

The Foolishness of Sin

Matthew 27:11-31 - NCBC, October 10, 2021

Main Point: **Sin is foolish; Jesus is amazing.**

- Sin lies & falsely accuses Jesus (11-14)
 - But Jesus' kingdom is not from this world
- Sin hardens & curses you to death (15-26)
 - But Jesus is the wellspring of life and righteousness
- Sin mocks & makes Jesus into a joke (27-31)
 - But Jesus is truly King above all

Application: **Worship Jesus as your King who died for you!**

Opening Announcements:

- Everyone is invited to our **Fall Workday** this Saturday, **October 16th, from 8am to 12pm.** Families and children are welcome. Contact Tom Felix with any questions.

<<By Faith>>



Amen. Jesus is both the object and the reward of our faith, and it is such a privilege to be able to worship Jesus as our King together with you today.

Please open your Bible to **Matthew 27 verses 11-31** as we prepare for our Scripture reading today.



If you need a Bible, simply raise your hand and we will gladly give you one. If you don't already have a Bible at home that you are reading every day, please take this Bible home with you today. Use it like a mirror, to reveal how God looks at you, and then use it like a window to gaze upon the glories of Jesus and the eternity He has prepared for all who love Him.

And while you're opening to **Matthew chapter 27**, I want to call your attention what's happening in 2 weeks.



On Sunday October 24th, just 2 weeks from today, we will enjoy a Biblical Counseling Mini-conference. We are very excited to celebrate the sufficiency of Scripture and equip our church family to better minister God's Word to one another.

Now most often, conferences like this are held on a Friday night or a Saturday morning... but that can be challenging for everyone to find the time to attend.

So notice we've combined a conference format with our worship in 2 weeks to make it as convenient as possible for you to participate in this special training.

The entire conference will just be 4 hours long, and we're highly recommending that you plan to attend the entire four hours. Of course, if you can only come for part of the morning, you're always welcome. However, the entire morning will be a great encouragement to you as much as you are able to participate.

The day will begin promptly at 8am with some singing and prayers, and then I will give a message on *What Makes Biblical Counseling Biblical*. Then at 9:30am, you will choose to attend 1 of 5 breakout sessions.

Mike Hanson will be teaching a session on *Walking Together on the Path of Grief*. Shaun Lewis will be teaching a breakout on *Emotional Abuse*. A Women's Panel will speak on the topic of *Biblical Counseling Through Daily Life*. Scott Gnuse will teach a session on gender and human sexuality entitled *Guys, Gals, and God's Good Design*. And Ben Holman will be leading a breakout that provides a very practical *Overview of the Biblical Counseling Ministry at New Castle* – so you can better understand what actually happens from the time a person first expresses interest in formal biblical counseling all the way through to when they graduate from their formal counseling here at New Castle.

Every one of these breakouts will be amazing, and so the most challenging part may be deciding which ones you won't attend!!

Then at 10:45am, after more singing and praying together as a church, Ben Holman will close out our time together by preaching a message entitled *A Community of Counselors*.

October 24th is going to be a great day of worship and learning together! You won't want to miss it! Start planning now how you can get the most from our mini-conference on Biblical Counseling on October 24th!



Now let's stand together in honor of the reading of God's Word, as I read from **Matthew 27** in the English Standard Version. This is Matthew's account of Jesus' trial before Pilate immediately before His crucifixion.

Starting in **verse 11**, the Scriptures say this:

11 Now Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus said, "You have said so." 12 But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he gave no answer. 13 Then Pilate said to him, "Do you not hear how many things they testify against you?" 14 But he gave him no answer, not even to a single charge, so that the governor was greatly amazed.

15 Now at the feast the governor was accustomed to release for the crowd any one prisoner whom they wanted. 16 And they had then a notorious prisoner called Barabbas. 17 So when they had gathered, Pilate said to them, "Whom do you want me to release for you: Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?" 18 For he knew that it was out of envy that they had delivered him up. 19 Besides, while he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent word to him, "Have nothing to do with that

righteous man, for I have suffered much because of him today in a dream." 20 Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowd to ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus. 21 The governor again said to them, "Which of the two do you want me to release for you?" And they said, "Barabbas." 22 Pilate said to them, "Then what shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?" They all said, "Let him be crucified!" 23 And he said, "Why? What evil has he done?" But they shouted all the more, "Let him be crucified!"

24 So when Pilate saw that he was gaining nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, "I am innocent of this man's blood; see to it yourselves." 25 And all the people answered, "His blood be on us and on our children!" 26 Then he released for them Barabbas, and having scourged Jesus, delivered him to be crucified.

27 Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters, and they gathered the whole battalion before him. 28 And they stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, 29 and twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on his head and put a reed in his right hand. And kneeling before him, they mocked him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" 30 And they spit on him and took the reed and struck him on the head. 31 And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him and led him away to crucify him.

This is the reading of God's Word. Please be seated.

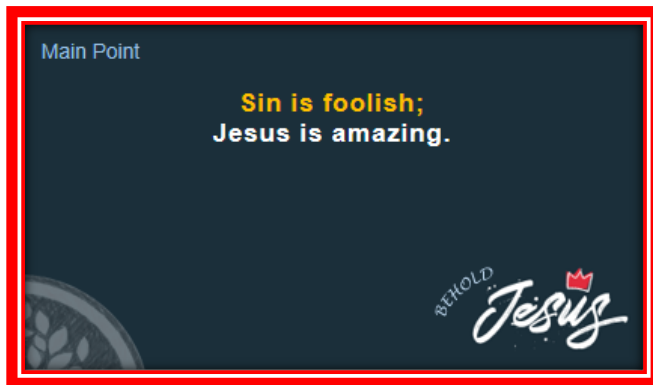
Let's pray.

Sin is stupid. Disobeying God is one of the most insane and irrational things you and I ever do.

In our honest moments we know that sin always leads to death and will always take more than it gives. And yet all of us find ourselves rationalizing and excusing our own sin at times.

Have you given any thought recently to how foolish sin actually is? How foolish it is for created beings to believe that we will actually find greater happiness and satisfaction by rejecting our Creator and willfully disobeying His commands? How irrational we are when we believe that our sin will go unpunished, or not have greater consequences than what we can manage?

Today our Bibles are open to **Matthew chapter 27** where we find Jesus just a few hours before His death. Jesus is on trial before Pilate, the Roman governor. And as we walk through this account, I want to help us see how,



Sin is foolish but Jesus is amazing.

That's the main point to take away from this text. Sin is foolish but Jesus is amazing. Because when you pay

careful attention to all the characters in this story: Pilate, the religious leaders, Barabbas, the crowd, Pilate's wife, the soldiers, and then of course Jesus Himself... the contrast between Jesus and all the rest becomes crystal clear. Sin is foolish, but Jesus is amazing.

Now of course, this is a wildly unpopular message these days. Our world applauds and promotes sin, while judging Jesus for being oppressive, backwards, and intolerant. So we need a large dose of humility as we consider today's Scripture.

We must not walk away from **Matthew 27** believing that we are better than Pilate, or the shrieking crowd, or the abusive soldiers. This text exposes the sinfulness of sin...*that is present in all our own hearts...*all while exalting the supremacy of Jesus who died in our place to set us free from sin's self-destructive insanity.

So remember the context:

The 6 Trials of Jesus		
Religious (Jewish)	1. Before Annas	Jn 18:19-24
	2. Before Caiaphas at night	Mt 26:57-68
	3. Before Sanhedrin in morning	Mt 27:1
Civil (Roman)	4. Before Pilate	Mt 27:2, 11-14
	5. Before Herod Antipas	Lk 23:6-12
	6. Before Pilate	Mt 27:15-31

Jesus had a total of 6 different trials in the hours leading up to His crucifixion. The first three trials were religious – before the Jewish leaders. In **verse 1** of **Matthew 27**, there is a reference to the final religious trial that happens

in the early morning hours, before the ruling religious council of the Jews.¹ They had finally condemned Jesus as guilty of blasphemy and deserving of death.

But Caiaphas knew that Rome must actually be the ones to execute the death penalty, or else the Jews would bring unwanted political conflict upon themselves. He reasoned that if Jesus must be killed during the Passover, at least Rome could take the fall for it.

So most likely when Judas came to betray Jesus late on Thursday evening, Caiaphas had put the Roman governor Pilate on notice... letting him know that they would soon be handing Jesus over for execution. After all, Caiaphas had secured an entire band of Roman soldiers from Pilate's command to accompany the religious leaders to arrest Jesus in the Garden.²

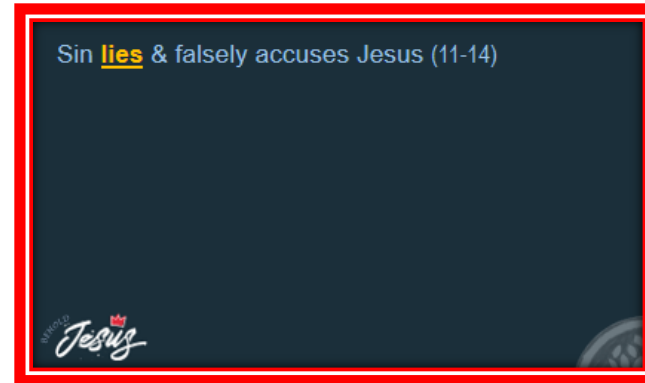
So as soon as Caiaphas and the other Jewish leaders had satisfied their own twisted sense of justice, our text today describes what happened in Jesus' Roman trial before Pilate.

First Jesus was interrogated by Pilate in **verses 11-14**, and then **Luke chapter 23** describes how Pilate sent Jesus to be examined by Herod Antipas, before Herod sent him back to Pilate for the final phase of His Roman trial in **verses 15-31**.

Today we'll just consider Jesus' 2 trials before Pilate, in order to better understand the stupidity of sin and the amazing glories of Jesus. So let's start in **verses 11-14**, where we observe that,

¹ C.f. Mark 15:1, Luke 22:66-71

² John 18:3, 12; c.f. Matthew 26:47; Mark 14:43; Luke 22:52



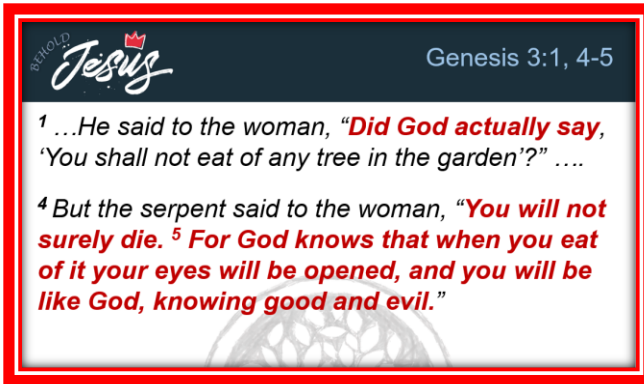
Sin lies & falsely accuses Jesus.

Loved ones, don't miss this: sin is a liar. Sin always lies. Sin never tells the truth, since sin always promises something that it cannot deliver. Sin always lies and deceives because the devil himself is a liar and the source of all lies.³ Sin always attacks the goodness of God and the authority of God.

After all, do you remember how back in **Genesis chapter 3** the devil used lies to deceive Adam and Eve and get them to question God's goodness for limiting their access to one tree?⁴

³ John 8:44

⁴ Genesis 2:17



In **Genesis 3 verse 1** the devil asked Eve,

“Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?’”

When Eve corrects the devil and says it was only one tree that they were not to eat, he deceives her with an outright lie:

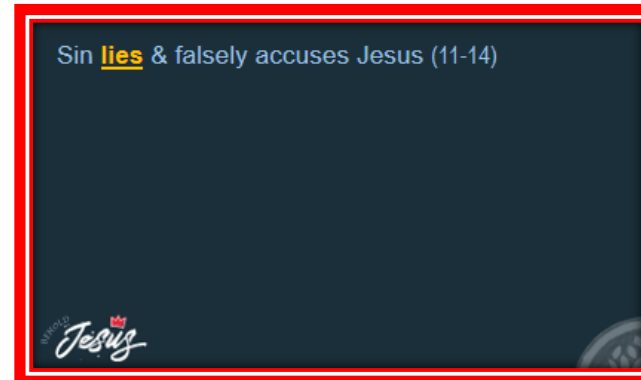
You will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.⁵

Notice what the devil did back in **Genesis 3**: he falsely accused God’s character in order to justify Eve’s disobedience. The devil promised Eve something that sounded better than what God had already given her. If she just ate from the forbidden tree, she could be enlightened. She could be like God! She wouldn’t have to depend on God anymore.

After all, God doesn’t know what’s best for her. God can’t be trusted to look out for Adam and Eve. God is selfish and not to be trusted.

And so Adam and Eve trusted Satan’s lie... fell prey to the false accusations against God Himself... and led all of humanity into sin’s death.

Therefore we must understand that whenever we sin—whenever we disobey God or reject His right to rule in our lives—we are foolishly choosing to believe a lie.

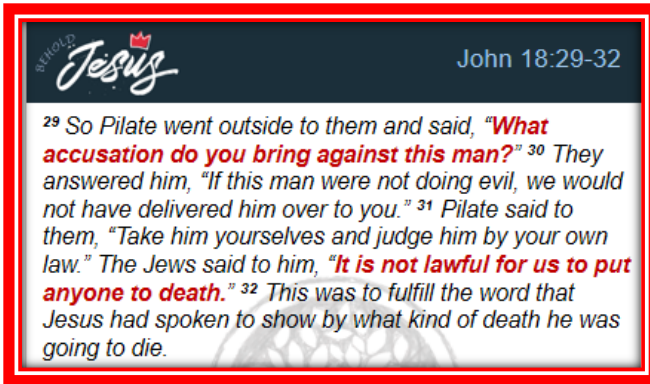


Certainly that’s what we see played out in this first phase of Jesus’ Roman trial before Pilate.

When Caiaphas delivered Jesus to Pilate, he fully expected Pilate to take Jesus and put Him to death.

But **John chapter 18** offers important details how Pilate received Jesus:

⁵ Genesis 3:4-5
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To Caiaphas' surprise, Pilate had a uncharacteristic flash of justice. Instead of simply accepting Jesus for crucifixion, Pilate started formal legal proceedings, asking,

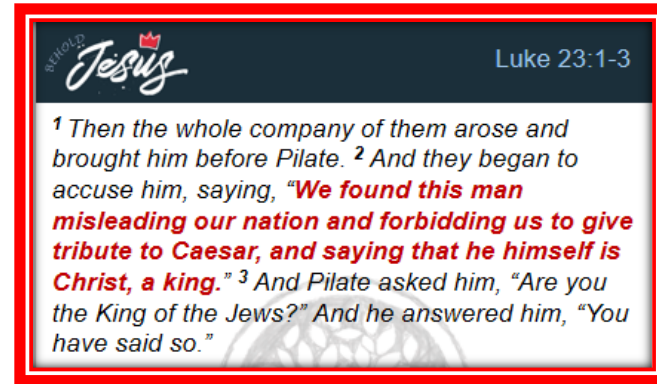
What accusation do you bring against this man?

Now Caiaphas wasn't prepared for any due legal process. So the Jews sarcastically answered,

If this man were not doing evil, we would not have delivered him over to you.

History reveals Pilate had no true concern for justice.⁶ He was wicked. But in order to remind Caiaphas that he's still in charge, he begins legal proceedings.

And since Caiaphas knew that religious blasphemy is not worthy of capital punishment according to Rome, he had no choice but to falsely accuse Jesus again:



Luke 23 records the Jews' specific 3-fold accusation:

Jesus is misleading our nation.

Jesus is forbidding paying taxes to Caesar, and Jesus is calling Himself the Christ, a king.

Sin always lies and misrepresents Jesus. Here sin lies and presents Jesus as some political revolutionary that was a threat to Rome.

But just pull the bus over for a moment and notice the ironic stupidity of these false accusations. Not only was it utterly untrue to present Jesus as a tax-evading revolutionary, but these accusations were entirely irrational for the Jewish leaders to make. The Jews hated Rome. Why would Jews ever deliver a Jewish revolutionary over to Rome?

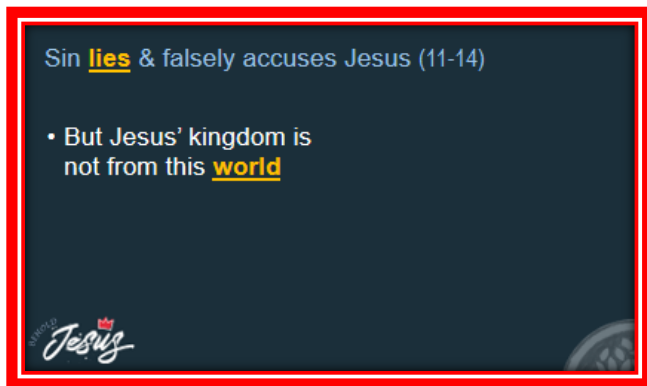
Sin never makes good sense. Sin is blinded by its selfish demands and is always foolish and irrational.

So in **Matthew 27 verse 11**, Pilate begins to examine Jesus against the Jews' lies.

⁶ Luke 13:1
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But Jesus gave no answer. **Verses 12 and 14** put great emphasis upon the fact that Jesus refused to defend Himself against all of sin's lies and false accusations. So much so that at the end of **verse 14**, Pilate himself was greatly amazed by Jesus.

You see sin is foolish, but Jesus is amazing! Pilate was well acquainted with criminals who would say or do anything when faced with the death penalty. Many would counterattack their accusers with all kinds of accusations...but Jesus gave Pilate no answer to all the obvious lies that were being charged to his account.



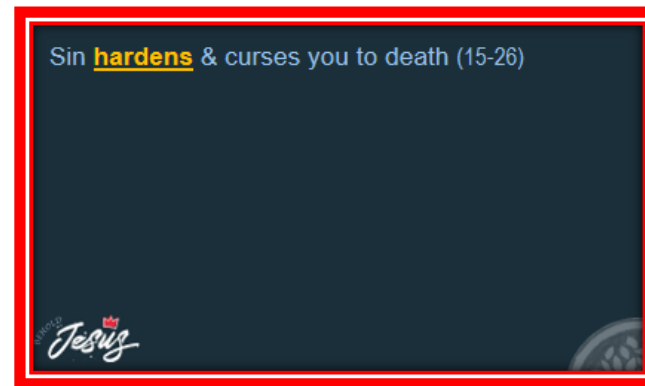
Because Jesus' kingdom is not from this world. This world is under the sway of Satan and His lies.⁷ But Jesus didn't come to condemn sinners; Jesus came to deliver sinners. Jesus didn't come to defend Himself... Jesus came to die in our place, so that liars might know the truth, and be set free by the truth.⁸

⁷ John 12:31, 14:30; Romans 5:12; 2 Timothy 2:26; 1 John 2:16, 22-23; 3:8; 4:2; 5:19

⁸ John 8:32

Listen church: Jesus is the personification of Truth.⁹ Contrary to what sin wants us to believe, Jesus is good. Jesus is in control. And Jesus can be trusted. Jesus has revealed God to us so that we might truly know Him as He is.¹⁰

Now as we consider how the crowd and Pilate response in **verses 15-26**, we can observe how,



Sin hardens & curses you to death (15-26)

Sin always changes us. Sin is deceitful, and the more friendly we become with sin's lies, the more our hearts become calloused and hardened to our rebellion against Jesus and His truth.¹¹

So this morning, if you are flirting with disobeying God, listen carefully. Sin will always take you farther than you wanted to go. Sin will make you stay longer than you wanted to stay. And sin will make you pay more than you wanted to pay.

⁹ John 1:14; 14:6.

¹⁰ John 18:35-38

¹¹ Hebrews 3:12-13; c.f. Isaiah 44:20; Romans 7:11

Because disobeying God hardens your own heart, and foolishly pursues death's curse for yourself.

You can see this illustrated in **verses 15-25** where the crowd starts out only asking for Barabbas to be released, but then becomes so quickly hardened that they end up calling for the curse of Christ's murder on their own souls, and their children's souls. So let's quickly review what happened.

Verse 18 tells us that Pilate was wise to the Jews' envy. Pilate knew that Jesus was not a political revolutionary. In **verse 23** he asks outright for any proof of evil that Jesus has done, and in **verse 24** Pilate acknowledges publicly that Jesus was innocent. So it seems Pilate never intended to actually crucify Jesus. Perhaps he thought that publicly shaming and scourging Jesus would satisfy the bloodlust of the Jews enough that he could let Jesus go, without actually following through with the execution.¹²

Or perhaps Pilate thought he could pit the Jewish leaders against the commoners who had begun to form a crowd?

After all, every Passover Pilate would release one of his prisoners as a diplomatic concession to the Jews. His soldiers had recently arrested three violent revolutionaries, and they were preparing to crucify them to make a public example out of them. Their leader was a famous guerilla fighter named Barabbas. He was a murderer¹³ and a robber;¹⁴ a real insurrectionist.¹⁵

¹² Luke 23:14-16, 22

¹³ Mark 15:7

¹⁴ John 18:40

So Pilate thought – let's take this decision out of my hands and put it into the hands of the public. Certainly the crowds will choose to release Jesus the Messiah rather than Barabbas the murderer!

Remember, Jesus was very popular among the common people. He had healed many of them. And everyone knew that Barabbas was a despised criminal. Even Rome-haters had to admit that Barabbas and his followers were selfish and against all that was good.

But **verse 19** says that while Pilate was sitting on the judgment seat, waiting for the crowd's choice,

His wife interrupted saying,

Having nothing to do with that righteous man, for I have suffered much because of Him today in a dream.

In **verse 20**, this distraction provided just the opportunity that the chief priests and the elders needed to persuade the crowd to ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus.

Which, by the way, shows us another aspect of sin's foolishness. Given a choice, sin will always follow the crowd rather than Jesus. Sin loves company. Sin always fears people more than God, and so the religious leaders have no problem employing a mob mentality to turn people against Jesus whose now swollen face is covered in blood and spit.¹⁶

¹⁵ Luke 23:25

¹⁶ Matthew 26:67

So, when Pilate returns to the judgment seat in **verse 21** to get the crowd's decision, the crowd demands to release *Barabbas!*

Pilate's surprise is evident. In **verse 22** he asks,

Then what shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?

And they all said, *Let him be crucified.*

And Pilate said, *Why? What evil has He done?*

But the hearts of the people were now sufficiently hardened to the point that they could not be reasoned away from their hatred of God.

Verse 24 makes it clear that Pilate recognized a riot was starting, and this was the one thing his own political career could not afford. Already Pilate had gotten flack from the Emperor about not being able to maintain control over Judea, so just one more riot would likely be enough to terminate his appointment as governor.

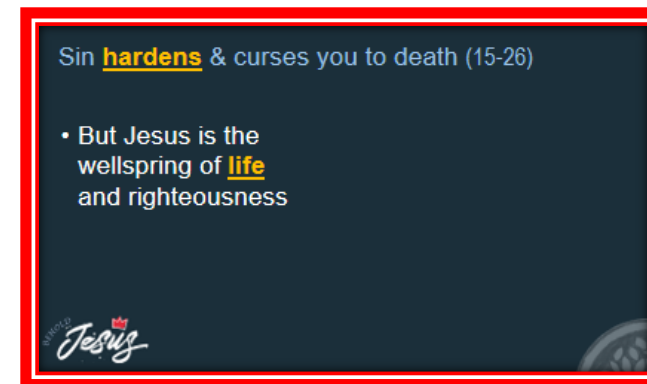
So here Pilate bows at the altar of "political correctness," and willfully follows sin's foolish path by choosing to do what is easy rather than what is right. He washes his hands, as if to absolve himself for the guilt that is rightly his, and uses the exact same words the religious leaders said when Judas came and acknowledged that he had done wrong, "See to it yourselves."¹⁷

And sin has made the crowd so irrational by this point, they have no problem shouting out a curse upon their

own souls and the souls of their children for their rejection of Jesus.

Dear friends, can we learn from the foolishness of sin? Sin hardens your soul, and only rewards you with the curse of eternal death and condemnation.

Sin is foolish, but notice that Jesus is amazing. Here in these verses we see proof that,



Jesus is the wellspring of life and righteousness

Pilate testifies to the innocence of Jesus. Pilate's wife testifies to the righteousness of Jesus.

So listen carefully to me: when you cling to sin, you forfeit the life and righteousness that Jesus is offering you.¹⁸ You can't give yourself to the practice of sin without bringing the curse of eternal death upon your soul.

Dear sinners, come awake from sin's lies and deception today! Eternal life is only found through faith's

¹⁷ Matthew 27:4

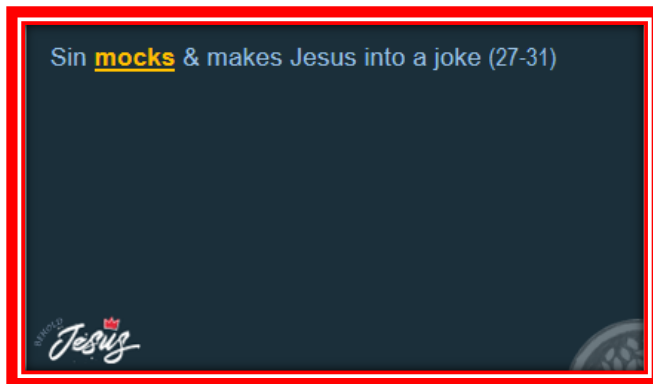
¹⁸ Jonah 2:8; 1 John 3:8

submission to Jesus! Righteousness is only found in Jesus' life. Repent from your sin... turn from your selfishness and pride and find the eternal life and righteousness that Jesus gives to all who believe on Him.

It's very rare to meet anyone who wants to go to hell. But it's quite common to meet people who aren't quite ready to submit to the Lordship of Jesus with their entire life yet.

So do not allow your hearts to be hardened by the deceptiveness of sin. Only Jesus is the wellspring of eternal life. Only Jesus can make you righteous. Believe in His death and resurrection. Ask God to forgive your sins and give you a brand new heart. For there's no one more attractive in all His glory than Jesus!

Finally, I want to just highlight one more way that sin shows itself foolish. From the soldiers' mocking of Jesus in **verses 27-31** we learn that,



Sin mocks & makes Jesus into a joke (27-31)

Sin is always proud, but Jesus is very humble. Sin foolishly causes me to think that I know better than Jesus, or that I'm more powerful than Jesus. But of course both of these lies couldn't be farther from the truth.

In **verse 27** after Pilate pronounces his final verdict, releases Barabbas and delivers Jesus over for crucifixion, the entire battalion of 600 Roman soldiers begins to mock Jesus. By this time Jesus' body had been ripped open and bloodied by the violent scourging that Pilate enforced in **verse 26**.

Here sin's proud sarcasm reaches new heights as the soldiers strip Jesus naked, and then put an old soldier's cloak around him. They twisted together a thorny branch to make their own version of Caesar's wreath and pressed it hard upon His head. They forced Jesus to hold a thin stick, which mimicked a king's scepter, or symbol of authority and power. And then to complete their joke, they knelt down before Jesus saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!"

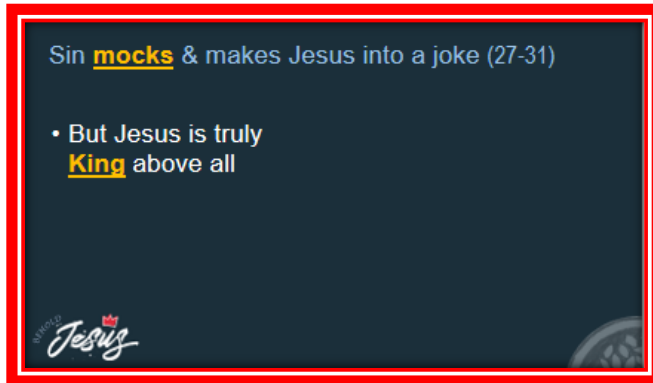
30 years earlier wise men had come from the east asking Herod the Great to show them the one who had been born "King of the Jews" that they might go and worship Him.¹⁹ Now Jesus was receiving the only coronation that sin could give... the shameful violence and mockery of fools.

It hurts to imagine the dark violence and evil of this scene, doesn't it? But we must not be too quick to judge these soldiers. We too are sinners.

¹⁹ Matthew 2:2

And sin always mocks and makes Jesus into a joke. Sin always spits in Jesus' face. My sin, and your sin, makes a mockery out of Jesus being King.

But you know what church? Where our sin abounds, the grace of Jesus abounds even more!²⁰ Because even when sin tries to mock the authority of Jesus,



Jesus is truly King above all.

Jesus is amazing. Jesus is a humble King. Jesus voluntarily took the form of a servant, and willingly gave His life²¹ to pay for the sins of these soldiers, and for my sins, and your sins, and the sins of the whole world – so that whoever would believe on Jesus Christ, would not perish, but have everlasting life!²² Isn't Jesus amazing?

But sin is stupid. Only a fool would mock the King of kings and Lord of lords. Only a fool would mock the One

who possesses the authority to forgive our sins and grant us eternal life forever with Him.²³

O church, as you consider afresh the sinfulness of sin, may you also glory in the wonders of King Jesus!



Sin is foolish but Jesus is amazing.

Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life.²⁴ Jesus is to all who believe on Him wisdom from God, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.²⁵ Jesus is our peace,²⁶ and our eternal hope.²⁷

In Jesus' bloody trial and crucifixion, we see Jesus paying the penalty for sin. But it was not His own sin that He was paying for... since Jesus never sinned.²⁸ Jesus was paying for our sins, church. Jesus was willingly dying in our place so that we might be saved from the wrath of God.²⁹

²⁰ Romans 5:20

²¹ Philippians 2:7-8

²² John 3:16

²³ Matthew 9:6-7; 28:18

²⁴ John 14:6

²⁵ 1 Corinthians 1:30

²⁶ Romans 5:1; Ephesians 2:13-22

²⁷ 1 Timothy 1:1; Titus 2:13

²⁸ Hebrews 4:15

²⁹ Romans 5:9

So how will you respond today? Can I urge you to turn from your sin in repentance and,



Worship Jesus as your King who died for you!

After all, sin is a liar. Sin will always diminish the goodness of God and the grace of God and the power of God to forgive sinners like me and you, and welcome us into eternal habitations of joy forever with Him.

Sin will always harden your soul through its deception, and try to convince you that you've gone too far, and you could never be forgiven or restored back to God now.

Sin will always turn the grace of God into a joke. Sin will try to make you believe that your sins are stronger than God's grace. Sin will try to convince you that Satan has won.

But church... please listen: Sin is foolish. But Jesus is amazing. Jesus is a Humble King. Jesus is a servant King. Jesus is a forgiving King. And when Jesus says that there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, He means it!³⁰ When Jesus says that He will never cast out anyone who comes to Him by faith, He means it!³¹ When Jesus died and rose again, sin died.

³⁰ Romans 8:1
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And Jesus is now the wellspring of life and righteousness for all who will believe that He is God, and joyfully submit to His kingly rule.

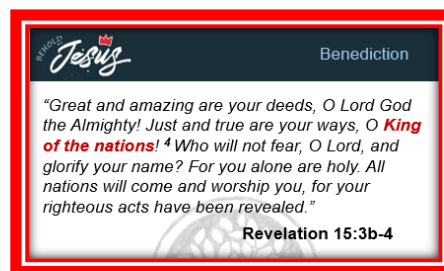


Will you worship Jesus today with joyful repentance and faith? Jesus died and rose again in your place to become the answer for your sin. He is so worthy!!

Let's pray.

<<The Wonderful Cross>>

Let's pray our benediction together:



Great and amazing are your deeds, O Lord God the Almighty! Just and true are your ways, O King of the nations! Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify your name? For you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship you, for your righteous acts have been revealed.
Revelation 15:3b-4

³¹ John 6:37

Recommended Resources on Sin's Foolishness:

- Psalm 22:6
- Proverbs 13:13-21
- Isaiah 1:3; 53:3-12
- Jeremiah 4:22; 10:2-10; 13:23; 51:17
- Matthew 2:2; 27:37
- Mark 15:1-20
- Luke 23:1-25
- John 18:28-19:17
- Romans 5:8-10
- 2 Corinthians 5:21; 13:4
- Philippians 2:7-8

- <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/kevin-deyoung/the-stupidity-of-sin/>
- <https://www.desiringgod.org/interviews/whats-the-difference-between-foolish-and-sinful>
- <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/the-insanity-of-trusting-yourself>

- *Spectacular Sins*, John Piper
- *The Enemy Within*, Kris Lundgaard
- *Living the Cross-Centered Life*, CJ Mahaney
- *Gospel Treason*, Brad Bigney

Growing Deeper: Life Group Questions

1. Read John 18:28-38. Why didn't Jesus seek to defend Himself before Pilate? What is Jesus' relationship with truth? (c.f. John 1:14; 8:44-47; 14:6)
2. Compare Luke 23:2, 23:19 and 23:25. Explain the irony of the Jew's false accusations against Jesus compared to Barabbas' real crimes. Imagine together how Barabbas may have responded to Jesus' death in his place. How have you responded to Jesus' death in your place?
3. Review Matthew 27:20-25. Describe how sin intensifies through this exchange. Share examples of when your sin has taken you farther than you wanted to go, and made you stay longer than you wanted to stay. Why is sin so deadly to our souls?
4. Review Matthew 27:27-31. What caused Jesus to keep submitting Himself to such horrific abuse and shame? (c.f. Matthew 20:28, 26:39; Romans 5:8, 8:3-4; Philippians 2:8-11; Hebrews 12:2)
5. Read 2 Corinthians 5:21. How does Jesus' death make you righteous before God? How has Jesus' death changed your personal relationship with sin?