

## WHAT SHALL I DO WITH JESUS?

Matthew 27:22

By Raymond White

I imagine that everyone, in this country at least, knows who Jesus is or at least claims to be. Some people believe him, some don't, but no one is ignorant of the Biblical claim that Jesus Christ is the son of God, the savior of the world. There's not much mystery there.

The real question is: once you know that, what do you do about it? Everyone is stuck with making a decision, yes or no. Maybe doesn't count because not to decide is to decide.

Pontius Pilate is the perfect example of a person stuck with the decision that he would rather not have had to make. Jesus was brought before him and Pilate had to decide what to do with him: crucify him or let him go.

*Matthew 27:22 Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ?*

This is the question the world faces, and sooner or later each person, each of us, must answer it and stand by that answer. Pilate tried to avoid the fateful choice and he had good reason to be nervous. Not only would it be nice to do the right thing for conscience sake, but his wife had warned him of a dream: **Matthew 27:19** ...*Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him.*

Pilate tried to act on that advice. Three times he tried to pass the responsibility onto someone else, but three times that responsibility came right back to him. God kept dragging him back to the issue, "Pilate, *you* decide. Make a decision."

1. **Pilate tried to pass Jesus back to the Jewish leaders.**

**John 18:31** *Take ye him, and judge him according to your law,* Pilate said to the Jewish leaders. But they replied, **:31** *It is not lawful for us to put any man to death.* In other words, Pilate, we need you to do our dirty work for us.

2. **Pilate tried to pass Jesus off to Herod**

**Luke 23:8** *And as soon as he knew that he belonged unto Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod. :11* [But] *Herod...sent him again to Pilate.*

3. **Pilate tried to pass Jesus off to the Jewish crowd that had gathered.**

**John 18:39** *Will ye therefore that I release unto you the King of the Jews? :40* *Not this man but Barabbas.*

No matter how Pilate tried to wriggle out of the fateful decision, the decision was his to make. He was stuck and he knew it. **John 19:10** *I have power to crucify thee, and the power to release thee.* Yes, Pilate, and you don't have the courage to do either. Make a decision.

God has set before each, as he did Pilate, a single, simple question: "What shall you do then with Jesus?" We cannot avoid deciding and absolutely everything depends on the choice we make.

Finally, Pilate tried one last ploy.

**Matthew 27:24** *When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it.*

Pilate reasoned that if he just didn't decide at all he'd be okay. It didn't occur that not to decide is to decide. He thought he had three choices: yes, no, and none of the above. There is no none of the above. When he washed his hands, he knew he was sending an innocent man to the cross. He could have stopped it but decided not to. That was his decision.

Self proclaimed agnostics think they can escape the pitfall of decision by declaring, "I don't know so I won't decide." But the problem remains: to not decide is to decide. You cannot not decide. So, I will ask you again as God did Pilate: What will you do with Jesus? Don't do what Pilate did. He let someone else, the crowd, answer for him.

A final thought.

**Hebrews 2:3** *How shall we escape, if we neglect so great a salvation?*

A final, final thought.

"I shall be telling this with a sigh  
Somewhere ages and ages hence:  
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I  
I took the one less traveled by  
And that has made all the difference.

Robert Frost