

"CAESAR'S POWER VS. THE SAVIOR'S POWER"

TEXT: Mt.27:62-66 & 28:1-10

THESIS: To compare the power of an earthly King w/the power of the King of Kings.

INTRO.: A. An interesting conversation between Pontius Pilate, ruler of Israel, & our Savior took place before the Lord was crucified. The subject was power. Pilate asserted his power over Jesus' life & Jesus responded w/the statement that Pilate could have no power at all unless delegated from God.

Jn.19:10-11 *Then saith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee?*

11 *Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.*

B. Of course Pilate's power came from the Roman Govt. & Caesar. Jesus' power came from God. Later Jesus would declare to His disciples **"All power is given unto Me in heaven & in earth..." Mt.28:18** To demonstrate his power (Caesar's power) Pilate put the seal of Caesar on Jesus' tomb after His crucifixion. The question was: whose power would prevail? It was **"CAESAR'S POWER VS. THE SAVIOR'S POWER"...**

I. THE POWER OF CAESAR:

A. The Priests & the Procurator: v.62

NOTE: It is interesting that when Jesus was crucified His enemies remembered His promise of resurrection (v.63), but His friends had forgotten it. It is also striking that His enemies knew that if His disciples could preach later about a risen Savior, then the message would have such power that there would be no way to stop it. So the religionists came to Pilate & asked him to seal the tomb w/the authority of Caesar, the seal of the Roman empire. It was earthly power against the power of heaven.

1. Enemies often unite against a common foe.
2. Religion & politics are "strange bedfellows" indeed, but both are antagonistic against Christ.

ILLUS.: Isn't it interesting that the liberals who deny the bodily resurrection of Christ still observe it by having Easter services & weekly Sunday services?! Isn't it strange that politicians who want to deny us our constitutional rights & have kicked the Bible & prayer out of school, open their legislative bodies daily w/prayer & ask people to swear on a Bible in court? Of course our President will ask us to pray for our troops whenever we are at war

3. Religion & politics are the 2 most important topics on the planet.

ILLUS.: The average unsaved person will state "I never talk religion or politics" when

you try to witness to him, But "true religion" from the Bible is what he needs most, & **Govt. (God's) is the theme of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation!**

B. The Pharisees & Pilate: v.62b,63

1. The Pharisees believed in resurrection, yet did what they could to prevent Christ's resurrection.

Acts 23:8 *For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit: but the Pharisees confess both.*

2. Pilate was a practical atheist or at least an agnostic, but he is beginning to waver & cooperates w/these religionists.
 - a. Note his words in v.65: **"make it as sure as ye can..."**
 - b. He does not seem to be too sure of himself!

ILLUS.: He is not saying: "Hey guys, I'm in this w/you, I don't want any false doctrine spread in my jurisdiction." The implication is: *"Go & do whatever you can, little boys, but personally, I think He is going to come out!"* Pilate has been warned by his wife, been witnessed to by Christ, examined Him & concluded He had done nothing wrong, had heard the Jewish prophecies, felt the earthquake & seen noon become midnight, heard about the conversion of the Centurion & was beginning to doubt his own infidelity!

II. THE POWER OF CHRIST:

A. Bribes & Lies: 28:11-13

1. Something had gone wrong, the seal has been broken & the tomb is empty! 28:2-6
2. Caesar's seal is no match for the Savior's sovereignty.
3. Caesar's power is no match for the Savior's power.

ILLUS.: The only thing left to do is LIE! The soldiers are bribed & told to say the body was stolen while they slept. Yet if they had been sleeping on watch they would have been executed. And if they were asleep, they could not know the body was stolen! Oh the hypocrisy of unbelief! Anything but admit & believe the truth.

1. These men knew better & had experienced a powerful witness & had seen the angel of the Lord & the empty tomb & yet DID NOT GET SAVED!

ILLUS.: Many today believe in Christ's resurrection & the empty tomb, like these men who saw it (!), but are not saved. Believing the facts doesn't save, receiving the resurrected Savior does!

B. False Doctrine & Perjured Testimony: v.14,15

1. The devil had lost, Christ has risen...so he resorts to "Plan B"!
2. They were bought off & they lied & others repeated the lie. v.15

ILLUS.: The question is why all the lying? Why not simply believe the obvious? The answer is simple:

1. If Christ is risen, as He said, then He is Who He claimed!
2. This would unseat them from their lucrative positions (*"love of money..."*)
3. It would mean that there is a resurrection before the last judgment!
4. It would prove that religious people trusting in their works, sacraments, self-righteousness, church or good intentions, are lost!

C. Politics & Power:

1. All politicians believe they have power.
2. All power they do possess they receive from God, whether they acknowledge it or not.

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3. Because of the resurrection of Christ, Pilate the Judge will become Pilate the judged.
4. Because of the resurrection of Christ He now has *"all power"* i.e., all authority in heaven & earth. v.17,18

5. He has become King of Kings.

- a. Caesar's seal, representing his power, could not hold the One Who is Caesar's King!
- b. The sovereignty of the Savior supercedes the sovereignty of any earthly or spiritual authority.

CONCL.: In the contest between the power of Caesar & the power of the Savior, Caesar loses! The sovereign power of the Savior is forever victorious over all earthly power of any Caesar, prince, potentate, procurator, prime-minister, priest or President. ***"All hail the power of Jesus' Name, let angels prostrate fall! Bring forth the royal diadem, and crown Him Lord of all!"***

The resurrection takes back the crown from all usurpers: earthly & devilish, human & satanic! Jesus is King of Kings with "all power!"