



# the Source

*Let anyone who is thirsty come to me...*

Luke 23:13-25 brings us to the deciding moment: Christ is to be crucified. But why? We could go into intricate theological discussions about atonement, sovereign grace, sacrifices, redemption, etc. The simple answer, “Christ died for me.”

I think of Tevye in *Fiddler on the Roof* praying, “would it spoil some vast eternal plan...?” Thousands of years of empirical evidence tell us that we humans are a fallen race, which creates a spiritual problem between us and God. Based on my own behavior, I don’t doubt that. Rectifying this fall takes a *vast eternal plan*.

Though I don’t understand all the mystery of it, this plan in some way involves Christ’s crucifixion. His death was a sacrifice that in some way compensates for my sinful behavior.

We are in the Lenten season, a time to identify in some token way with the suffering of Christ by embracing some unpleasantness.

I am struck in this passage by how difficult it is for Pilate to accept the unpleasantness of doing the right thing. He admits finding no grounds for convicting Christ.

Three times he tries to convince the mob of this. In the end, he cannot bring himself to stand against the crowd.

In this Lenten season, instead of trying to think of something you can give up, think of something you can do, some unpleasant thing you have been putting off. Make it a time to right some wrong you have been avoiding because it is painful. Maybe it is time to have that unpleasant conversation with a neighbor, relative, or family member. Maybe it is time to take that stand that will embarrass you in front of your peers. No little thing you give up can compare to doing that thing you keep putting off.

Christ died for me as part of some *vast eternal plan*. Lent reminds me that I too share in that plan when I suffer.

— Joe Grove, First Church member

## A Family Affair

For the next few weeks, the Family Affair will focus on events of the week prior to Easter, which we call Holy Week. Each of these events can be visited *live* at **Resurrection Celebration** on April 9.

Jesus and his disciples were heading to Jerusalem for the Passover Celebration. Jesus sent two of the disciples ahead with instructions: Go into the village and find a colt that has never yet been ridden. Untie it and bring it to me. If anyone asks, “What are you doing?” say, “The Lord needs him, and will return him right away.” They went and found a colt just as Jesus said. Some people nearby asked “Why are you untying that colt?” The disciples replied exactly as Jesus had instructed them. They brought the colt to Jesus. He climbed onto the colt’s back and rode into Jerusalem. Many people were going into Jerusalem to celebrate, so there were crowds of people everywhere. As Jesus rode into town, the people gave him a wonderful welcome, some throwing their coats on the street. They were calling out, “Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in highest heaven!” The people waved palm branches as he passed. Today we call this day Palm Sunday. It is the first day of Holy Week, which leads up to Easter. You can read about these events in Mark 11:1-11.

*Dear God, it is exciting to read about Jesus triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Help us to remember this excitement and share it with others always. In Jesus name, Amen.*

— Jennifer Hall, Director of Children’s Ministry

## Monday: Luke 23:13-16

Pilate called together the chief priests, the rulers and the people, and said to them, “You brought me this man as one who was inciting the people to rebellion. I have examined him in your presence and have found no basis for your charges against him. ...as you can see, he has done nothing to deserve death.”

- Discuss how you might feel if convicted by a court, knowing that there is absolutely no justification for the charge brought against you. It could be a court of law, social media, or just the neighborhood gossip.

## Tuesday: Luke 23:18,19

With one voice they cried out, “Away with this man! Release Barabbas to us!” (Barabbas had been thrown into prison for an insurrection in the city, and for murder.)

As we absorb the daily news it appears mob rule has found a place in our culture also. Even as it led to the crucifixion of Christ, it can lead to miscarriages of justice today.

- How does mob rule happen, and how can you protect yourself from becoming a part of it?

## Wednesday: Luke 23:20,21

Wanting to release Jesus, Pilate appealed to them again. But they kept shouting, “Crucify him! Crucify him!”

- Can you think of a time when you stood up against your peers? What happened?
- How about a time when you failed to take a stand?
- How do you feel looking back on that?

## Thursday: Luke 23:22

For the third time he spoke to them: “Why? What crime has this man committed? I have found in him no grounds for the death penalty. Therefore I will have him punished and then release him.”

- What would Pilate have accomplished by punishing Christ just a little bit?
- When we have wronged somebody and hold back on making amends, aren’t we punishing them just a little bit?
- How should we handle situations when we have wronged somebody?
- Is there a situation like this in your life that is begging to be addressed?

## Friday: Luke 23:23,24

“But with loud shouts they insistently demanded that he be crucified, and their shouts prevailed. So Pilate decided to grant their demand.”

- What should Pilate have done?
- Have you ever given in to your kids or a peer because they have outshouted you?
- How should you handle such situations?