

Sermon Reflections

Innocent Blood (Matthew 27: 1-26)

Summary: Discover Jesus' total innocence, that he might be your guilt-bearing substitute. (He was innocent. We are all guilty.) Five testimonies of his innocence...

1. The Betrayer Confesses Jesus' Innocence (vv. 27:1-5)

- When did Judas see that he had done the wrong thing? What caused him to “change his mind,” or more literally “to be stricken with grief and remorse?” (vv. 1-3)
- What are the implications of his statement to the chief priests and elders, both with regard to himself and to Jesus? Why would the leaders not take the money back?
- What lessons can we learn from Judas about how to (or how not to) deal with our own guilt? Can you think of a time in your own life when your guilt caused you to make poor choices? What resources are available to us so we can find hope in these times of seeming hopelessness?

2. The Leaders Confirm Jesus' Innocence (vv. 27: 6-10)

- The Jewish leaders knew “from the law” the thirty pieces of silver were blood money (which they had paid to Judas) and that the coins should not be put into the temple treasury. (Dt. 23:18) Did they know “from the law” that it was wrong to kill someone who was innocent? Why did they seem to care about one law, but not another?
- Are there times when you skip over some scriptures because they don't fit your current agenda? Have there been times when you have realized that you had been blind to your own hypocrisy?

3. The Savior Defends Not His Own Innocence (vv. 27:11-14)

- When Jesus gives no answer and only says that, yes, he is “the King of the Jews,” what else is he saying yes to? Why is he willing to suffer mocking and death? (Isa. 53:7-8) Why can he not defend himself when he is accused and threatened? How does that affect you and your life?

4. The Governor Suspects Jesus' Innocence (vv. 27:15-19)

- If Pilate believed Jesus was innocent, why didn't he just “throw the case out of court?” What was his plan to feel clear of guilt himself, stay out of the dispute, and still free Jesus? (vv. 15 and 17)
- When have you ever chosen cowardice over courage when it came to standing up for Jesus or not? Do you “include Jesus in your life” to make your life better? Or is Jesus your life? Are you prepared to make a defense for the hope that is in you?” (1 Pet. 3:15) What will you say when the moment comes?

5. Crowds Ignore Jesus' Innocence (vv. 27:20-26)

- The Jewish leaders had “persuaded the crowd to ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus.” (v.20) What is your defense against being “persuaded” into a “mob mentality?” What two things did Pilate do before the crowd to claim his own innocence? v.24 Consider the solemnity of the people's response in v. 25.
- How could the innocent One take on himself guilt and death? Isa. 53:6, 11-12. How does this affect your daily life? (Rom. 8:33-34)