

## What Will You Do with Jesus?

You have an appointment that you cannot \_\_\_\_\_: and one day you must face the Lord. We love the Lord and want to \_\_\_\_\_ Him, and the Scriptures teach us how. God is our Creator and the \_\_\_\_\_ of every good thing; God gave His Son upon the cross for our sins; God gives us an abundant life and eternal life; and the Lord Jesus is preparing a \_\_\_\_\_ for us in heaven. These things \_\_\_\_\_ us to love Him and to please Him in every respect.

Mack Lyon asked me to \_\_\_\_\_ with the Search ministry twelve years ago. I moved back to Oklahoma to be part of this evangelistic \_\_\_\_\_. These twelve years have been a different part of my ministry than my work with local churches, but I have treasured these years. This week celebrates another anniversary: I began working as a youth minister for the East Main Church of Christ in Shawnee, Oklahoma, fifty years ago in 1971. Dewayne Thomas was the minister and he helped me learn about ministry. Through the years with churches in Oklahoma, Mississippi, Texas, and Tennessee, I've made many new \_\_\_\_\_ throughout America and in other countries.

Working these last twelve years at In SEARCH of the Lord's Way has been exciting and challenging. I've learned to pray and to \_\_\_\_\_ upon God for strength. I've seen God open \_\_\_\_\_ of opportunity for preaching the word far beyond anything I imagined. I am thankful to my coworkers, our volunteers, our viewers, and our supporters of SEARCH for all their encouragement and prayers. God truly is the giver of every good thing, and the people who love this ministry are the salt of the earth. I ask that you please keep praying that God will continue to bless us for many more years.

Our reading today comes from Acts 17:30-34. Paul is in Athens, giving the philosophers a reason to believe in God, and a reason to follow Jesus. Some will sneer, but some will believe.

No event in \_\_\_\_\_ compares with the events of Jesus' death, burial, resurrection, and the establishment of the church. This series of events describes human \_\_\_\_\_ and reveals how they perceived and treated Jesus Christ. The Lord Jesus knew that He would \_\_\_\_\_ at the hands of His enemies. Matthew 20:17-19 says, "As Jesus was about to go up to Jerusalem, He took the twelve disciples aside by themselves, and on the way He said to them, 'Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem; and the Son of Man will be delivered to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn Him to \_\_\_\_\_, and will hand Him over to the Gentiles to mock and scourge and crucify Him, and on the third day He will be raised up.'" Both Judas Iscariot and Simon Peter heard this prophecy.

The Chief Priests hated Jesus and they feared that they would lose their \_\_\_\_\_ as leaders of the Jewish people. When Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead they began thinking seriously of finding a way to \_\_\_\_\_ Him. When Jesus overturned the tables of the moneychangers in the \_\_\_\_\_, things got even more serious. Mark 11:15-18 says, "Then they came to Jerusalem. And He entered the temple and began to drive out those who were buying and selling in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who were selling doves; and

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**Longer quotations may not appear in the Study Sheet, but can be read in the accompanying transcript.**

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PO Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 1-800-321-8633

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He would not permit anyone to carry merchandise through the temple. And He began to teach and say to them, 'Is it not written, "My house shall be called a house of \_\_\_\_\_ for all the nations?" But you have made it a robbers' \_\_\_\_\_.'" (Jesus is quoting from Isaiah 56:7, and Jeremiah 7:11.) The chief priests and the scribes heard this, and they began seeking how to destroy Him; for they were \_\_\_\_\_ of Him, for the whole crowd was astonished at His teaching. They wanted to kill Him and began looking for a way.

Judas Iscariot had been a \_\_\_\_\_, helping himself to what was in their moneybag. His desire for \_\_\_\_\_ became a habit. When he learned the chief priests were seeking an opportunity to \_\_\_\_\_ Jesus privately he took them up on the offer. Read Luke 22:3-6. Judas apparently loved that measly thirty pieces of silver more than he loved the Lord Jesus. Though Jesus washed the feet of Judas, and though Judas participated in the institution of the Lord's Supper, he still \_\_\_\_\_ Jesus and led the crowds to the Garden of Gethsemane. When Judas came into the garden, Jesus called him " \_\_\_\_\_" (Matthew 26:50); but Judas was no friend. He betrayed Jesus with a kiss.

Then there was Simon Peter who disappointed Jesus by \_\_\_\_\_ him three times. Peter boasted in Matthew 26:33-35, "Though they all fall away because of you, I will \_\_\_\_\_ fall away.' And Jesus said to him, 'Truly, I tell you, this very night, before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times.' Peter said to him, 'Even if I must die with you, I'll never deny you!' And all the disciples said the same." The words of Jesus proved \_\_\_\_\_. Peter, falling to fear and temptation, did indeed \_\_\_\_\_ being with the Lord three separate times. According to Mark 14:71, he invoked a curse on himself and \_\_\_\_\_ that he did not know Jesus. Luke 22:61 mentions that after his third denial the Lord Jesus himself turned and \_\_\_\_\_ at Peter. Peter remembered what the Lord had said, and he went out and he \_\_\_\_\_ bitterly.

Pontius Pilate was the appointed procurator or governor of the Judean province. He was known as an \_\_\_\_\_ administrator who would not allow riotous behavior among the Jews; but he was obstinate and inflexible. Because Pilate treated the Jews mercilessly and took \_\_\_\_\_ from the Temple treasury to build aqueducts the Jews despised him. Because the Jewish Council couldn't sentence Jesus to \_\_\_\_\_ on their own they had to get Pilate involved. The Sanhedrin Council \_\_\_\_\_ condemned Jesus for blasphemy when Jesus admitted that He was the Christ, the Son of God; but Pilate would not put Jesus to death for a Jewish theological dispute. The charge they brought to Pilate was one of \_\_\_\_\_, since being the Messiah meant Jesus was a king. In John 18 Pilate asked Jesus, "Are you a \_\_\_\_\_?" Jesus responded in John 18:36-37, "My kingdom is not of this \_\_\_\_\_. If my kingdom were of this world, my \_\_\_\_\_ would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from the world.' And then Pilate said to him, 'So you are a king?' Jesus answered, 'You say that I am a king (that is, yes). For this \_\_\_\_\_ I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to bear witness to the \_\_\_\_\_. And everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice.'" Jesus is the king of a spiritual kingdom, not a worldly one.

Pilate repeatedly told the Jews that he found no \_\_\_\_\_ in Jesus, that Jesus had not done anything worthy of death. Since it was Pilate's \_\_\_\_\_ to let a prisoner go free, and hoping that prisoner would be Jesus, he asked the \_\_\_\_\_ if they wanted Jesus to be released. Mark 15:11-14 says, "But the chief priests \_\_\_\_\_ up the crowd to have him release for them Barabbas instead. And Pilate again said to them, 'Then what shall I do with the man you call the

King of the Jews?’ And they cried out again, ‘Crucify him.’ And Pilate said to them, ‘Why, what \_\_\_\_\_ has he done?’ But they shouted all the more, ‘Crucify him.’”

Pilate’s \_\_\_\_\_ had gotten involved. Matthew 27:19 says, “And while he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent him a message, saying, ‘Have nothing to do with that righteous Man; for last night I suffered greatly in a dream because of Him.’” Pilate had married Claudia Procula, the granddaughter of Augustus Caesar and was very powerful. Pilate owed his \_\_\_\_\_ to his wife’s connections. He was caught between his wife’s \_\_\_\_\_ and the Jewish crowd’s insistence that Jesus be crucified.

When Pilate tried to free Jesus, the Jewish leaders told Pilate, “We have a law, and according to that law he ought to \_\_\_\_\_ because he has made himself the Son of God” (John 19:7-8). When Pilate heard this statement he was even more \_\_\_\_\_. Matthew reveals what Pilate did. “So when Pilate saw that he was gaining nothing, but rather that a \_\_\_\_\_ was beginning, he took water and he washed his hands before the crowd, saying, ‘I’m innocent of this man’s blood; see to it yourselves.’ And all the people answered, ‘His blood be on us and on our children’ Then he released for them Barabbas, and having scourged Jesus, delivered him to be crucified” (Matthew 27:24-26)

When Pilate felt \_\_\_\_\_ he compromised. He washed his hands of the situation and declared himself free from “this man’s blood.” Pilate tried to absolve himself of any responsibility for the condemnation of Jesus, but Pilate was \_\_\_\_\_ to himself and to the crowd. It’s common nature for people to try to \_\_\_\_\_ their actions rather than admit they were doing something wrong. Pilate could wash his hands physically, but he couldn’t \_\_\_\_\_ responsibility for the death of Jesus Christ. People today try to justify their \_\_\_\_\_ through a lot of false reasoning, but according to 2 Timothy 4:8, Jesus is “the righteous \_\_\_\_\_.” He will judge us fairly according to what we’ve \_\_\_\_\_ good or bad. You may justify yourself, but that doesn’t mean the Lord Jesus will justify you.

Matthew 27:27-31 says, “Then the soldiers of the governor \_\_\_\_\_ Jesus into the governor’s headquarters, and they gathered the whole battalion before him. And they stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, and twisting together a \_\_\_\_\_ of thorns, they put it on his head and put a reed on his right hand. And kneeling before him, they \_\_\_\_\_ him, saying, ‘Hail, King of the Jews!’ And they spit on him and took the reed and struck him on the head. 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.”

For those who love Jesus Christ, we hardly understand how anyone’s \_\_\_\_\_ could be so hardened that they would treat another human being the way they treated the innocent Jesus Christ. This is what they did with Jesus: the Council hated Him, wanted Him dead; Judas betrayed Him with a kiss; Peter denied Him three times; Pilate washed his hands of Jesus; and the soldiers mocked Him, spit on Him, beat Him, scourged Him, and crucified Him. That’s how they treated the Lord of glory who suffered and died to set us \_\_\_\_\_ from sin and to bring us to God. Jesus never \_\_\_\_\_ back, never called twelve legions of angels to protect Him. He willingly suffered for our sins. Isaiah prophesied of Jesus: Read Isaiah 53:4-6. The grace of the Lord Jesus so marvelously \_\_\_\_\_ us. We wonder how could we ignore Him or sin against Him.

What are you doing with Jesus? You're doing something with Him. You may \_\_\_\_\_ that He ever existed. You may \_\_\_\_\_ He was just a good teacher. You may \_\_\_\_\_ He's the Son of God, but denying Him doesn't change the facts. You may disagree with Him and leave Him, but what Jesus said then remains \_\_\_\_\_. You may hate Him, but He doesn't hate you. You may be ignoring Him, but He is calling for you. You may be making \_\_\_\_\_ of those who believe in Him. You may betray Him, but He won't betray you. You may wish you could wash your hands and be free of Him, but He isn't going away. You may think assembling with the Lord and His people to worship isn't important, but Jesus communes with His people in the Lord's Supper.

The Lord Jesus told the lukewarm Laodiceans, "Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline, so be zealous and repent. Behold, I stand at the \_\_\_\_\_ and knock. And if anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me" (Revelation 3:19-20). The Lord wants to be \_\_\_\_\_ to you, to bless you, and to prepare a place for you in heaven. Jesus loved you enough to \_\_\_\_\_ on the cross for you. I pray that you might have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth of the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge. Whatever mistakes you made in the past doesn't have to determine what you will do with Jesus today or in the future. If you recognize His love for you, won't you love Him with all your heart?

You may ignore the Lord now, but there's a \_\_\_\_\_ coming when you can't avoid Him, and you won't be able to avoid him in the life to come. Philippians 2:9-11 says, "God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every \_\_\_\_\_ will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every \_\_\_\_\_ will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of the Father." If you fail to bow the knee in this life, you will bow it in the life to come.

You'll also face Christ in judgment: Second Corinthians 5:10 says, "For we must all \_\_\_\_\_ before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his \_\_\_\_\_ in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad." On that day, you'll either hear the Lord say, "Well done, good and faithful servant. You were faithful in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master"; or you'll hear, "I never knew you; depart from me, you who practice lawlessness" (Matthew 25:21-22). What you now do with Jesus will determine what Jesus will then do with you.

You must in this life come to Him with faith and love in your hearts. You must repent of your sins and determine to live righteously. You must confess Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God and be baptized into Christ. When you're baptized into Christ, your sins are washed away (Acts 22:16) and you become a new creature (2 Corinthians 5:17). The Father will then make you His child, and the Lord will add you to His church. What a blessing! Why not get right today!