

# Pilate

“Lent, A Monologue”



*“Pilate went back out again and said to them, ‘I present him to you, but I want you to know that I do not find him guilty of any crime.’ Just then Jesus came out wearing the thorn crown and purple robe.”*

John 19:4-5 THE MESSAGE

“As Governor, I, Pilate, had a lot of authority and yet I was helpless when it came to releasing Jesus Christ from the men who wanted to kill him. I had been following the teachings and actions of this man as much as one could in my position, and my wife felt that he was telling the truth. When the high priests and religious leaders sent him to me, I was in an awkward situation.

“First they took him to Herod for questioning. Herod did not want to make the decisions. He was brought to me. I asked him if he was King of the Jews. He did not answer me directly; he said *‘If you say so.’*”

“He put the whole thing on my shoulders. I wanted him to deny it. Then I could set him free and tell the religious leaders they didn’t have enough evidence to call for his crucifixion.

“Again I asked him as we both heard the cry of accusations from the high priests and leaders, ‘Do you hear that long list of accusations? Aren’t you going to say something?’ If he would only defend himself. He said nothing. The more I tried to escape the situation, the deeper I was involved.

“My wife had sent me a message that she had a dream. She recommended that I get out of this somehow. She felt Jesus was telling the truth, and that he was a noble man. I only saw one chance to set him free. It was the custom to release one prisoner at the time of the Passover Feast. I asked them if they wanted to release Jesus or a prisoner named Barabbas, who everyone knew was guilty. I realized that I had been set up; I was stuck in a very bad situation. The crowd had been coached by the high priests and religious scholars. They called out that they wanted me to release Barabbas. I asked what they wanted me to do with Jesus. They all wanted him crucified on the cross. I asked for what crime, but they only shouted louder. They had no cause, no reason. I was afraid. I knew now that he was really the one he claimed to be. He didn’t claim to be an earthly king. He was not a threat to us.

“I saw that I could not win; I washed my hands of the entire matter and told the crowd my decision. I did as much as I could to make them the judge for

Jesus’ death. They weren’t concerned about the responsibility. They were willing to take the blame. I had only one choice – to release Barabbas and send Jesus to the cross.

“When they took him to Golgotha, a hill located very near to a gate into Jerusalem, I made a sign saying ‘Jesus, the Nazarene, the King of the Jews.’ It was written in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. The people would see it because many thronged to the hill to see the crucifixions. They tried to get me to change it to read that Jesus said he was King of the Jews. Then I was strong. I said ‘I have written what I have written.’ I would not change it. I tried to do one thing right, but I did so many things wrong.

“They wanted to guard the tomb. I knew that he was safe, so I told them to do what they needed to do. The guards did what the authorities wanted, but instead of attacking when the stone was moved, they realized he was who he said he was and became believers. Some told me I had been wrong to not have the grave guarded more closely, I knew that He was who He said He was. The guards were there and as I think back what a privilege it would have been to see Him rise from the grave as He had said He would do. Through His amazing grace I was forgiven.”

Pilate: Pilate’s involvement in the crucifixion is chronicled in Matt 27:2-65; Mark 15: 1-44; Luke 23: 1-52; John 18:29-38 and John 19:1-38. Paul makes reference to him in Acts 13:28 and I Timothy 6:13.

There is an old song that may resemble Pilate's thought at the time of the crucifixion. Many Bible authorities feel that Pilate did know who Jesus was, but his fear of the government kept him from taking the proper stand he felt in his heart. As we read through the words, we can also see our own weakness at times as we fail to stand up all the time when we should.

*“Stand up, stand up for Jesus! ye soldiers of the cross;  
Lift high His royal banner, it must not suffer loss:  
From vict'ry unto vict'ry, His army shall He lead,  
Till every foe is vanquished, and Christ is Lord indeed.*

*Stand up, stand up for Jesus! The trumpet call obey:  
Forth to the mighty conflict, in this His glorious day;  
Ye that are men now serve Him against unnumbered foes;  
Let courage rise with danger, and strength to strength oppose.*

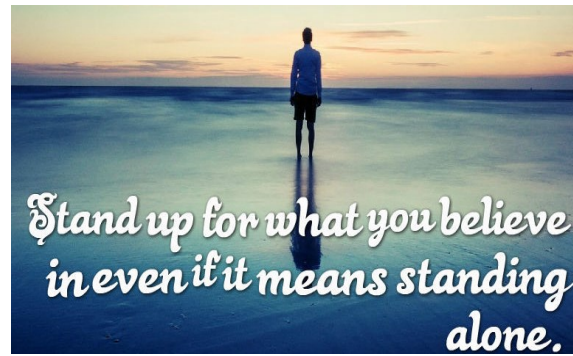
*Stand up, stand up for Jesus! Stand in His strength alone,  
The arm of flesh will fail you, ye dare not trust your own;  
Put on the gospel armor, and watching unto prayer,  
Where calls the voice of duty, be never wanting there.*

*Stand up, stand up for Jesus! the strife will not be long;  
This day the noise of battle, the next the victor's song;*

*To him that overcometh a crown of life shall be;  
He with the King of glory shall reign eternally.”*

Text: George Duffield, Jr., 1818-1888  
Music: George J. Webb, 1803-1887

Note: In some other writings, Pilate's wife is given the name Procula or Prokla. While Martin Luther thought her dream came from the devil, John Calvin argued that it was divine. Both Pilate and his wife are canonized in some eastern churches.



Did you know that Pontius Pilate's wife asked him not to do anything against Jesus: *“Moreover, while he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent a message to him, saying: ‘Have nothing to do with that righteous man, for I suffered a lot today in a dream because of him.’”*  
Matthew 27:19

*Life is full of happiness and tears; be strong and have faith.*

Prayer: Heavenly Father, You have given us so much. Your goodness is never ending and we so seldom realize all the many blessings we have received. We take them for granted. Like Pilate we sometimes let worldly treasures and positions stand in the way of doing what You have asked us to do. Please forgive our sins and help us to show Your love to others and not be afraid to tell them about Your love and forgiveness that is available to all who accept You as their personal Saviour. Amen

1. Have you ever been challenged to stand up for your belief when it was not popular?
2. Can the leader of a country stand on his own personal belief?
3. What if he is governed by a higher authority in another country?
4. Do you have a position that puts you in a place comparable to that of Pilate?
5. We seldom hear about Pilate's wife. In fact her name is not given in the Bible. Can we even begin to imagine her problem when she believed Christ was telling the truth, but her husband's job and maybe even his life depended on his having Christ killed?

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*“Forgiveness is not always easy. Sometimes it is more painful to forgive the person who imposed it than the hurt we suffered. And yet, there is no peace without forgiveness.”*  
Unknown