



FAMILY LIFE BAPTIST CHURCH

“The Last Year of the Life of Christ, Part 65”

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Informed. Insightful. Intelligent.



The Last Year of the Life of Christ, Part 65

Luke 23:22

For the third time Pilate said to them, “Why, what evil has He done?”

Thank you very much for coming to hear the message for today. Before we begin our next lesson, let us reiterate our reason for attending Church.

We attend Church to obtain the mind of Christ, meaning, to have the Bible illuminated in our minds so that we can clearly understand the principles that Jesus taught and base our daily personal decisions on those principles.

We come to Church because we want to be obedient to the Bible, which is the doctrine of Jesus Christ, in an informed, insightful and intelligent manner.

In our last lesson, I made the point that people only reject Jesus, and by extension, God’s plan, for two reasons. The first reason is that people reject Jesus is ignorance. Ignorance can be rectified by study, because there is sufficient available evidence to prove the truth of the deity of Jesus Christ and the content of the Bible beyond the shadow of any reasonable doubt. But the second reason that people reject Jesus is that people have their own plans and don’t want to live by God’s plan. They are envious of God’s control of the universe, and want to be able to make their own decisions and rule their own lives.

The Jewish leadership brought Jesus to Pilate for execution because they thought that they could stop Jesus’ infringement on their rule of the Jewish religious landscape if they could just get rid of Him. But they couldn’t tell Pilate their true reason for wanting Jesus executed, because they were sure that Pilate would not execute an innocent man for such a trivial reason.

But every Jewish objection to the ministry of Jesus Christ was trivial. Trivia is defined as matters or things that are very unimportant, inconsequential, or nonessential. In the mid-1980’s, a board game, Trivial Pursuit, became a popular pastime in the United States. The game consisted sets of cards containing questions on various topics, generally historical or scientific events, and the point of the game was to answer the questions correctly, which would allow you to move your game piece around the board. The first player to answer enough questions correctly to complete a trip around the board won the game. The ability to play Trivial Pursuit well is based upon the knowledge of trivia, that being, unimportant, inconsequential, or nonessential facts.

It is important to be able to distinguish between trivia and essential facts. Rick, Paul’s friend who has visited us several times, was conversing with a friend of his about using the Bible as a guidepost for living, particular as it pertained to marriage. Rick’s friend responded that the Bible wasn’t really a good source of information, as the teachings of the Bible were just the opinion of some men, rather than being the Word of God.



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It is a fact that each book of the Bible had a human author, but Rick's friends' assertion assumes that God did not inspire the authors of the books of the Bible to write that which He wanted written, which is an assumption that is neither proven nor true. As a matter of fact, that assumption is diametrically opposed to that which the Bible says about itself, in **2Peter 1:19-21**:

19 And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts;

20 knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation,

21 for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

The Bible itself testifies that the men who wrote it were moved by the Holy Spirit of God, the same intellectual entity whom Jesus told the disciples was going to come to them to empower them to preach the Gospel, in **Acts 1:8**:

8 But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

Not only does the Bible itself claim to be inspired by God the Holy Spirit, but the writers of the Bible provide proof for their inspiration by the fulfillment of the prophecies that they have made. The Bible repeatedly makes detailed predictions of things that are to happen in the future, even long after the deaths of the human authors, and the predictions made by these human prophets repeatedly come to pass. Dr. Norman Geisler, the former Professor of Religion at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, former President of the Dallas Theological Seminary, and President of Southern Evangelical Seminary writes in his book, *A General Introduction to the Bible*,

According to **Deuteronomy 18**, a prophet was false if he made predictions that were never fulfilled. No unconditional prophecy of the Bible about events to the present day has gone unfulfilled. Hundreds of predictions, some of them given hundreds of years in advance, have been literally fulfilled. The time (**Daniel 9**), city (**Micah 5:2**), and nature (**Isaiah 7:14**) of Jesus' Christ's birth were foretold in the Old Testament, as were dozens of other things about His life, death, and resurrection (see **Isaiah 53**). Numerous other prophecies have been fulfilled, including the destruction of Edom (**Obadiah 1**), the curse on Babylon (**Isaiah 13**), the destruction of Tyre (**Ezekiel 26**) and Nineveh (**Nahum 1-3**), and the return of Israel to the Land (**Isaiah 11:11**). Other books claim divine inspiration, such as the Koran, the Book of Mormon, and parts of the [Hindu] Veda. But none of those books contains predictive prophecy. As a result, fulfilled prophecy is a strong indication of the unique, divine authority of the Bible.



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This sermon is not the venue in which we can explore these predictions in detail, but suffice it to say that the information to verify Dr. Geisler's statement is easily available in his *General Introduction to the Bible*, which I would recommend to anyone that is interested in pursuing it further. The fact that the books of the Bible have human authors is that which I would denote as trivia, because the Bible itself and the prophecy in it testify that the inspiration for the Bible is from God.

My point is that trivial explanations are often the hiding place of people that do not want to deal with the reality of their situation. People turn to trivial facts to justify their lack of desire to do that which they should. The Jewish leaders refused to acknowledge Jesus as the Christ because His ministry began in Nazareth in Galilee, and they were hung up on the trivia that the Christ would be from Bethlehem in Judea. **John 7:40-42, 50-52** records:

40 Therefore many from the crowd, when they heard this saying, said, "Truly [Jesus] is the Prophet."

41 Others said, "[Jesus] is the Christ." But some said, "Will the Christ come out of Galilee?"

42 Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the seed of David and from the town of Bethlehem, where David was?"

50 Nicodemus (he who came to Jesus by night, being one of them) said to them,

51 "Does our law judge a man before it hears him and knows what he is doing?"

52 They answered and said to him, "Are you also from Galilee? Search and look, for no prophet has arisen out of Galilee."

Nicodemus rightly said that the Jewish leadership should examine that which Jesus was doing, but Jesus' miracles, healing the sick and raising the dead, had no effect on the Jewish leaders because they were hung up on the trivia that Jesus had come from Galilee rather than from Bethlehem. Even as they arrested Jesus, the Jewish leaders completely ignored the incident of the healing of Malchus, the servant of the High Priest that went with the men to arrest Jesus. **Luke 22:49-54** records:

49 When those around [Jesus] saw what was going to happen, [that Jesus was going to be arrested] they said to Him, "Lord, shall we strike with the sword?"

50 And one of them struck [Malchus] the servant of the high priest and cut off his right ear.

51 But Jesus answered and said, "Permit even this." And [Jesus] touched [Malchus'] ear and healed him.

52 Then Jesus said to the chief priests, captains of the temple, and the elders who had come to Him, "Have you come out, as against a robber, with swords and clubs?"



53 When I was with you daily in the temple, you did not try to seize Me. But this is your hour, and the power of darkness.”

54 Having arrested Him, they led Him and brought Him into the high priest’s house.

Jesus displayed His access to the healing power of God to the Jewish leadership constantly from the time that He first came on the scene to the time that they arrested Him, but Jesus’ ability to wield the power of God made no difference to the Jews, because they were hung up on trivia. The Jews were so blinded by their knowledge of the past that they would not look at the present standing before their eyes.

Our history is often an important thing to know, but we need to recognize that when we look at life through the lens of history, our interpretation of the correlation of history to current events may not actually be correct. That is why Pilate’s question in our text, the “a” portion of **Luke 23:22**, is so important:

22 For the third time Pilate said to them, “Why, what evil has He done?”

A couple of weeks ago, we had a discussion about marriage. I have found, through both study and experience, that people often bring trivia from their pasts into their present marital relationships. Our thoughts about the environment in which we were born and raised exert powerful formative influences over us, and we often find ourselves trying to either recreate our birth families or fix problems that we experienced in our birth families as we endeavor to create our adult families. In some cases, emulating our birth families may be healthy, but if our experiences were dysfunctional, we rather need to emulate the plan of God for marriage instead of referring back to or recreating the mistakes of the past.

The plan of God is that not that we recreate, relive or recycle the sins of the past, but that we move past the pain of our experiences to develop loving, godly relationships. Jesus Christ died on the Cross so that sins could be forgiven, and once a sin is forgiven, it is to be removed, as **Psalms 103:12** teaches:

12 As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us.

The relevant fact is, however, that the way we were raised is part of our trivia, as our past may not mirror our present experiences and may be unimportant, inconsequential, or nonessential to our current experiences as adults. Unfortunately, we have the tendency to see our formative experiences as “normal”, and even more harmfully, universal.

When we look at our spouses, we may not see them for whom they are, but rather, through the misshapen lens with which we see those individuals with whom we were involved during our formative years. And just as the Jewish leadership condemned the Christ for the trivial fact that He was from the region of Galilee rather than the prophesied region of Bethlehem, we may condemn those with whom we come into contact because of our memory of a negative influence in our past rather than on something that the person has actually done to us. I



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have often discouraged my son from getting involved with people that had certain negative experiences during their formative years, especially if they show their inability to put the past in the past and experience the present as the present. Especially in our culture, baggage from the past is a major contributor to a lack of ability to have a successful relationship in the present.

I was in a meeting on discouraging the use of alcohol among teens this week. The moderator of the meeting was giving instructions about the proper way to approach the children, and in her presentation, she used the word “authoritative” when referring to the way to approach the subject. A female attendee raised her hand to object, and told the moderator that she didn’t particularly like the word “authoritative” when referring to the interaction of parents with their children, stating that she rather thought that parents should reason with their children rather than giving them direct instructions. It came to light that she didn’t like being told what she could and could not do by her parents, and she came to the conclusion that her personal experience should be universal reality.

But **Proverbs 22:6** makes it clear that the responsibility of parents is to train children. It tells us:

6 Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it.

Proverbs 23:13-14 further clarifies that parents are to be authoritative, even to the point of physical correction of their children, as it says:

13 Do not withhold correction from a child, For if you beat him with a rod, he will not die.

14 You shall beat him with a rod, And deliver his soul from hell.

This passage of Scripture specifies that controlled corporal punishment is not abuse, but rather that controlled corporal punishment to correct bad behavior is the desired norm. The Bible specifies a rod as the implement of punishment. A rod is a round piece of wood that has a small area of impact and is designed to break if it is used with too much force; a rod is designed to create pain without injury, as the amount of force required to seriously injure someone with a rod would break the rod. But the point is that the rod is intended to reinforce the authority of the parent.

The fact that many people find uncomfortable is that authority figures are authoritative, meaning that authority figures use their authority to restrict our activities. In **Genesis 2:16-17**:

16 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, “Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat;

17 but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”



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Commandments are designed to be authoritative. Jesus told His disciples, in **John 14:15**:

15 “If you love Me, keep My commandments.

Jesus also told the disciples that even He was under authority, in **John 15:10**:

10 If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love.

So Jesus equates love for God with keeping God’s commandments. God is the ultimate authority figure. Last week, in our discussion, we spent a great deal of time on the greatest commandment, **Matthew 22:35-37**:

35 Then one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, and saying,

36 “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?”

37 Jesus said to him, ‘You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’

But, as we have seen from the lections in John, to love God means to keep His commandments. To love God means to acknowledge His authority. To love God is to refuse to hide from His authority by focusing on the trivia of our personal pasts. To love God is to reject the subjective conclusions to which we have come by our experiences in favor of accepting the objective truth of the Word of God. You cannot love God and be a moral free agent, deciding right and wrong as you go along. You cannot love God while making up commandments for yourself based upon your own subjective experiences and conclusions.

Remember **Genesis 3:6**:

6 So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.

None of the things that they saw in the Garden were actually there. The tree was not good for food, but poison. Once God pronounced sentence on them, they did not enjoy looking at the fruit that caused them to be kicked out of the Garden. After eating the fruit, their wisdom was not increased, as they stupidly hid from God as though fig leaves would keep Him from finding them.

Subjective conclusion is our real problem. Subjective conclusions lead us to envy and covet God’s rule of the universe, which manifests as our desire to redefine our reality by our own conclusions rather than by the Word of God. Over and over, we get life wrong because we reject that which God says, either because of ignorance, or because we have our own plan and don’t want to live by God’s plan. We allow trivia from the past to overtake us and remake our thinking, and then find ourselves unwilling to follow the plan of God. We saw this in the Garden. We see this in the trial of Jesus.

The story of the Roman Trial of Jesus shows us that Pilate and the Jews were unwilling to follow the plan of God. The Jews were hung up on Jesus’



origins, but Pilate knew that their objections to Jesus were trivial. But Pilate became hung up himself, because the Jews were so persistently unreasonable about their desire to have Jesus crucified. Even though Pilate had the authority to free Jesus, Pilate became intimidated when the Jews made the false accusation that if Pilate let Jesus go, Pilate was not Caesar's friend.

Jesus, however, was willing to follow the plan of God. Although He had committed no sin and although His crucifixion would be the greatest miscarriage of justice of all times, Jesus was willing to accept crucifixion because His death on the Cross would fulfill the plan of God to save the souls of all of those that believe in Him. We can see the thinking of the Jewish leaders, of Pilate and of Jesus from the lection that records the end of the Roman trial, from *Jesus Christ the Greatest Life*, which says:

Then Pilate called together the chief priests and the rulers of the people and said to them, "You brought this Man [Jesus] to me on the charge of stirring up subversion. Yet on examining Him I found no substance to your accusations. Neither did Herod because he sent Him back to us. You can see He's done nothing deserving death.

"Now, you have a custom directing me to release one man to you at Passover. So I'll punish [Jesus] and then release Him." (At the feast the governor's custom was to release one prisoner to the people, whomever they chose. At that time a notable prisoner named Barabbas was being held along with a few of his fellow insurgents. He was a robber who had been thrown into prison for an insurrection in the city and for murder.)

When the crowds had gathered and noisily asked Pilate to act on the custom, he answered, "Whom do you want me to release to you? Barabbas, or Jesus, who is called 'Messiah'?" (He knew the chief priests had handed Jesus over because of envy. And as he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent word to him: "Don't do anything to [Jesus], that just Man! On account of Him I have suffered many things today in a dream!"

But the chief priests and the elders stirred up the crowds to ask Pilate to release Barabbas to them instead, and to execute Jesus.

"Which of the two do you want me to release to you?" the governor said. "Do you want me to release to you the King of the Jews?"

They replied, "Barabbas!" They all shouted together, "Not this Man! Get rid of [Jesus], and give us Barabbas!"

Because Pilate wanted to release Jesus, he said to them once more, "Then what should I do with Jesus who is called 'Messiah,' whom you call 'King of the Jews'?"

Again they all shouted, "Let Him be crucified!" They continued crying out, "Crucify! Crucify Him!"



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For the third time Pilate said to them, “Why, what evil has He done? I don’t find that He’s done anything deserving death. So after punishing Him, I’ll release Him.”

Pilate took Jesus and had Him flogged. The soldiers took thorns, wove them into a crown, and placed it on His head. They put a purple garment on Him and said, “Hail, King of the Jews!” and kept punching Him with their fists.

Pilate then came out again and said to them, “Look, I am bringing Him out to you so you’ll know I find Him not guilty.” Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple garment. “Look at the Man!” Pilate said to them.

When the chief priests and the officers saw Him, they shouted, “Crucify! Crucify!”

“You take [Jesus] and crucify Him yourself,” Pilate said. “I find Him not guilty.”

“We have a law,” the Jews answered, “and by our law He ought to die because He claimed to be the Son of God.”

When Pilate heard this claim, he grew even more afraid. He returned to the judgment hall and said to Jesus, “Where do You come from?”

Jesus gave no answer.

“You refuse to talk to me?” Pilate said. “Don’t You know I have authority to crucify You—or to release You?”

Jesus answered, **“You would have no authority at all over Me unless it had been given to you from above. Because of this the one who handed Me over to you is guilty of the greater sin.”**

These words prompted Pilate to continue seeking ways to release Him. But the Jews shouted, “If you release this Man, you’re no friend of Caesar. Anyone claiming to be the king is speaking against Caesar!”

Hearing this, Pilate brought Jesus outside. He sat down on the judgment seat in a place called the Pavement (or in the Jewish language, “Gabbatha”). It was Preparation Day for the Passover, about six in the morning. He said to the Jews, “Look at your king.”

But they shouted, “Away with Him! Away with Him! Crucify Him!” They were insistent and shouted all the more, demanding loudly that He be crucified.

Pilate said to them, “Should I crucify your king?”

“We have no king,” the chief priests answered, “except Caesar!”

When Pilate saw he couldn’t dissuade them, but instead a riot was in the making, he took water and washed his hands in front of the crowd and said, “I am innocent of the blood of [Jesus], this righteous Man. You will be witnesses of the fact.”

All the people answered, “His blood be on us and on our children!”



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Their voices and those of the chief priests won out. So Pilate, wanting to satisfy the crowd, ordered that they should get what they demanded. He released Barabbas to them—the man they had asked for, who had been thrown into prison for insurrection and murder—but he gave in to their demands about Jesus and handed Him over to be crucified.

Then the governor's soldiers took Jesus and led Him away to the court called the Praetorium. There they gathered the whole company of soldiers around Him. They stripped Him, then again clothed Him in purple, and put a crimson cloak on Him. And they put on His head the crown of thorns they had made, and placed a reed in His right hand. They continued mocking Him, bowing in homage and saying "Hail, 'King' of the Jews!" They spat on Him and took the reed from Him and kept beating Him on His head.

When they finished ridiculing [Jesus], the soldiers stripped Him of the cloak and the purple garments and gave Him His own clothing. Then they led Him out to crucify Him.

Jesus Christ's life was about the development of relationships. Jesus was not an ascetic prophet living in the wilderness eating locusts and wild honey as was John the Baptist, but Jesus lived among the people of the Palestine and touched their lives. Jesus went to the wedding ceremonies, and when the hosts ran out of wine, Jesus changed water into wine for the merriment for the well-wishers. Jesus made Himself available to the prostitutes, who came to Jesus and repented their immoralities, as they washed His feet in their tears. Jesus attended the feasts of the tax collectors, who came to Jesus and repented, with the pledge to give their stolen profits back to the people from whom they stole them. Jesus fraternized with the fishermen, who repented, throwing down their nets and their foul language to become preachers of the gospel. Jesus walked among the blind, the deaf, the lame, the demon possessed, the sick, those that had leprosy and those that had palsy, and He restored them to perfect health. Jesus developed loving relationships with all in Jerusalem that acknowledged their need for a Savior, but all of Jesus' love was lost on those that were self-righteous and focused on trivia and self-aggrandizement that brought Jesus before the Roman procurator and bullied Pilate into crucifying Jesus. **John 15:25** records:

25 But this happened that the word might be fulfilled which is written in their law, 'They hated Me without a cause.'

The chronicling of the antisocial behavior of the Jewish leadership in the crucifixion of Jesus is recorded in the Scripture as a warning to us about our own behavior. As we contemplate the thinking of the Jewish leaders and of Pilate, let us think of our own lives and our own relationships. Think of all of the people that you hate, dislike or with whom you have an interpersonal conflict. Is the reason



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for your dislike of them valid, or are you emulating the thinking of the scribes and the Pharisees?

Has the person that you dislike actually intentionally done something to you worthy of your dislike, or is your reason for disliking them trivial, based on something that happened in your past?

Are you being influenced to dislike them because of a prophecy that you were given that you may have misunderstood or misapplied as the Jews did?

Are you being influenced to treat them unfairly by an angry mob as was Pilate? Do you have a cause, or do you hate them even as the Jewish leaders did Jesus?

Jesus gives us a commandment about our interpersonal relationships in **John 13:34-35**

34 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.

35 By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”

This commandment applies particularly in our familial situations. Paul, in **Titus 2:1-5**, tells Titus to instruct those of us that have reached the age of being able to counsel:

1 But as for you, speak the things which are proper for sound doctrine:

2 that the older men be sober, reverent, temperate, sound in faith, in love, in patience;

3 the older women likewise, that they be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things—

4 that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children,

5 to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed.

Paul also instructs us in **Ephesians 5:25, 28**:

25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her,

28 So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself.

Wives are to love their husbands, and husbands are to love their wives. Familial relationships exist so that we can model love for our children and perpetuate the commandment of Christ to love one another into the next generation. Parents are to love one another so that they can model healthy relationships for their children, not provide a negative example to lead their children into dysfunction. We ought follow the commandment of God and love one another, not stand as part of the mob and shout “Crucify Him, crucify Him”.

God did not send Jesus into the world to get even with us for our many sins, but as **John 3:16-17** tells us:



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16 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.

17 For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

Let us not re-crucify Jesus by being condemnatory to one another, emulating the irrational hatred of the Jewish leaders, but let us rather worship God by loving one another as Jesus has loved us.

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