

“Kangaroo Court!”

1. **Intro:**

- 1.1. **Compromise:** A New York family bought a ranch out West where they intended to raise cattle. Friends visited and asked if the ranch had a **name**.
 “Well,” said the would-be cattleman, “I wanted to name it the **Bar-J**. My wife favored **Suzy-Q**, one son liked the **Flying-W**, and the other wanted the **Lazy-Y**. So we’re calling it *The Bar-J-Suzy-Q-Flying-W-Lazy-Y*.” “But where are all your cattle?” the friends asked. “Well, none survived the branding!”
 - 1.1.1. Pilate sought this type of **compromise** seeking to please all!
- 1.2. After His arrest, Jesus was paraded around to 6 illegal and dishonest trials in less than 6 hours...**Justice?** More like a **kangaroo court!**
 - 1.2.1. The 1st 3 trials were **religious in nature** and held by the **Jews**, while the last 3 trials were **civil in nature** and held by the **Romans**.
 - 1.2.2. The 1st trial took place at the home of **Annas** around 2 am.
 The 2nd trial was held in the home of **Caiaphas** at 3 am.
 The 3rd trial was a formal hearing before the **Sanhedrin** at 6 am.
 The 4th trial was before **Pilate** around 6:30 am
 The 5th trial quickly occurred before **Herod**.
 The 6th trial went back to **Pilate** and was done in just a few minutes.
- 1.3. **Outline:** Pilate – **Leave me!** - Herod – **Please me!** - Barabbas – **Free me!**

2. **PILATE – JUST LEAVE ME! (1-7)**

- 2.1. **NEUTRALITY IS IMPOSSIBLE!**
- 2.2. **Lessons:** Avoiding Action; Avoiding Decision; the Sacrifice of Truth; Compromise; Capitulation; Caving in; Neutrality is Impossible.
- 2.3. (1) **To Pilate** – An intensely cruel man. During 6 years of term he had done many rash things to alienate Jewish people & make for mutual hatred.¹
 - 2.3.1. **Almost immediately on his arrival** Pilate brought the Roman soldiers, which bore **the image of the emperor**, into the Holy City. A sacrilegious act.
 - 2.3.2. They knew they wouldn’t be able to **reason** with him, but they knew they could **threaten his position** with Caesar!
 - 2.3.3. Jn.19:12 “From then on Pilate sought to release Him, but the Jews cried out, saying, **“If you let this Man go, you are not Caesar’s friend. Whoever makes himself a king speaks against Caesar.”**

¹ Griffith Thomas; pg.345.

- 2.4. (2) Jesus is accused of 2 crimes by the Pharisees:
- 2.4.1. [1] He is a **political rebel**: They say he **causes riots** and **tells people not to pay taxes** to Caesar.
 - 2.4.2. [2] He is a **religious blasphemer**: He claims to be **the Son of God**.
- 2.5. (3,4) **Are you a king...yes...I find no fault???** -
- 2.5.1. What' missing is found in Johns account (18:36) **“My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here.”**
- 2.6. **I find no fault** – Official Formula, **Not Guilty!** (see also 14,22)
- 2.6.1. According to Roman Law there was only one thing to do!...**Take his bonds off & set him free.**
 - 2.6.2. **At this point is where Pilate's breakdown occurred.**
 - 2.6.3. **He uttered the verdict, Not Guilty!**
- 2.7. (5-7) **Galilee** – plan backfires!
- 2.7.1. Galilee was known as a **troubled district**.
 - 2.7.1.1. **“You know Pilate, bad guys come from there.”**
 - 2.7.2. **But when Pilate heard Galilee he endeavored to avoid action by sending Him to Herod!**
 - 2.7.3. Pilate wanted to avoid making **serious decisions** about Jesus...many try the same today!
 - 2.7.4. **Sent (7)** – actually a technical term meaning “remitting a case to a higher court”. (not that Pilate would have admitted it was “higher”)
 - 2.7.4.1. **But basically gave the case to him completely.**
 - 2.7.4.2. **Galilee** word backfired!
- 2.8. Pilate had enough **contact** with Christ to find **light**, but was led into **darkness**.
- 2.8.1. His questions about **Truth** show he thought it **didn't exist (What is truth?)**
 - 2.8.2. His desire for **popularity** caused him to be a **man pleaser**.
 - 2.8.3. His desire to **secure his position** made him **vulnerable to others**.
 - 2.8.4. His **intellect** was stronger than his **moral sense**. (he **knew** to do right, but wouldn't do it)
 - 2.8.5. He was **blind** to Christ's beauty & authority, because he was entirely **engaged with self**.
 - 2.8.6. He was a **shirker** of responsibility. And **shirkers always suffer**.
 - 2.8.6.1. Ask Adam(*it was the woman!*), or king Saul(*What then is this bleating? the people spared the best of the sheep and the oxen, to sacrifice to the LORD your God*).
 - 2.8.7. He was a determined to **sacrifice truth** for **selfish interest**.
- 2.9. Pilate asked the **most important question** in Mt.27:22 **“What shall I do then with Jesus?”**
- 2.9.1. **Q: Have you asked yourself that question?**

- 2.9.2. Never sell your **conscience** for **convenience** like Pilate did!
- 2.9.3. His conscience must have been screaming: “Do the right thing man, though the **heavens** fall, though **hell** is moved, though **Rome** dismiss you, do the right. Stand square with your own conscience!”
- 2.9.4. **Q:** Has your conscience been telling to you about doing **the right thing...do it man!**
- 2.10. **Lesson:** The issue here seems to be one’s desire to try to **avoid** making a decision with Jesus.
- 2.10.1. Here lies the dilemma of many...“How can I hear about Him & who he is, and still ride the fence? I know, I will **not** make a decision!”
- 2.10.2. **Which they don’t realize...is a decision!**
- 2.10.2.1. Jn.3:18 “He who **believes** in Him is not condemned; **but he who does not believe is condemned already**, because he has **not believed** in the name of the only begotten Son of God.”
- 2.10.3. **Q:** Are you still dodging a decision regarding Jesus?
- 2.11. **Ps:** How did **compromise** work out for Pilate?
- 2.11.1. Extra-biblical history tells us that he lost it all very soon after this, was recalled back to Rome & was disgraced. Then suddenly history stops regarding him.
- 2.11.2. *Anatole Francois* imagined him, in his book *Mother of Pearl*, in the days after his dismissal, when a friend came up to him & asked Pilate “There was a young Galilean thamaturgist(miracle-worker), His name was Jesus; He came from Nazareth, & he was crucified for some crime, I don’t quite know what. Pontius, do you remember anything about this man?” “Pontius Pilate contracted his brows, & his hand rose to his forehead in the attitude of one who probes the deeps of memory. Then after a silence of some seconds – “**Jesus?**” He murmured, “**Jesus of Nazareth?**” “**I cannot recall him to mind.**”

3. **HEROD – JUST PLEASE ME! (8-12)**

3.1. **CURIOSITY IS INEFFECTUAL!**

3.2. *Herodian Dynasty:*

- 3.2.1. Founder – Herod the Great (died soon after Jesus birth. Killed the babies)
- 3.2.2. 2nd Generation – (Land divided amongst 3 of his sons)
- 3.2.2.1. **Herod Antipas** – (over Galilee/Perea; killed John Baptist)
- 3.2.2.2. **Herod Philip** – (East of Jordan)
- 3.2.2.3. **Herod Archeleus** – (over Judea & Samaria)
- 3.2.3. 3rd Generation – Herod Agrippa 1 & 2 (in book of Acts)
- 3.3. **This Herod**(Antipas) – was the basest of all Herod’s, cowardly, cruel, sensual. [the movie *The Passion of the Christ* did a great job depicting him]

- 3.3.1. He with **unhallowed gladness & vulgar curiosity** welcomed opportunity at last to see Jesus. (he'd been waiting since 9:9)
- 3.3.2. What a thrill for his degenerate, burnt-out life!
- 3.3.3. Herod wanted to see Jesus do a miracle!
 - 3.3.3.1. The evil king tried to make the Son of God into a **court entertainer**.
 - 3.3.3.2. He didn't treat Jesus as a **criminal...but as a buffoon!** (one who amuses others by clowning)
- 3.3.4. Jesus not only **didn't perform any miracles**, but he **didn't even speak a word** to him. [Led to slaughter, & as a sheep that before its shearers is dumb, so he opened not His mouth]
 - 3.3.4.1. {I'm sure this goaded him to carry out vs.11}
- 3.3.5. Herod had silenced God's voice...& there was nothing left but **divine judgment**. [See 1 day Jesus & Herod will **change places!!!**]
- 3.3.6. Herod had already silenced **the voice**(John the Baptist), no wonder he could not hear **the Word**(Jesus)!
- 3.3.7. Heb.2:3 **"How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?"**
- 3.4. He was motivated by **curiosity** & not by **conscience**!
 - 3.4.1. **Curiosity:** Sign in the window of an English company: We have been established for over one hundred years and have been pleasing our displeasing customers ever since. We have made money and lost money, suffered the effects of coal nationalization, coal rationing, government control, and bad payers. We have been cussed and discussed, messed about, lied to, held up, robbed, and swindled. The only reason we stay in business is **to see what happens next**.
- 3.5. **Lesson:** The issue here seems to be one's desire for Jesus to meet your needs.
 - 3.5.1. In Herod's case he sought entertainment from Him.
 - 3.5.2. **Q:** What do you seek from him?

4. **BARABBAS – JUST FREE ME! (13-25)**

- 4.1. **ESCAPE IS UNACCEPTABLE!**
- 4.2. Barabbas **deserved to die** but was set free because Jesus **took his place!**
 - 4.2.1. Set free to return to his old ways??? (we're not sure)
 - 4.2.2. He was free, but still in the bondage of sin.
 - 4.2.3. **What is liberty for?** Gal.5:13 answers this, **"not to serve the flesh but to serve others!"**
 - 4.2.4. **"For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another."**

- 4.3. Such opposites(Jesus & Bar-abbas): Both called son of the Father. [A few old manuscripts give him the name **Jesus Barabbas**. *Origen accepted as authentic*]
- 4.3.1. **Bar-abbas** = intended to set up a kingdom of the world, & fought, & blood was shed.
- 4.3.2. **Jesus** = had said, “No, that is not the way of My Kingdom.”
- 4.3.3. **Thus they make the decision between the 2 kingdoms.**
- 4.4. **There’s being such thing as being set free & being free indeed! [Story]**
- 4.5. Following three years of hazardous duty as a member of the famed Lewis and Clark expedition along the western frontier, **John Colter** turned to trapping beaver in the Three Forks area of the Missouri River, deep in Blackfoot Indian territory.
- One day, while inspecting traps by canoe, Colter and a companion were suddenly flanked by Blackfoot warriors. Colter’s friend was killed as he tried to escape, but Colter was captured. Stripped of his clothing, including his shoes, the adventurer was led out onto the prairie and then **released** as several hundred Blackfoot set off in pursuit. What followed was a legendary 11-day overland trek. Traveling day and night, Colter climbed mountains, scurried across fields, and tramped through woods, covering an unbelievable 300 miles as he **made his way to safety**.
- 4.5.1. **There’s being such thing as being set free & being free indeed!**
- 4.6. (23) **The voice of the people** – is not always the voice of God!
- 4.6.1. **Right is right** whether people are **for** or **against** it.
- 4.6.2. Pilate wanted to **do right**, but **more...**to **please the Jews**.
- 4.6.3. Pilate’s **knowledge** was sufficient, his **power** adequate, yet **preference** often decides!!!
- 4.7. (24) **The Value of a Single Act!**
- 4.7.1. **Oh how one foolish act** has changed a man’s life(prison).
- 4.7.2. Yet, it’s **not always fair** to judge a man by a single act or sudden decision. – **But it does often reveal the character of one’s life**.
- 4.7.2.1. Pilate had been preparing for **this act** by living a life of **cruelty & selfishness**.
- 4.7.2.2. The test is sure to come along that will find us out.
- 4.7.2.3. **Character & opportunity** collide to show your true colors!
- 4.7.3. Pilate made **the mistake of his life** by not standing by Jesus, by **seeing right...& not doing it!**
- 4.8. **Lesson:** The issue here seems to be one’s desire to be **free**, yet not understanding who it is **who** makes you free.
- 4.8.1. “I’ll take what you have to offer Jesus, but don’t expect me to follow you!”
- 4.8.2. **Q:** You might have been freed from **some bondage**, but have you experienced being **free indeed**, freed completely?

4.9. 3 Overall Lessons:

- 4.9.1. **Neutrality is *Impossible!*** – You must **decide** for Jesus!
 - 4.9.2. **Curiosity is *Ineffectual!*** – You must not just be **curious** but have a **conscience!**
 - 4.9.3. **Escape is *Unacceptable!*** – You must not only seek to be **free** but ***free in Christ!***
- 4.10. Job 22:21(Eliphaz) “**Now acquaint yourself with Him, and be at peace; Thereby good will come to you.**”