

A Good Confession before Pontius Pilate

Scripture Reading: I Timothy 6:12-13; John 18:28-40

In I Timothy 6:12-13, as Paul encourages us to keep our priorities straight and make sure that we are fighting “the good fight of faith,” he draws attention to the fact that Christ Jesus witnessed a good confession before Pontius Pilate. It would be profitable to take some time and look at that moment when the Jews brought Jesus before Pilate to be crucified (John 18:28-40; 19:1-12). The following is a summary of what can be gleaned from those conversations. This will be followed by a “Paraphrased Dialogue.”

Read John 18:28-40

A religious war, between Christ & Satan, is often taken to the political arena. This war cannot be won by politics. Christ’s servants must not get caught up in the wrong fights. Our priority is **the truth as it is in Jesus** (Ephesians 4:17-21 & etc.). In spiritual warfare, what might look like a loss could actually be our victory, if we only stay focused on Christ and the way of the cross. Jesus Christ remained calm and gentle and never lost sight of His real purpose for being here. When it comes to the truth, expect the world and religion to always make the wrong choices. Here are a few points to ponder in Christ’s confession before Pilate:

John 18:36 – Christ’s kingdom is spiritual and eternal. Conquering earthly kingdoms is **not** on the agenda. Conquering Satan’s influence on sinful men’s hearts **is** on the agenda.

John 18:37 – Christ’s mission was to come and bear witness to the truth. The secular world will never figure it out with their wisdom and philosophy. Israel’s leaders had lost their way. They had a form of godliness, but it was a righteousness of their own making. They handled God’s words, but it was not God’s truth.

John 19:10-11 – Fighting for earthly power is vain. It is God who distributes earthly power. As followers of Christ, we will work with or around earthly government. But it is futile to work against it with carnal weapons. The battle is for the hearts of men. If we could somehow control people, against their will, we still would not have won them for Christ.

The following are Scriptures that provide good food for meditation as we contemplate the interactions of ourselves with religion and with the world.

- Titus 3:1-7
- I Peter 2:21-25
- John 16:33
- I Corinthians 1:18-31; 2:1-16
- II Corinthians 2:14-17; 4:1-6; 6:1-10; 10:3-5
- II Timothy 2:24-26
- Ephesians 6:10-20
- I John 2:15-17; 4:1-6; 5:1-5
- Matthew 16:21-27
- Matthew 26:47-54
- Romans 1:16; 10:1-4 cp. Jeremiah 2:8
- Colossians 2:6-10
- Luke 24:44-48
- Romans 8:28-39
- Romans chapters 12 – 13
cp. Psalm 1:1-6; 2:1-12; 75:5-7; 46:1-11; Mark 12:13-17

A Paraphrased Dialogue Between the Jews (Religion), Pilate (The World), and Christ
(Taken from John 18:28-40)

- Religion: We don't want Jesus. We'll go to the world and get rid of Him. Now we can get back to our religious life. (John 18:28)
- World: Isn't this a religious issue? (John 18:31)
- Religion: We need your help. We don't want to mess up our holiday. So, you need to do the dirty work here. (John 18:28-31)
- Christ: Disciples, remember I told you this would happen.
(John 18:32 cp. Matthew 20:17-19)
- World: What authority do you claim to have? Are you a King? (John 18:33)
- Christ: Why do you ask? Do you even care? (John 18:34)
- World: Normally, I wouldn't care, but there seems to be a problem among your people. Did you stir up this trouble? (John 18:35)
- Christ: I have a Kingdom with which you, Rome, and religion have nothing to do. If it was a worldly kingdom, there would have been a fight before now.
(John 18:36)
- World: So, you do have authority? You are some kind of a King? (John 18:37)
- Christ: That's right. The purpose for me being here is that I might reveal the truth. Only those who love the truth really care that I am a King. (John 18:37)
- World: Is there really any such thing as absolute truth? Look, Religion, I don't want to really get involved. Why don't you just go back to your traditions and let Jesus go? (John 18:38-39)
- Religion: Oh no, we'd rather have criminals run loose, than to let this man live.
(John 18:40)