

MAN IN THE MIRROR

(John 19:1-16)

(Note: This long sermon was divided into two parts)

I. WELCOME/INTRODUCTION

A. Welcome

B. Introduction

1. The Story of Ping (**Slide**)

2. MP: The story of Ping is parable of redemption, in which is pictured *the absolute necessity of our seeing ourselves as sinners in need of salvation; the shock of seeing our “total depravity.”*

3. This is the thrust of John 16:7-11 (HSL)

4. Today’s text is like a mirror in which we see five things:

- *The depravity of man* (in Adam)
- *The glory of God and Christ*
- Man condemning himself by judging and rejecting Christ
- God and Christ, in love, saving a chosen people, even while “they were yet sinners.”
- A preview of the end-time Church—the Church of the last of the last days—hated, condemned, and rejected by the vast majority of mankind that has taken “the mark of the Beast,” declaring “We have no King but Caesar!” (i.e. the State).

II. OVERVIEW OF TEXT (SLIDE)

A. (1-3) Jesus scourged and mocked

B. (4-5) Jesus offered to Israel again

C. (6-7) Jesus rejected again

D. (8-9) Pilate’s fearful question

E. (10-11) Pilate’s angry threat

F. (12) The Jew’s intimidation

G. (13-14) Pilate’s final ploy

H. (15) Some among Israel take the mark of the Beast

I. (16) Pilate fails the test

III. (1-3) JESUS SCOURGED AND MOCKED

A. SCRIPTURE: *So Pilate took Jesus and had him scourged. And the soldiers wove a crown out of thorny branches, placed it on his head, and wrapped a purple robe around him. Then they began coming up to him, and saying, "Hail, king of the Jews!" and striking him with their hands.*

B. Elements

1. *So Pilate took Jesus and had him scourged.*

- Stymied by the ruler's choice of Barabbas, Pilate hopes to satisfy their bloodlust by having Jesus scourged, a manifest injustice since Pilate knows he is innocent
- A partial fulfillment of Is. 53:5 (By his stripes we are healed)
- **Depravity**: lawlessness, cowardice, man-pleasing, cruelty

2. *And the soldiers wove a crown out of thorny branches, placed it on his head, and wrapped a purple robe around him. Then they began coming up to him, and saying, "Hail, king of the Jews!" and striking him with their hands.*

- The crown of thorns was in fulfillment of OT prophecy (Genesis 22:13)
- The soldiers' mockery was in partial fulfillment of Psalm 2:1-3 and 69:12
- **Depravity**: Man in sin by nature sits in the seat of the mocker (Psalm 1:1)
- **Glory**: The sovereign God is in absolute control, even of this egregious sin, so that His enemies, all unconsciously, are doing his bidding and worshiping His Son
- **Glory**: Christ, out of obedience and love to his Father, and out of love for his people, humbly submitting to dishonor and pain (John 17:19). We shall have to do the same (Rom. 8:17; Phil. 3:10).

IV. (4-5) JESUS AGAIN OFFERED TO ISRAEL

A. SCRIPTURE: *Then Pilate came out again and said to the Jewish rulers, "Look, I myself am bringing him out to you so that you will know I find no grounds at all for a charge against him." Then Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Look at the man!"*

B. Elements

1. *Then Pilate came out again and said to the Jewish rulers, "Look, I myself am bringing him out to you so that you will know I find no grounds at all for a charge against him."*

- A further effort on Pilate's part to see Jesus freed, protect his conscience, and honor the true spirit of the law, both God's and Rome's
- MP: In the test of life we often will be left alone with our conscience in the presence of many contrary voices. We should understand beforehand that God will bring a few such tests into each persons' life. This knowledge will help us pass the test when the it comes.
- MP: There is no grounds for a charge *of any kind* against him, since he is the morally spotless lamb of God, and so perfectly qualified to be our redeemer (John 8:46; Heb. 9:14; 1 Pet. 1:19).

2. *Then Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Look at the man!"*

- The voice of Pilate, seeking to elicit compassion and mercy on the part of the Jewish rulers (and the people, if they are present)
- The voice of God, not only to Israel, but to all mankind: Look at the Man, and see that He is a) the God-Man, b) the Last Adam, c) the Man appointed to be the Messiah, the anointed Prophet, Priest, and King of His believing people, 2) the perfect and prototypical Man, after whom all men and all women should model themselves

V. (6-7) JESUS REJECTED AGAIN

A. SCRIPTURE: *When the chief priests and the officers saw him, they cried out, "Crucify him, crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and crucify him, for I find no guilt in him." The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die because he has made himself the Son of God." (S)*

B. Elements

1. *When the chief priests and the officers saw him, they cried out, “Crucify him, crucify him!”*

- “Upon seeing the object of their ghoulish envy, they begin to shriek, ‘Crucify, crucify!’ Over and again they yell these terrible words till they become an eerie ominous chant: crucify, crucify, crucify, crucify.” –Hendricksen
- **Depravity:** Man’s innate *hatred* of God (S: Rom. 8:6-8); man’s innate desire to *expel him* from his own universe, to be rid of him once and for all (Psalm 2:1-3)
- **Glory:** of God, using the wicked rulers to bring about His secret purpose and plan (John 12:33; 18:32); of Christ, seen in his willingness to submit to such a difficult death

2. *Pilate said to them, “Take him yourselves and crucify him, for I find no guilt in him.”*

- This is not a serious proposal. Neither he nor the Jews would really implement it, lest Rome should come down upon them. This is an impulsive cry of anger and frustration. He finds no guilt in Jesus, yet he doesn’t have the courage simply to release him, for fear of the Jews. Pilate is a caged animal.
- **Depravity:** Pilate continues to *evade his responsibility*
- **Glory:** Jesus humbly fulfills his, no matter how costly

3. *The Jews answered him, “We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die because he has made himself the Son of God.”*

- They refer here to the OT law against blasphemy, which was punishable by death (Lev. 24:6)
- Yes, he DID make himself out to be THE Son of God
- But no, he did not blaspheme (lie about or insult God), for a) it was true; b) the OT spoke mysteriously of God’s Son (2 Sam. 7:8-17; Psalm 2:7; Prov. 30:4; Dan. 7:13-14)

VI. (8-9) PILATE'S FEARFUL QUESTION

A. SCRIPTURE: *When Pilate heard this statement, he was even more afraid. He entered his headquarters again and said to Jesus, "Where are you from?" But Jesus gave him no answer.*

B. Elements:

1. *When Pilate heard this statement, he was even more afraid.*

- He's already afraid: He's heard Jesus performed miracles; he has been warned by his wife; Jesus has just said that his kingdom is not of this world.
- This further revelation opens his mind to terrible possibilities: Could this be a son of the gods?

Note: John 3:19: All who hear of Christ KNOW he is different, possibly divine, possibly the Savior and Judge. Therefore they fear.

- Application: Sometimes fear is from God. It is good to examine our fears: to evaluate them against God's Word, to reject false fears, to learn from true

2. *He entered his headquarters again and said to Jesus, "Where are you from?"*

- Pilate fears that he is a god, but hopes he is not. One way or another, he wants to know.

3. But Jesus gave him no answer.

- He already had told Pilate where he was from (18:36), and Pilate scourged him anyway
- Even if Jesus told him again, it would make no difference. He knows Pilate's heart.
- Application: The Lord will always answer *honest* questions, questions from anyone who fully intends to obey

VII. (10-11) PILATE'S ANGRY THREAT

A. SCRIPTURE: *So Pilate said to him, "You will not speak to me? Do you not know that I have authority to release you and authority to crucify you?" Jesus answered him, "You would have no authority over me at all unless it had been given you from above. Therefore he who delivered me over to you has the greater sin."*

B. Elements

1. *So Pilate said to him, "You will not speak to me? Do you not know that I have authority to release you and authority to crucify you?"*

- Afraid and angry, Pilate now begins to *throw his weight around*, demanding that Jesus speak on penalty of death
- **Depravity**: This is an *abuse of God-given authority*. Jesus is about to set him straight.

2. *Jesus answered him, "You would have no authority over me at all unless it had been given you from above."*

- Jesus now teaches Pilate two things: 1) God above, by his Providence, has put him in authority, in this case over Christ; and 2) God above expects all who have authority to hold it as a stewardship from Him, and to administer it wisely and justly. In this regard, Pilate is now failing miserably.
- Meditation on Authority:
 - a. All authority is from God (S: Rom. 13:1-6)
 - b. Biblically, there are several different spheres of authority (HSL: Individual, Family, Church, State).
 - c. All authority involves responsibility: a two-sided coin
 - d. We must never evade responsibility
 - e. We must never abuse authority (Matt. 20:24-28)

f. The glorious liberty of the Christian man and woman: When we evade or abuse our authority, we confess our sin, trust Christ, and get up and try again!

“For the righteous falls seven times and rises again; but the wicked stumble in times of calamity.”-- Proverbs 24:16

3. *“Therefore he who delivered me over to you has the greater sin.”*

- Pilate *is* in sin. He is evading his responsibility to administer justice, irrespective of the consequences.
- But the Jews are in greater sin, for while Providence has made Pilate an unwilling victim of his own cowardice, the Jews are maliciously driving the whole process so as to murder an innocent man.
- There is a note of compassion here. Jesus sees that Providence is putting Pilate to the test; that Pilate doesn't know what is happening or what he is doing; that he is trapped, ultimately by his own sinful fears. He pities Pilate, and in this final word invites him to rethink his course; to do the right thing no matter what.

VIII. (12) THE JEWS INTIMIDATION

A. SCRIPTURE: *From then on Pilate sought to release him, but the Jews cried out, “If you release this man, you are not Caesar's friend. Everyone who makes himself a king opposes Caesar.”*

B. Elements:

1. *From then on Pilate sought to release him . . .*

- Pilate is now determined to release Jesus, but not determined enough to release him himself. Instead, he again tries to reason with the Jews, to get them to let Jesus go. Finally, the Jews get mad . . .

2. *But the Jews cried out, “If you release this man, you are not Caesar's friend. Everyone who makes himself a king opposes Caesar.”*

- This is a thinly veiled threat. They are saying that if Pilate releases Jesus, they will go over his head and report him to Tiberius. (**Slide: H**)
- **Depravity:** The Jews utter *hypocrisy*, pretending to be a great friend of Caesar. / **Glory:** The complete sincerity and honesty of Christ

- **Depravity:** Pilate is a wretched *slave to his selfish fears*: Loss of prestige, position, property, possibly life itself.
- **Glory:** The glorious *freedom* of Jesus. He knows that God has his back, so he can dare to do the right thing and leave the results to him! We can too!

IX. (13-14) PILATE'S FINAL PLOY

A. SCRIPTURE: *So when Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judgment seat at a place called the Stone Pavement, and in Aramaic Gabbatha. Now it was the day of Preparation of the Passover. It was about the sixth hour. He said to the Jews, "Behold your King!"*

B. Elements:

1. *So when Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judgment seat at a place called the Stone Pavement, and in Aramaic Gabbatha.*
(Rev. 20)

- (Slide: The Judgment Seat; exact location unknown)
- Pilate's action reflects his determination: If it comes to it, he will indeed condemn Jesus. Inwardly, he has crossed the line.
- Nevertheless, he is not quite done trying to secure Jesus' release: If he takes the judgment seat *in front of the people*, and offers them their king one final time, perhaps the people will choose mercy, and the rulers will yet relent.

2. *Now it was the day of Preparation of the Passover.*

- John means that it was Friday, the Day of the Preparation *for* the Sabbath of the Passover week. As always, he is keen to associate Jesus' atoning death with death of the Passover Lamb.

3. *It was about the sixth hour.*

- It appears that John is using Roman time to tell us that the sentence came down near dawn, around 6 AM. If so, he may be highlighting the fact that the decision was a hasty one, without the knowledge or consent of the mass of Israelites attending the Feast.

4. *He said to the Jews, "Behold your King!"*

- Since he is out in the open, on the judgment seat, Pilate may have spoken directly to the leaders, but actually meant his words for the people, hoping they would feel pity for Jesus and relent of their desire to see him killed.
- This is not, “Look at the man; hasn’t he suffered enough? This is “Look—this is your king. He is no threat to Rome. I (and Rome) will let him be king if you want him. Are you SURE you want me to crucify him?”
- Application: Pilate has given both priest and people several opportunities to receive their king. Often—but not always—God does the same. We should respond immediately to the Gospel, honestly seeking to determine if it is true, and then courageously obeying it if we find that it is.

X. (15) JEWISH PRIESTS TAKES THE MARK OF THE BEAST

A. Scripture: *They cried out, “Away with him, away with him, crucify him!” Pilate said to them, “Shall I crucify your King?” The chief priests answered, “We have no king but Caesar.”*

B. Elements

1. *They cried out, “Away with him, away with him, crucify him!”*

- Not only the priests, but also many of the people. Neither Jesus’ disciples, nor many who hailed him at the triumphal entry, but many: Israel at large (Romans 9-11). These listened to the false shepherds instead of the Good Shepherd (John 10)

2. *Pilate said to them, “Shall I crucify your King?”*

- Lit: “Your King—shall I (really) crucify him?” A last ditch effort to save Jesus

3. *The chief priests answered, “We have no king but Caesar.”*

- **Depravity**: These men are *idolaters*; they have grievously broken (at least) the first and second commandments (Ex. 20)
- **Glory**: Then Jesus said to him, “Be gone, Satan! For it is written, ““You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve!” (Matthew 4:8-11). As before Satan in the wilderness, so before Pilate in Jerusalem: Jesus worshiped God alone.

4. The mark of the Beast (Rev. 13)

- The Beast (political face of world-system)
- The False Prophet (religious face of world-system)
- Choose you this day whom you will serve: God/Christ (Rev. 7, 144,000, sealed, marked) or . . .
- Man/Government (Rev. 13, marked: 666)
- Here, the Jewish priests functioned as the False Prophet, even as they themselves took the mark of the Beast
- The choice is ever before us, but especially at the end of the age, when the pressure to worship the State becomes intense. Beware the tendency to deify government: to look upon it as your sole provider, protector. A dreadful idolatry, embraced by many today.

XI. (16) PILATE FAILS THE TEST OF LIFE

A. SCRIPTURE: *So he delivered him over to them to be crucified.*

B. Comments:

- Pilate completely caves
- After many warnings, after many chances to do what was right, he has failed the Gospel test
- The rest of his life: 10 years in power; a cruel and foolish reign; Pilate recalled by Caligula and (allegedly) forced to commit suicide
- Wherever they are, he, the Jewish rulers, and all the people of Jerusalem are now waiting to stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ (Slide: Rev. 20). Unless the Lord returns quite soon, we too will soon be with them.

XII. SUMMARY CONCLUSION: This text and these events are a mirror. This is what we see in them:

A. **The depravity of man:** Cruelty, foolishness, duplicity, jealousy, hatred, bloodlust, murder, injustice, lawlessness, cowardice, pride, abuse of authority, hypocrisy, selfishness, and idolatry.

B. **The beauty of Christ:** Courage, kindness, responsibility, godly authority carried with a mix of strength and gentleness, compassion, self-control, endurance, patience, wisdom, and true reverence.

C. **The Savior of the World**

- Suffering for his people, so that they may escape the wrath to come and stand tall before the Judgment Seat of Christ. \

- Inviting all who are willing to come to him for salvation
- Giving all his disciples a revelation of the Man: The Pioneer of the New Humanity; the role-model that all the saints should strive to imitate, especially when they suffer at the hands of the fallen world-system . . .
- As indeed **MANY SHALL BE PRIVILEGED TO DO** one last time at the end of the age: Rev. 11:7-14 (HSL)