

“The One Redeeming Quality” Luke 23:1-25

Context: Luke begins a graphic account of what the Lord’s Supper represents in two chapters that follow its institution. Jesus was now alone after His closest disciples, like Peter, denied Him and fled from His trial. The prophecies in the previous chapters about the Messiah’s torture, crucifixion, and resurrection were now unfolding as truth. In recounting Christ’s passion story, Luke fulfilled his ultimate purpose of steadying the sometimes wobbly faith of the God-lover in the face of their witness, persecution, and perhaps martyrdom (cf. Luke 1:4).

Life Principle: Guilt becomes a paper tiger when faced with the power of Christ’s gift of release (cf. Hebrews 9:14).

1. Free from worldly insurrection - Luke 23:1-7

The religious leaders of the Jews brought a beaten Jesus before the Roman prefect Pilate, a Roman nobleman appointed by the emperor to collect taxes, supervise the military, and enforce Roman law. Relentlessly, they brought formal claims of tax rebellion, insurrection, and sedition. Pilate dismissed the first and last claim, probably upon his monitoring of Christ’s activity, but entertained the accusation of King. Pilate accepted Jesus’ other-worldly affirmation of Kingship without great concern and pronounced him not guilty.

2. Free from worldly retort - Luke 23:8-12

Shrewdly, Pilate attempted to divert the Jesus problem to Herod and so free himself of innocent blood and win over Herod by giving him authority in the matter. Herod, murderer of Jesus’ cousin John, wanted to see some circus-like magic. When Jesus ignored Him, beatings and mocking ensued, yet with no guilt determined (cp. Isaiah 53:7).

3. Free from deserving death - Luke 23:13-25

Pilate summoned the whole leadership and a large crowd of Jewish people to the Pavement for a verdict that Jesus was without guilt of any charge. After repeating the pronouncement three times, he perceived that a riot was about to occur and so acquiesced to their demands to murder Jesus, releasing Barabbas to freedom as a scapegoat in Jesus’ place (cp. Leviticus 16:6-10).

For Further Study:

- Building an understanding of the meaning of Bible words, a biblical vocabulary, is critical to a deeper understanding of Scripture. As a **Bible study method**, look up the meanings of “redeem” and “redemption” in *Vine’s Expository Dictionary of the New Testament* at <http://www2.mf.no/bibel/vines.html>, note A-2 and B1-2. What does the significance of Pilate’s declarations in Luke 23:4, 14, 15, and 22 have to do with the redemptive work of Christ (cf. Hebrews 9:14)? How does Jesus’ guiltless life affect your potential for a life free from guilt?
- Our doctrinal statement professes “the Lord Jesus Christ as the only Redeemer” (see our **doctrinal statement ‘On Salvation’** under **what we believe**, footnote 2 at <http://www.gracepointfellowship.org/files/DocStmnt.pdf>). Search out the meaning of redemption by answering the objects of the following prepositions: “I am redeemed: by ... (1 Peter 1:18-19), from ... (Romans 5:9, Galatians 3:13, & 1 Peter 1:18), for ... (Hebrews 9:14-15), through ... (Hebrews 9:14), and because of ... (Ephesians 1:7).” With the thought of what redeem means, put your name in front of the “I” and reflectively read your answers (i.e. I am redeemed by the “precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ”). Do you believe it?
- Luke 23:4, 14, 15, and 22 reveal the guilt-free state of Jesus. He was free of the sins of deception and lies that led to humanity’s radically wounded nature (cf. Genesis 3:1-6). What is the one quality necessary for redeeming humanity from our sinfulness and the punishment due us (cp. Isaiah 41:14; 43:14; 47:4; 48:17; 49:7; 54:5; 1 Peter 1:19 and Hebrews 9:14)?

Transformation exercise:

Reflect on Jesus’ freedom from guilt this week. Do you suffer from guilt? This week, begin the practice of a habit of being released from guilt by using the remedy provided by God in Hebrews 9:14.