers mock Jesus?

1. Mockery was a strange thing for Roman soldiers in this situation.

2. The soldier's mockery was a mockery of the Jews.

3. Ultimately, we must all answer the question what we will do with Jesus—do you love Him?

4. If you do not love Jesus, you love the opposite and are condemned.

5. Surrender any wrong attitudes you might have toward Jesus today.

Application questions:

1. What do the different responses to Jesus reveal about the people surrounding His crucifixion?

2. What does Jesus silence before Pilate tell us about His purpose?

3. What attitude do you have toward Jesus right now? Reflect on what brought you to this point and spend some time in prayer giving thanks or asking for restoration.
