

ARM Prison Outreach International

"Ministers' Minute" ---- Volume IV Number 3

What Will You Do with Jesus?

Mark 15:1-15; John 12:12-19

Editor's Note: This "MM" is the 39th email sermon in a series we are sending as an encouragement to preachers and Christian workers around the world. This message could be appropriate as a devotional or expanded into a sermon appropriate for Palm Sunday. It is my prayer that this message will encourage you and those you teach. Use it as a devotional, edit it, share it, or use components of it!

May God bless your labors! -- Rod Farthing, Development Director

What Will You Do with Jesus?

Mark 15:1-15; John 12:12-19

Mark 15:1-15

1 And straightway in the morning the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council, and bound Jesus, and carried him away, and delivered him to Pilate.

2 And Pilate asked him, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answering said unto him, Thou sayest it.

3 And the chief priests accused him of many things: but he answered nothing.

4 And Pilate asked him again, saying, Answerest thou nothing? behold how many things they witness against thee.

5 But Jesus yet answered nothing; so that Pilate marvelled.

6 Now at that feast he released unto them one prisoner, whomsoever they desired.

7 And there was one named Barabbas, which lay bound with them that had made insurrection with him, who had committed murder in the insurrection.

8 And the multitude crying aloud began to desire him to do as he had ever done unto them.

9 But Pilate answered them, saying, Will ye that I release unto you the King of the Jews?

10 For he knew that the chief priests had delivered him for envy.

11 But the chief priests moved the people, that he should rather release Barabbas unto them.

12 And Pilate answered and said again unto them, What will ye then that I shall do unto him whom ye call the King of the Jews?

13 And they cried out again, Crucify him.

14 Then Pilate said unto them, Why, what evil hath he done? And they cried out the more exceedingly, Crucify him.

15 And so Pilate, willing to content the people, released Barabbas unto them, and

delivered Jesus, when he had scourged him, to be crucified. (KJV)

Pilate asked the question: "What shall I do with Jesus?"

We each face that crucial question today. What will **you** do with Jesus?

We face many important questions, but of all the questions we face, none is more important. In fact, when life is over, no other questions will be important at all, except, "What did you do with Jesus?"

1. Jesus: Exalted as the Son of Man ... Follow Him or Fear Him

John 12:12-19

12 On the next day the great multitude who had come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem,

13 took the branches of the palm trees, and went out to meet Him, and began to cry out, "Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel."

14 And Jesus, finding a young donkey, sat on it; as it is written,

15 "Fear not, daughter of Zion; behold, your King is coming, seated on a donkey's colt."

16 These things His disciples did not understand at the first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written of Him, and that they had done these things to Him.

17 And so the multitude who were with Him when He called Lazarus out of the tomb, and raised him from the dead, were bearing Him witness.

18 For this cause also the multitude went and met Him, because they heard that He had performed this sign.

19 The Pharisees therefore said to one another, "You see that you are not doing any good; look, the world has gone after Him."

(NAS)

The Son of Man was a special designation from the Old Testament.

Dan 7:13-14

13 "I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a **Son of Man** was coming, and He came up to the Ancient of Days and was presented before Him.

14 "And to Him was given dominion, glory and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and men of every language might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion which will not pass away; and His kingdom is one which will not be destroyed. (NAS)

"Given Dominion" -- Christ came in power on that day of the triumphal entry. Yet not all followed Him. Some feared Him because of the power He showed, because of the authority given Him by His Father.

We, too, will either follow his leadership, or resist His authority. Where are you in that regard today?

Have you made that decision? Or do you continue to try to put it off?

Former president Ronald Reagan once had an aunt who took him to a cobbler for a pair of new shoes. The cobbler asked young Reagan, "Do you want square toes or round toes?" Unable to decide, Reagan didn't answer, so the cobbler gave him a few days. Several days later the cobbler saw Reagan on the street and asked him again what kind of toes he wanted on his shoes. Reagan still couldn't decide, so the shoemaker replied, "Well, come by in a couple of days. Your shoes will be ready." When the future president did so, he found one square-toed and one round-toed shoe! "This will teach you to never let people make decisions for you," the cobbler said to his indecisive customer. "I learned right then and there," Reagan said later, "if you don't make your own decisions, someone else will."

If you don't make a commitment either way, your decision will be made for you. Jesus said that whoever is not FOR Him is AGAINST Him. There is no middle ground. Some followed Jesus ... some feared His claim and plotted to kill Him. Do you follow Him? It is your decision.

Later, after much teaching, the Last Supper with his disciples, the arrest, and the trial, Jesus was crucified. (Message continued below)

ARM ANNOUNCES A BRAND NEW VBS MISSIONS PROGRAM

"The World in Your Own Back Yard!"

<http://www.arm.org/vbs.htm>

Get a VHS or DVD with five 10-minute segments, teacher's guide, audio CD with ARM theme song, "Jailhouse Joe" tokens, and a Mission Goal Sheet. All free! For more information, please email info@arm.org, call 1-800-CALL-ARM, or write to PO Box 1490, Joplin, MO 64802.

2. Jesus: Executed as the Son of God ...Mourn Him or Mock Him

Luke 23:26-37

26 And when they led Him away, they laid hold of one Simon of Cyrene, coming in from the country, and placed on him the cross to carry behind Jesus.

27 And there were following Him a great multitude of the people, and of women who were mourning and lamenting Him.

28 But Jesus turning to them said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, stop weeping for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children.

29 "For behold, the days are coming when they will say, 'Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bore, and the breasts that never nursed.'

30 "Then they will begin to say to the mountains, 'Fall on us,' and to the hills, 'Cover us.'

31 "For if they do these things in the green tree, what will happen in the dry?"

32 And two others also, who were criminals, were being led away to be put to death with Him.

33 And when they came to the place called The Skull, there they crucified Him and the criminals, one on the right and the other on the left.

34 But Jesus was saying, "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing." And they cast lots, dividing up His garments among themselves.

35 And the people stood by, looking on. And even the rulers were sneering at Him, saying, "He saved others; let Him save Himself if this is the Christ of God, His Chosen One."

36 And the soldiers also mocked Him, coming up to Him, offering Him sour wine, 37 and saying, "If You are the King of the Jews, save Yourself!" (NAS)

The women who watched Him fall beneath the weight of the cross mourned Him, weeping for the innocent One who was being so mistreated. Others mocked Him, reviling the One Who was sinless, but yet willing to die for the sins of the whole world.

But you say, "I wouldn't mock Him." Perhaps not. But are you one that walks on by? Are you one who keeps your distance? Are you one who is not "near the Cross" but hiding in the shadows?

If you were to look at Rembrandt's painting of The Three Crosses, your attention would be drawn first to the center cross on which Jesus died. Then as you would look at the crowd gathered around the foot of that cross, you'd be impressed by the various facial expressions and actions of the people involved in the awful crime of crucifying the Son of God. Finally, your eyes would drift to the edge of the painting and catch sight of another figure, almost hidden in the shadows. Art critics say this is a representation of

Rembrandt himself, for he recognized that by his sins he helped nail Jesus to the cross.

We all are Rembrandts. We are there, causing His Death by our own Sin. And it is up to us. We can deny it and mock Him, or we can deny it and walk away. It is about the same, no difference in the result.

Or we can mourn His death in appreciation for what the Death means and commit our hearts and lives to Him. It is a decision we must make!

What will you do with Jesus?

A farmer hired a man to work for him. He told him his first task would be to paint the barn and said it should take him about three days to complete. But the hired man was finished in one day. The farmer set him to cutting wood, telling him it would require about 4 days. The hired man finished in a day and a half, to the farmer's amazement. The next task was to sort out a large pile of potatoes. He was to arrange them into three piles: seed potatoes, food for the hogs, and potatoes that were good enough to sell. The farmer said it was a small job and shouldn't take long at all. At the end of the day the farmer came back and found the hired man had barely started. "What's the matter here?" the farmer asked.

Said the worker: "I can work hard, but I can't make such hard decisions!"

Such are we. We can work hard and keep busy, but we can't make such hard decisions. But we must!

Pilate's words echo thru the centuries: What will I do with the King of the Jews? What will I do with Jesus?

What will you do? Only you can decide. I pray you would love Him, accept Him, trust Him, Confess Him, and be immersed into Him for the remission of your sins. He died for you. Will you live for Him?

42,898 Bible courses were sent to prisoners in 2004 -- 117 per day on average! A new prisoner/student is being enrolled every 24 minutes of every day!

Check out our web sites: www.arm.org www.abarc.org www.raphahouse.org