

What Then Shall I Do With Jesus Who Is Called Christ?

By: Steven Chan

In Matt 27:22-26, the Bible tells us about the dilemma faced by Pontius Pilate when he had been forewarned by his wife not to have anything to do with Jesus, a just man in her opinion (Matt 27:19): “Pilate said to them, “What then shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?” They all said to him, “Let Him be crucified!” - 23 Then the governor said, “Why, what evil has He done?” But they cried out all the more, saying, “Let Him be crucified!” 24 When Pilate saw that he could not prevail at all, but rather that a tumult was rising, he took water and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, “I am innocent of the blood of this just Person. You see to it” 25 And all the people answered and said, “His blood be on us and on our children.” 26 Then he released Barabbas to them; and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered Him to be crucified.”

Governor Pontius Pilate had declared that Jesus was not guilty of any evil deed. Pilate had said: “I find no fault in Him at all” (John 18:38). Instead they asked

for the release of Barabbas, a notorious robber (John 18:40) and one “who had been thrown into prison for a certain rebellion made in the city, and for murder” (Luke 23:19). Why would the multitude make such a drastic choice – considering Jesus to be worthy of death, and preferring the release/acceptance of Barabbas, a rebel, robber and murderer?

The Bible tells us that the multitude clamoured for the crucifixion of Jesus because they were persuaded by the chief priests and elders: (they) “persuaded the multitudes that they should ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus” (Matt 27:20). What happened to the multitude of 5,000 men who had seen the sign that Jesus did when He fed them with five barley loaves and two fish, and who had said, “This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world” and who had wanted “to come and take Him by force to make Him king” (John 7:14-15)?

Unfortunately, this incident warns us about the danger of bad leadership and what happens when one blindly follows the leaders. In Matt 15:14, Jesus said about the Pharisees: “They are blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind leads the blind, both will

fall into a ditch.”

The chief priests and elders were appointed to their position as leaders of the Jewish people to look after their best interest and to serve and glorify their God. But it is a real tragedy when these leaders led the people on to the wrong path and the followers allowed themselves to be persuaded by their leaders to reject the truth in spite of the clear evidence that they had witnessed.

Likewise, the churches have leaders too. Good leaders will teach their followers as the apostle Paul did in 1 Cor 11:1: “Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ.” In other words, follow me for as long as I am following Christ. Christ is the ultimate example and role model, and our leaders are our examples only for as long as they are imitating Christ.

When leaders fall into sin, the followers should not be blind to their sins. The Bible says in 1 Tim 5:20, “Those who are sinning rebuke in the presence of all, that the rest also may fear”. Unfortunately, how many followers are courageous or convicted enough to “rebuke” elders/leaders who sin? The Christians in Berea were commended because they were good

followers as they did not blindly accept the teaching of the apostles but they searched the Scriptures to see whether they were teaching the truth (Acts 17:11).

The question for us today is this: What will we do with Jesus and His teachings? Will we reject the truth taught by Jesus because we are persuaded to do so by our leaders/bible professors/preachers who use persuasive words of human wisdom? Let's heed the exhortation of the apostle Paul in Gal 1: 6-10:

“I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, 7 which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. 8 But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. 9 As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed. 10 for do I now persuade men, of God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ.”