

WHAT WILL YOU DO WITH JESUS?

Matthew 27:22

All scripture quotations from NASB 1995 Bible unless otherwise noted.

WHAT WILL YOU DO WITH JESUS?

The question Pilate asked, "what shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?," is a question everyone must answer.

*"But the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas and to put Jesus to death. But the governor said to them, 'Which of the two do you want me to release for you?' And they said, 'Barabbas.' Pilate said to them, 'Then **what shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?**' They all said, 'Crucify Him!'"*
(Matthew 27:20-22)

WHAT WILL YOU DO WITH JESUS?

The question Pilate asked is a question everyone must answer, "What shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?"

Secular world history recognizes the existence of a man known as Jesus of Nazareth, who claimed to be the Son of God, and was crucified on a Roman cross.

The Bible confirms that He spoke truth, as He was raised from the dead on the third day, further taught his apostles, and ascended to heaven where He now sits at the right hand of God.

WHAT WILL YOU DO WITH JESUS?

In answering Pilate's question, "What shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?," the Jews answered, "Let Him be crucified!"

They completely rejected Him! All who reject Him today crucify Him yet again.

*"For in the case of those who have once been enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, and then have fallen away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance, since they again crucify to themselves the Son of God and put Him to open shame." **(Hebrews 6:4-6)***

WHAT WILL YOU DO WITH JESUS?

Judas Iscariot's answer was a question, as to how much money he could gain by betraying Him.

*"Then one of the twelve, named Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests and said, 'What are you willing to give me to betray Him to you?' And they weighed out thirty pieces of silver to him. From then on he began looking for a good opportunity to betray Jesus." **(Matthew 26:14-16)***

WHAT WILL YOU DO WITH JESUS?

Sometimes professional people have the attitude of Judas by hypocritically joining some church, then feigning piety for business reasons.

False teachers see in Jesus nothing but monetary gain. Peter warns about them:

*"But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves. Many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of the truth will be maligned; and in their greed they will exploit you ("make merchandise of you" - ASV) with false words; their judgment from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep." **(2 Peter 2:1-3)***

WHAT WILL YOU DO WITH JESUS?

Peter's answer at that crucial time was to deny Him – three times.

"And a servant-girl, seeing him as he sat in the firelight and looking intently at him, said, 'This man was with Him too.' But he denied it, saying, 'Woman, I do not know Him.' A little later, another saw him and said, 'You are one of them too!' But Peter said, 'Man, I am not!' After about an hour had passed, another man began to insist, saying, 'Certainly this man also was with Him, for he is a Galilean too.' But Peter said, 'Man, I do not know what you are talking about.' Immediately, while he was still speaking, a rooster crowed. The Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had told him, 'Before a rooster crows today, you will deny Me three times.'" (Luke 22:56-61)

WHAT WILL YOU DO WITH JESUS?

Peter found himself in a hostile crowd while Jesus was on trial. His faith was weak, and he succumbed to the pressure of the crowd. We too can find ourselves in hostile crowds of our own making.

"Do not be deceived: 'Bad company corrupts good morals.' Become sober-minded as you ought, and stop sinning; for some have no knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame."

(1 Corinthians 15:33-34)

"Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God."

(1 Corinthians 6:9-10)

WHAT WILL YOU DO WITH JESUS?

Pilate's recourse was to attempt neutrality. He washed his hands and claimed innocence in his condemnation and death sentence of an innocent man.

"When Pilate saw that he was accomplishing nothing, but rather that a riot was starting, he took water and washed his hands in front of the crowd, saying, 'I am innocent of this Man's blood; see to that yourselves.' And all the people said, 'His blood shall be on us and on our children!' Then he released Barabbas for them; but after having Jesus scourged, he handed Him over to be crucified."
(Matthew 27:24-26)

WHAT WILL YOU DO WITH JESUS?

Pilate was too fearful to deny Jesus but too weak to stand for Him. Yet, there is no middle ground.

"He who is not with Me is against Me; and he who does not gather with Me scatters."
(Matthew 12:30)

"For he who is not against us is for us." **(Mark 9:40)**

"He who is not with Me is against Me; and he who does not gather with Me, scatters." **(Luke 11:23)**

WHAT WILL YOU DO WITH JESUS?

Years later, the attitude of Saul of Tarsus toward Jesus was to persecute Him. In persecuting His church, Saul persecuted Jesus.

"Now Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest, and asked for letters from him to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to the Way, both men and women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. As he was traveling, it happened that he was approaching Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him; and he fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?' And he said, 'Who are You, Lord?' And He said, 'I am Jesus whom you are persecuting, but get up and enter the city, and it will be told you what you must do.'" (Acts 9:1-6)

WHAT WILL YOU DO WITH JESUS?

Throughout the centuries, including today, when men and women persecute, misrepresent, speak evil of, commit violence against, or otherwise oppose the church of our Lord, they persecute Jesus Christ.

"When the Lamb broke the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God, and because of the testimony which they had maintained; and they cried out with a loud voice, saying, 'How long, O Lord, holy and true, will You refrain from judging and avenging our blood on those who dwell on the earth?' And there was given to each of them a white robe; and they were told that they should rest for a little while longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brethren who were to be killed even as they had been, would be completed also." (Revelation 6:9-11)

WHAT WILL YOU DO WITH JESUS?

The attitude of Felix the governor of Judea was to put off making a decision until later.

"But some days later Felix arrived with Drusilla, his wife who was a Jewess, and sent for Paul and heard him speak about faith in Christ Jesus. But as he was discussing righteousness, self-control and the judgment to come, Felix became frightened and said, 'Go away for the present, and when I find time ("a convenient time" – NKJV) I will summon you.'" (Acts 24:24-25)

There is no record that Felix ever "found time" to hear, believe, and obey the gospel message.

WHAT WILL YOU DO WITH JESUS?

It is truly tragic that so many people today are of the same attitude as Felix, some who actually know the will of God, yet delay in obeying it. The time to be saved is always NOW.

"Do this, knowing the time, that it is already the hour for you to awaken from sleep; for now salvation is nearer to us than when we believed."

(Romans 13:11)

"And working together with Him, we also urge you not to receive the grace of God in vain – for He says, 'At the acceptable time I listened to you, and on the day of salvation I helped you.' Behold, now is 'the acceptable time,' behold, now is 'the day of salvation ...'"

(2 Corinthians 6:1-2)

"Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent ..." (Acts 17:30)

WHAT WILL YOU DO WITH JESUS?

King Agrippa's attitude toward Jesus was "Almost."

*"For the king knows about these matters, and I speak to him also with confidence, since I am persuaded that none of these things escape his notice; for this has not been done in a corner. King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know that you do believe.' Then Agrippa said to Paul, 'You **almost** persuade me to become a Christian.' And Paul said, 'I would to God that not only you, but also all who hear me today, might become both almost and altogether such as I am, except for these chains.'" (Acts 26:26-29 NKJV)*

As the old saying goes, "Almost only counts in horseshoes and hand grenades."

"Almost saved" means "lost."

WHAT WILL YOU DO WITH JESUS?

Good intentions don't count! Obedience is required!

*"And having been made perfect, He became to all those who **obey Him** the source of eternal salvation ..."*

(Hebrews 5:9)

*"Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and **acts on them**, may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded on the rock. Everyone who hears these words of Mine and **does not act on them**, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and it fell – and great was its fall." (Matthew 7:24-27)*

WHAT WILL YOU DO WITH JESUS?

Good intentions don't count! Obedience is required!

*"For after all it is only just for God to repay with affliction those who afflict you, and to give relief to you who are afflicted and to us as well when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, dealing out retribution to those **who do not know God** and to those **who do not obey** the gospel of our Lord Jesus. These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, when He comes to be glorified in His saints on that day, and to be marveled at among all who have believed – for our testimony to you was believed."*

(2 Thessalonians 1:6-10; cf. 1 John 2:3)

WHAT WILL YOU DO WITH JESUS?

Good intentions don't count! Obedience is required!

"But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to each person according to his deeds: to those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life; but to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation." (Romans 2:5-8)

WHAT WILL YOU DO WITH JESUS?

Now, contrast the answers of the Jews, Pilate, Judas, Peter, Saul, Felix, and Agrippa with those of the people who heard the gospel on the Day of Pentecost.

Upon hearing the eyewitness testimony of the Apostles concerning Jesus' prophesied life, death, burial, resurrection, and heavenly coronation, they wanted to know what to do, knowing they had killed the Christ.

"Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, 'Brethren, what shall we do?'" (Acts 2:37)

Peter, now inspired by the Holy Spirit, answered:

"Peter said to them, 'Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.'" (Acts 2:38)

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Peter continued his inspired message, which prompted the obedience of about 3,000 people, who repented of their sins and were baptized in water for the forgiveness of their sins.

"For the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call to Himself.' And with many other words he solemnly testified and kept on exhorting them, saying, 'Be saved from this perverse generation!' So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls. They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer." (Acts 2:39-42)

WHAT WILL YOU DO WITH JESUS?

Which attitude describes you?

Will you reject Him?

Will you avoid making any decision about Him at all, or put it off "until later"?

Will you mock and ridicule Him and those who believe in Him?

Will you stand up for Him?

Will you believe and obey Him?

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Biblical scholar Bruce M. Metzger once wrote:

"It has often been pointed out that Jesus' claim to be the only Son of God is either true or false. If it is false, he either knew the claim was false or he did not know that it was false. In the former case he was a liar; in the latter case he was a lunatic. No other conclusion beside these three is possible."

Ultimately then, everyone on earth has made or will make their decision whether Jesus was a liar, a lunatic, or is the Lord and Savior of the world, the Son of the living God. Which will you choose?

HOW TO OBEY THE GOSPEL

Hear the word of God (2 Thessalonians 2:14-15; James 1:21)

Believe the gospel message (Hebrews 11:6; John 8:24)

Repent of sins (Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30-31)

Confess Jesus Christ (Romans 10:10; Matthew 10:32-33)

Be Baptized (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Galatians 3:26-27; Romans 6:3-4)

Remain Obedient (Matthew 7:21; Revelation 2:10; Hebrews 3:12)