

The Good Confession of Christ Jesus

“I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession.”

I Timothy 6:13

Introduction:

1. In light of this morning’s sermon, there are several things we ought to remember to fully glory in our Lord.
 - a. The standard of righteousness He set for the sixth commandment was very high, but He kept it perfectly!
 - b. If you feel condemned by knowing you are a serial killer by His definition, then love your Redeemer!
 - c. If there was ever an example of anger and murder without a cause, it was surely the Jews and Pilate.
 - d. Caiaphas and the religious men of Israel were totally obsessed with killing Jesus by their own definition.
2. One of the greatest texts in the Bible is Paul’s prophecy of Jesus Christ’s glorious coming (I Tim 6:13-16)!
3. Tonight we remember the Lord’s death until He comes at communion. Let us remember His crucifixion trial.
4. Please forgive my pitiful efforts at supplying meaning and import to His trial. He is infinitely glorious!

The CONTEXT

- A. Paul wrote three Pastoral Epistles to exhort ministers to their duties, and this is the first to Timothy.
- B. He is concluding this first epistle; but before he ends it, he exhorts Timothy to faithfulness by Christ.
 1. He mentioned the all-seeing God, Who makes all things alive, as the first motive to faithfulness.
 2. He mentioned our Lord’s faithfulness before Pilate, when His life was at risk and truth ridiculed.
 3. He mentioned the coming of Jesus Christ to reveal Himself as the blessed and only Potentate.

The TEXT

- A. Paul charged Timothy to faithfulness in very strong language – oaths based on God and Jesus Christ.
- B. He appealed to the highest authority in the universe – the all-seeing God, the Source of all life.
- C. He appealed to Jesus Christ for the glorious example of His faithfulness in the direst circumstances.
 1. Jesus of Nazareth was hauled before Pontius Pilate and had many charges laid against Him.
 2. When questioned, demeaned, ridiculed, and condemned, He gave an unflinching confession.

The EVENT

- A. Jesus Christ stood before Pontius Pilate, Governor of Judea, and answered questions and statements.
 1. The band that took Jesus captive in Gethsemane was sent by the chief priests (John 18:1-3).
 2. They took Jesus to Annas and then his son-in-law Caiaphas, the high priest (John 18:12-16,24).
 3. The Jewish leadership then took Him to Pilate in the Judgment Hall for condemnation (Jn 18:28).
 4. Please consider that Jesus knew in advance without a doubt that Pilate would not defend Him.
- B. Pilate interrogated Jesus Christ to confirm or deny the accusations of the Jews (John 18:29-33).
- C. Pilate asked Jesus, “Art thou the King of the Jews?” The Jews brought this as one of their charges against Jesus, which they knew could be taken as sedition against Caesar (John 18:33; Luke 23:1-2).
- D. Jesus did not answer Pilate directly, but He inquired to know if this was his personal question or the Jews’ charge (John 18:34). Here was an opportunity for Pilate to value his own soul. Here was an opportunity for Pilate to be a just man; Jesus had done nothing in His life even hinting of sedition.
- E. Pilate responded by demeaning Jewish customs, implying Roman legal impartiality and fidelity to justice, reminding Jesus of the serious nature of His accusers and their charges, and asking what Jesus had done to deserve this extreme treatment (John 18:35).
- F. Jesus again did not answer Pilate directly, but He returned to the issue of a kingdom and explained how the nature of His spiritual kingdom differed from anything that Pilate had studied (John 18:36).
 1. Jesus implied here that He was a king, but He was a kind of king that was no threat to Caesar.
 2. The kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, of which He was king, was unlike any worldly kingdom.

3. Please note the absolute confidence and authority of the Lord Jesus Christ by “my” four times!
 4. It was not the Jewish fable of an earthly Messiah reigning over Israel in national supremacy.
 5. It was not any kingdom that Pilate needed to worry about relative to Caesar, for it was spiritual.
 6. The kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ is a spiritual kingdom of His reign over men’s hearts.
 7. He explained why He had no defenders, because His kingdom was not related to the world, earthly geographical location, physical conflict, or opposition to captivity by an opponent.
 8. Our Lord could have called twelve legions of angels that would have blown poor Pilate’s mind!
 9. Jesus explained that His kingdom was not from a political uprising of this world ... from hence.
 10. Jesus explained that His kingdom had no earthly ambitions contrary to Caesar ... from hence.
- G. Pilate, noting our Lord’s reference to His kingdom, asked again, “Art thou a king then?” (John 8:37).
- H. Jesus no longer avoided the direct question, but He directed Pilate’s attention to the issue of truth.
1. Jesus acknowledged that he was indeed a king. This form of expression is positive confirmation.
 2. Compare the other gospel accounts of this form of response and its meaning made to Judas, Caiaphas, and Pilate (Matt 26:25,64; 27:11; Mark 14:62; 15:2; Luke 22:70; 23:3).
 3. Our Lord’s first words here are not saying Pilate affirmed anything, for he asked a question.
 4. The Lord Jesus Christ identified His purpose and mission as bearing witness to the truth of God.
 5. He was a king, but His kingdom was far different from the geopolitical kingdoms of this earth.
 6. His kingdom was for bringing truth rather than economic, political, or military dominion. Amen!
 7. How precious is truth to you? Something you believe? Or something you love, obey, and defend!
 8. It is too bad that Roman Catholicism and Islam have exchanged truth for a sword in evangelism!
 9. He then made a profound statement and condemned Pilate by the actions of those of the truth.
 10. The realities of the universe are wrapped up in God and Christ, and the elect respond to Christ!
- I. Pilate’s answer was short and curt, as educated and rulers of all ages – ignorant scorn (John 18:38).
1. He did not believe Jesus could explain truth, so he returned to the Jews to release the fanatic, believing that though strange and misguided with talk of a spiritual kingdom, he was harmless.
 2. What an opportunity did this educated and knowledgeable man squander that day! Lord, save us!
 3. Men have quibbled and argued over this question and its answer through all ages of history, and they are farther from the truth of the universe today than they were 500 or 5000 years ago.
 4. Men are unwilling to humble themselves before the God of heaven, His word, and His preachers.
 5. Do you have any clue of the great gift God has bestowed upon you to believe on Jesus Christ?
 6. The greatest realities of the universe – mysteries and secrets to the world – are clearly revealed to His elect through the preaching of His inspired word by the powerful assistance of the Holy Spirit (John 3:9-13; 8:43,47; I Cor 2:6-16; Eph 3:1-12; II Thess 3:1-2; I Tim 3:15-16; 6:20-21).
 7. What should you do with the offer? “Buy the truth, and sell it not” (Pr 23:23)! Do it today!
 8. What does the Bible mean to you? Will you read it tonight? Tomorrow? The rest of your life?
- J. Pilate, returning to the Jews outside the Hall, confessed His innocence and sought to release Him.
1. Pilate had found no fault in Him as threatening the Empire and was ready to release Jesus.
 2. But the Jews, fearing the loss of their case, were even more fierce and adamant (Luke 23:4-5).
- K. The Jews accused Jesus of many things, and Pilate sent Him to Herod (Mark 15:3-5; Luke 23:6-12).
- L. Pilate and Herod used typical Roman tactics to chastise Jesus and extract a confession from Him.
1. He was scourged, which was a harsh beating with numerous leather thongs with pieces of metal.
 2. The soldiers put a crown of thorns on His head and mockingly arrayed Him in a purple robe.
 3. They mocked Him as King of the Jews, and they blindfolded Him and smote Him with hands.
- M. Pilate brought Jesus forth from the Judgment Hall and showed the damage He had done to Him.
1. A hardened Roman governor was not moved to condemn by Christ’s scourging, but to release!
 2. Rather than confess to any charge laid against Him, Jesus bore it as a quiet lamb to the slaughter.
 3. Pilate brought Jesus forth to the mob to show that he had violently abused him without a crime.
 4. “Behold the man!” are Pilate’s words that scourging, mocking, and other abuse had not elicited any confession to any crime, but rather our Lord’s quiet patience proved otherwise.

5. Pilate was troubled by many things about Jesus, and he had hoped to evoke pity from the Jews.
- N. Pilate then returned to the Judgment Hall with Jesus to enquire about the latest charge (John 19:6-9).
 1. The first charge had been political and seditious in nature – that Jesus claimed to be a king.
 2. Now the Jewish leadership charged Him with claiming to be the Son of God. Glory! Amen!
 3. Pilate is further troubled by this latest accusation and seeks to hear Jesus on the matter.
 4. Jesus did not return answer for having already answered before, Pilate knew He was an innocent man, Pilate would not have grasped the answer, and Pilate had unjustly tortured Him already.
- O. When Jesus would not answer, Pilate arrogantly and weakly turned justice into political expediency.
 1. He was irritated Jesus would not answer him, which left him to the decision he could not make.
 2. Pilate said, “Do you not know that I can release you, if you will adequately cooperate with me?”
 3. Jesus knew, regardless of further explanation He gave, Pilate would definitely cave to the Jews.
 4. Our Lord explained that Pilate’s role in the matter was of little significance, since the God of heaven, His Father and God, had ordained this event for purposes far beyond the governor.
 5. Jesus indicted the Jews as the main culprits, for they sinned against greater knowledge, as Pilate merely sinned by violating justice through the weakness of his character.
 6. Pilate, though sinning through weakness, merely executed the wishes of the Jews, who knew they could move their weak governor to do their dirty work for them.
 7. Pilate was moved even further by this explanation, but he had no character of a true governor.
 8. The blessed God had ordained a weak man to capitulate and compromise his office before the religious leaders of that God’s own nation and people, yet both were wicked in accomplishing the sovereign will of that blessed God (Acts 2:22-23; 4:26-28).
 9. Paul wrote later that the princes of this world – Caiaphas, Pilate, and Herod – would not have crucified the Lord of glory, if they had known! Reader, are you obedient to knowledge you have?

The SIGNIFICANCE

- A. Our Lord’s confession of bearing witness to the truth was excellent for Paul charging Timothy.
- B. Every minister has a similar role in the earth – to bear witness of the truth before men (I Pet 3:15).
- C. Jesus was not afraid to admit He was the Son of God to the Jews’ angry theocratic council.
- D. Jesus was not afraid to admit He was the King of the Jews to a representative of Caesar.
- E. And the same results occur as Paul described – a saviour of either life or death (II Cor 2:14-17).
- F. Consider our Lord’s fearlessness in facing the cross knowing the outcome of the trial in advance.
- G. Consider our Lord’s courage and integrity in answering questions without little visible evidence.
- H. Consider our Lord’s superiority in character and speech to the highest-ranking official in Judea.
- I. Consider our Lord’s kingdom, of which you are citizen, of which He is now the crowned King!
- J. Consider our Lord’s emphasis on truth, which you have in abundance over Caiaphas and Pilate!

The APPLICATION

- A. We first want the application of Jesus Christ not compromising at all before going to the cross for us.
- B. We then want the application of Jesus Christ giving us an example not to ever compromise for men.

Conclusion:

1. As we go to the Lord’s Table, remember the willingness and confidence of Jesus Christ before Pontius Pilate.
2. He did not flinch from claiming to be God’s Son before the condemning council of God’s nation and religion.
3. He did not flinch from claiming to be the King of the Jews before the condemning representative of Caesar.
4. Can you be thankful tonight for the good confession and submissive death that our Lord Jesus died for you?
5. Can you be convicted tonight by that example to be bold and courageous followers of Him in a dark world?