

## Eyes on Jesus: Worldly Eyes (4/1/2020)

This Lent, we will use the metaphor of eyesight to examine how the various people in Mark's Gospel viewed Jesus during His Passion. In most cases, they misunderstood who He was and what He was doing; then again, sometimes by faith people did recognize Him correctly.

We have these forty days of Lent in which we may look within ourselves as people of faith in our day. How are we like or unlike the people who saw Jesus in the flesh? Most important, as we gather for worship, we will see what Jesus has done to save us from our sins by His holy, precious blood and innocent sufferings and death.

Today, we learn of Pilate's worldly view and how, to keep his position and placate the Jewish leaders and crowd, he handed Jesus over for crucifixion. The soldiers saw the opposite of a worldly king, but their ironic hailing of Him as "King of the Jews" proclaims who He really is. The world looks for power and glory; God's way is suffering and the cross. Which way do we look in the daily decisions we make?

"What is the World to Me" [LSB 730]

1 What is the world to me, With all its vaunted pleasure  
When You, and You alone, Lord Jesus, are my Treasure!  
You only, dearest Lord, My soul's delight shalt be;  
You are my peace, my rest. What is the world to me!

2 The world seeks to be praised, And honored by the mighty  
Yet never once reflects, That they are frail and flighty.  
But what I truly prize, Above all things is He,  
My Jesus, He alone. What is the world to me!

3 The world seeks after wealth, And all that mammon offers  
Yet never is content, Though gold should fill its coffers.  
I have a higher good, Content with it I'll be:  
My Jesus is my wealth. What is the world to me!

4 What is the world to me! My Jesus is my treasure,  
My life, my health, my wealth, My friend, my love, my pleasure,  
My joy, my crown, my all, My bliss eternally.  
Once more, then, I declare: What is the world to me!

### Mark 15:1–20

And as soon as it was morning, the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council. And they bound Jesus and led him away and delivered him over to Pilate. <sup>2</sup> And Pilate asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" And he answered him, "You have said so." <sup>3</sup> And the chief priests accused him of many things. <sup>4</sup> And Pilate again asked him, "Have you no answer to make? See how many charges they bring against you." <sup>5</sup> But Jesus made no further

answer, so that Pilate was amazed. <sup>6</sup> Now at the feast he used to release for them one prisoner for whom they asked. <sup>7</sup> And among the rebels in prison, who had committed murder in the insurrection, there was a man called Barabbas. <sup>8</sup> And the crowd came up and began to ask Pilate to do as he usually did for them. <sup>9</sup> And he answered them, saying, "Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?" <sup>10</sup> For he perceived that it was out of envy that the chief priests had delivered him up. <sup>11</sup> But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have him release for them Barabbas instead. <sup>12</sup> And Pilate again said to them, "Then what shall I do with the man you call the King of the Jews?" <sup>13</sup> And they cried out again, "Crucify him." <sup>14</sup> And Pilate said to them, "Why? What evil has he done?" But they shouted all the more, "Crucify him." <sup>15</sup> So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released for them Barabbas, and having scourged<sup>[a]</sup> Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified. <sup>16</sup> And the soldiers led him away inside the palace (that is, the governor's headquarters),<sup>[b]</sup> and they called together the whole battalion.<sup>[c]</sup> <sup>17</sup> And they clothed him in a purple cloak, and twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on him. <sup>18</sup> And they began to salute him, "Hail, King of the Jews!" <sup>19</sup> And they were striking his head with a reed and spitting on him and kneeling down in homage to him. <sup>20</sup> And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him. And they led him out to crucify him.

Do we think about what being worldly means? First, however, we need to get the concept into its proper perspective. There cannot be a true understanding of what is worldly without considering it in relation to what is spiritual. In the passion story, the portion that surrounds Pilate, the comparison of worldly verses spiritual or heavenly is very much on display. There is a reason that in the prayer our Lord taught us it says, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." When life in this world gets ahead of our spiritual life, we lose sight of God's will. "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." (Matthew 6:21)

Worldly eyes ignore our true need for forgiveness of our sins. The focus of the priests was on their privileged position guaranteed by the Romans. Pilate's concern was maintaining his position and being in Caesar's good graces. The soldiers were only interested in having a little fun at Jesus' expense. In each case their interests were in their present momentary lives rather than in their eternal futures. Jesus' death on the cross served each of their interests. Are we that short sighted? Every worldly thing that we have will be lost when we die? There is no future in having worldly eyes. Jesus died on the cross to pay for our sins, to give us an eternal future.

We believe in Jesus Christ not for a good life here but for a good eternal life. "If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory." (Colossians 3:1-4) Jesus told Pilate, "My kingdom is not of this world." (John 18:36) Which is better, what lasts for a moment or what lasts forever?

With our human nature corrupted by sin, we would only see our physical momentary present which will be lost. Our faith in Jesus Christ releases us from this shortsightedness through forgiveness won for us on the cross. We have heavenly eyesight in Christ. "For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. And because of Him you are in Christ Jesus,

who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, so that, as it is written, 'Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord'. ” (1 Corinthians 1:26–31)

**Lord's Prayer**

**Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name,  
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven;  
give us this day our daily bread;  
and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.  
For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.**

**Psalm 67:6-7 (English Standard Version)**

God, our God, shall bless us. <sup>7</sup> God shall bless us;  
let all the ends of the earth fear him!