

# Who Did It?

by Jim Cymbala

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*The sermon explores the reasons behind Jesus' crucifixion, highlighting the roles of jealousy, envy, and manipulation by religious leaders, Pontius Pilate, and the crowd.*

**Duration:** 38:19

**Scripture:** Isaiah 53:5, Matthew 6:33, Mark 11:1-11, Luke 23:1-25, John 1:11-12, John 3:3

**Topics:** "Christian Life"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of being born again in order to have salvation and eternal life. He encourages listeners to come to a crisis point in their lives where they recognize their need for a savior and cry out to God for mercy. The preacher discusses three suspects in the crucifixion of Jesus: the religious leaders, Pontius Pilate, and the manipulated crowd. He suggests that all three played a role in Jesus' death. The sermon concludes with a reminder that one day everyone will be judged by Jesus and must decide whether to live for themselves or for Him.

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## Transcript

In John 19, John 19 verse 25, we read that, near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother's sister, Mary, the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. A whole bunch of Marys there, right? His mother's name was Mary, his mother's sister. Then Mary, the wife of Clopas, and then Mary Magdalene.

And when Jesus saw his mother there and the disciple whom he loved, which was John, standing nearby, he said to his mother, dear woman, here is your son. And to the disciple, here is your mother. From that time on, this disciple took her into his home.

A couple sidebars just to that passage. That is one of the sayings of Jesus Christ from the cross. Anyone think of other things he said from the cross that are kind of famous? Father, forgive them.

They, into your hands I commit my spirit. My God, my God, why have you? Well, in this one, he sees Mary, his mother. It seems almost certainly that Joseph has died sometime in Jesus's upbringing, growing up.

Jesus is about 33 and a half years old when he goes to the cross. And even though he is enduring such agony and dying sacrificially for the sins of the world, he sees his mother and he realizes as the oldest child, wanting to make sure she's cared for. In his agony, he's thinking of his mother and says, John's

gonna help you.

Son, behold your mother. And from that moment on, John took special care of Mary. We don't know all the details of that, why her other children, sons that she had like James, the half-brother of our Lord, wasn't given that responsibility.

But be that as it may, this is one of the sayings of Christ from the cross. Mary was there during all of that agony. And as Mary looked up at him and saw the nails in his hands and the nails in his feet, imagine the agony that went through that mother's heart.

Very few mothers see their children die. Very, very few mothers see their child murdered. Very, very, very few mothers would see anything as horrible as a crucifixion to their own child.

The little hands that she held in the manger in Bethlehem that she would let lay in her hand, now they had spikes in them and blood gushing. The feet that she would hold in her little hands and play with his little baby feet, now they were nailed and blood running. And that body that she saw grow from a little baby to a man, the Bible tells us he was beat so badly he hardly had the form of a human being.

And she must have thought sometime in there, how did it come to this? Because remember, she pondered all these things that the angel had said to her and she wasn't aware of everything like we're aware now that the Bible is written. She was seeing through a glass darkly for sure, trying to figure out who is this child, this special child? And why this? He goes from teaching the multitudes and doing miracles to this kind of battering and beating. How did this happen? How do you start off with an angel coming to you, Gabriel, and saying you're gonna give birth to a boy and he'll be like no other boy? How do you start with that? And wise men coming to Bethlehem to find him and bowing down and giving gold frankincense and myrrh and angels singing and all, how do you start that way and end up this way? So I'd like to do a bit of investigation with you and let's see, I'll give you three suspects and let's see if we can figure out who did it, who killed Jesus? When crimes are committed here in New York City, that's what detectives try to do.

They try to find out who, what the motive was. But when you have someone like the Son of God, someone perfect, someone who never sinned, someone who never said anything wrong, even people who don't believe in Jesus, they can't find one thing in the gospels that he did wrong. No, his is the greatest life that was ever led, even for people who are non-Christians.

He said things no one had ever said before. He preached peace and love in a way no one had ever thought of these things, turned the other cheek, render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's and unto God that which is God. No matter how they tried to trick him, he always had the answer, he had wisdom, he could see into people, he knew what was in them.

And yet so loving and merciful and kind, a friend of sinners. What kind of sin and what kind of person would put him on the cross? That's what I wanna know. What kind of fiend, or maybe it wasn't a fiend, maybe it was a normal person.

And what kind of sin, what kind of motivation, what kind of evil spirit would get him to there? I wanna dismiss Judas. Judas betrayed him, but the plot to kill him preceded Judas and his love of money. And always remember that, why Judas betrayed Jesus, and he was one of the 12, was he loved money.

He did it for money. One of the reasons Jesus was on the cross is that one of his disciples couldn't say no to money. He looked to make a buck.

What's interesting about that is Judas was one of the ones who had Jesus sent out to preach. Judas preached, Judas went out, and according to the Bible, laid hands on the sick and saw them recover, and in the end betrayed Jesus for filthy money. So money's in the background somewhere there.

But let's give the three main suspects, because one of them's gotta be the real culprit that put Jesus on that cross and made Mary agonize, watching her son suffer. The first suspect, obviously, is the religious leaders, the Jewish leaders, the Pharisees, mixed together with some Sadducees. The Pharisees were the hardline conservatives.

They were the religious fundamentalists. They were the Hasidim of that day. That mixed in with the Sadducees, who were more liberal and were worried about political alliances with Rome, and together, along with the chief priests and that family, they were the ones who plotted and were the first ones to say, this guy has got to go.

In fact, the Bible tells us that while Jesus was teaching and performing miracles, right on the edge of the crowd, they were whispering to each other and said, not, we don't believe in him. They did not only believe in him, they said, no, we're gonna kill him. So I wanna understand, Jesus ended up on the cross because religious leaders wanted to kill him, because without them, Jesus doesn't go to the cross.

No, they were the ones who plotted it. There's other culprits, which we'll get to in a second, but without that, there's no crucifixion, without them. So what was the sin, what was the terrible sin in them that put Jesus on the cross? Because they didn't have horns, they didn't look like demons, they were religious leaders.

They were the ones quoting the Bible the most. Is that not noteworthy to us? The people who knew the Bible the best were the ones who plotted the murder of Jesus. That tells you that religion can be dangerous.

Going to church on Palm Sunday doesn't mean a whole lot if Pharisees were the ones who plotted the murder of Jesus. They were the hardliners. They had the strictest code of religious worship around.

And what was the sin that put them in such a place to plot the murder of Jesus? Well, we know it from Pilate, and we'll get to Pilate in a second. When they brought Jesus to him, he took one look at Jesus, asked a few questions, and watched them, and the Bible says, immediately Pilate knew they had delivered him up because of envy. Jesus was put on the cross because of jealousy.

Jealousy. You know what jealousy is? When you can't take God blessing another person. We're so stinking proud ourselves that we resent that God would give somebody more than we have.

More talent, better looks, nicer clothes, better job, better education. You know, envy, jealousy, that's a sick little puppy that's inside of all of us, isn't it? These religious people put Jesus on the cross because the crowds were larger, and the people loved him more than they loved to listen to them. That's what put Jesus on the cross.

It wasn't some demon whispering to them, it was jealousy, it was envy. You know, when I first went in the ministry, I shared this with pastors around the world. That really took me back because my background was not seminary or Bible school.

My background was basketball, March Madness, and ended up playing in the NCAA tournament in my senior year. And what you have in basketball is teamwork. You root for each other.

It doesn't matter who scores, you wanna win. But when I first went in the ministry, I found out that's not even that way in the body of Christ among churches. The Baptists resent the Assemblies of God, and the Assemblies of God resent the Nazarenes, and the Presbyterians resent them all.

I would go to a pastor naive, I was so naive. How simple was I? And I would say, wow, I was just in this place, and I saw this church, and God's blessing, and they would look at me, and yeah, I was in this Missionary Alliance church, and you know, my friend Ravi Zacharias, and he knows this church, and I was there, and that person from a different denomination would look at me like, what are you talking about? Why are you wasting my time? They're not one of us. I went, us? I thought we're all together.

No, no. Envy, jealousy, on an individual level, on a religious level. I met pastors who, if God is blessing another church, they would say, well, don't get excited about it.

It probably isn't as big as it really seems. And if something bad happened to that other church, I always knew there was something underneath all of that. That's just a lovely spirit, isn't it? That's what put Jesus on the cross.

And when you're envious and jealous of someone, you never say you're jealous of them. You always look for another excuse. Could any good thing come out of Nazareth? Look at the people he hangs out with.

Look at these losers, these fishermen. They're his disciples, what a joke. And he runs around with publicans and sinners, and he eats with them, but underneath all of that, most all criticism underneath it is jealousy.

When we are always harping and finding fault with somebody, we're jealous of them. We resent them in some way. That's what put Jesus on the cross, jealousy.

Definitely the religious leaders of that day were the cause of Jesus's agony on Calvary, which Mary had to watch. But wait a minute, there's another suspect. Because the religious leaders couldn't pull it off.

They were part of the Roman Empire. The Roman Empire had swallowed up Israel a long time ago, a long time before that. And although the Jewish people were a pain in the neck to the Romans like other places were, and they were very nationalistic and very religious and held to their traditions, they were part of the Roman Empire.

And the Roman Empire made it like this. Look, go to your temple, do your thing, offer your sacrifices, whatever, do it. But you don't kill anyone.

We kill. No people in the Roman Empire could commit capital punishment and exact the death penalty, except the Roman Empire. The Roman governor had to sign off, the Roman soldiers had to crucify someone, which is one of the ways that they exterminated people.

The Jewish people and any other people, you were not allowed to just be trying people and then killing them. No, you couldn't do that in the Roman Empire. So the religious leaders, filled with envy and jealousy, oh God, save us from jealousy.

You know, I'm just thinking of a proverb. Wrath is terrible, and anger is like a bubbling up of a river, but who could stand before jealousy and envy? When someone's jealous of you, no matter what you say to them, they're not buying. They are not buying it.

But even with all that envy, they needed help. That's why they went to Pontius Pilate. They arrested Jesus with the temple guard, but they knew to carry out what they wanted, they gotta get Pontius Pilate to sign off.

So they brought him to Pontius Pilate, and that's suspect number two. So we can figure out who did the deed. They bring him to Pontius Pilate, and that's where Pontius Pilate saw that it was because of envy.

Pontius Pilate was nobody's fool. He saw through them. He saw, no, this guy didn't do anything wrong.

It's you're jealous of him. He's a threat to your perks. He's bringing in a religion that, you know, you like to walk around with your long robes and be greeted by everyone, and he's washing people's feet.

No, he's a threat to you, your whole idea of religion. And Pontius Pilate was the one who signed off. In a way, he was the one, wasn't he, that had killed Jesus? But it was hard for Pontius Pilate.

What was the great sin in this man? History tells us he died a madman. Historical tradition says that, I guess, from this event or something else, he just snapped. Pontius Pilate had been warned by his wife who had a dream about Jesus, and she went to Pontius Pilate and said, yo, Pontius, or whatever she called him, do not fool with this man.

Do not fool with this man. Leave him be. And Pontius Pilate wanted to leave him be.

The Bible tells us clearly that he wanted an out. He was looking for an out. He didn't want to crucify Jesus.

He ended up crucifying Jesus. It's like a lot of us. We don't want to, but we do.

So what was the terrible sin in Pontius Pilate? He wanted to be accepted by the crowd. He didn't want anybody to rock the boat. And when they started screaming at him, we have no king but Caesar, this guy is a revolutionary, and we're gonna report back to Rome that you're putting up with guys that say they're leaders, and of course, Jesus wasn't any of that.

Those were all lies. Pontius Pilate was in a bind. He was between a rock and a hard place because he knew Jesus was innocent.

He talked to him, and instead of intimidating Jesus, Jesus intimidated him. How about that? He said, like, don't you know who I am? And Jesus said, you have no power unless it was given to you. And they was like, what? Don't you know who I am? Jesus just would be quiet, and he knew these were bad guys, and he knew this was an innocent guy.

And he was looking for a way to get out, but you know, it's hard to go against the flow, isn't it? When all your friends and all the people are gonna laugh at you if you serve Jesus. You go undercover, but he couldn't go undercover because in the end, you gotta make a decision. Does he live or does he die? If he lives, Pontius Pilate, we're gonna say that you believe in him, and it's gonna, I'm telling you, it's gonna get crazy.

So go along with the crowd, fit in. That's the sin that put Jesus on the cross. Pontius Pilate wouldn't have done it in a vacuum.

It was the pressure of peers. It was the pressure of the crowd. Like for some of us, it's the pressure of the family.

How many Christians have I seen start off serving the Lord, and because of their families, they turn back? They're families. What good will your family do when you die and you have to stand before God? Where will your friends be that are egging you on? You go, girl. You go, boy.

You go. Where will they be when you're in trouble? Where will they be from me when I have to cross over that last river and stand before God? Where are they gonna be? Who's gonna help you then? All the people who pressure us now silently, you're not gonna believe in that, are you? You're not gonna follow like Jesus? That's the sin that put Jesus on the cross. Jealousy and compromise.

Don't wanna rock the boat. Don't wanna get into something where people might say, what, you let him go? Did you know that Pontius Pilate got to the place, and we know what this is like, don't we? Because we all are attacked like Pontius Pilate. He actually got a basin and filled it with water, and what did he do? He washed his hands as if to say, hey, listen, you're gonna do it, but listen, I'm innocent of this, but you're not innocent, Pontius Pilate.

By washing your hands, you're not getting out of anything. It's the old thing of straddling the fence. I'm not gonna be for Jesus.

I'm not gonna really serve him and really make him the center of my life, but I'm not gonna say I'm against him. I'm gonna be in the middle. You can't be in the middle.

That's the song that God used to wake me up as a little boy one night, and I left the bed that I shared with my brother, a pull-out bed on 384 Parkside Avenue between Bedford and Flatbush, and I crawled over my brother, and I went down into the basement where I knew I could be alone because God was speaking to me as a little boy, and the words to the song that you don't know, but it's a song that was sung back then in church. What will you do with Jesus? Neutral you cannot be. One day, your heart will be asking, what will he do with me? You know, you all can sit here, and we can all sit here and judge Jesus, and I don't know if I believe in that verse, and I grew up different and all of that, and we're judging and judging, but there's gonna come a day when every mouth will be stopped, and then he's gonna judge us.

He's gonna give the verdict on us. Which do you wanna live for? You wanna be full of yourself and be judging Jesus, or do you wanna humble yourself? So Pontius Pilate tried to wash his hands because he wanted to straddle the middle. That's what put Jesus on the cross, a guy wanting to play the middle ground.

Envy, jealousy mixed with pride, and then a guy just like, come on, I don't wanna rock the boat. I could lose my job. Yeah, this gets back to Caesar.

I'm letting revolutionaries go. See, sometime to follow Jesus, you gotta take up your cross and deny yourself, and you gotta say no to things that are really easy and there's peer pressure. I don't know, what do you think? The religious leaders, number one, Pilate, number two.

There's one other person. Without the religious leaders, Jesus is not on the cross. Without Pilate carrying it out, Jesus is not on the cross because he could've said, get out of here, all of you.

Get out of here. I'm letting him go. He, listen, you know how he tried to get out of it? He said, wait, I can get out of it.

At that season, the holy season that we're going through right now, Passover, it was a time of letting one prisoner go, so he picked the worst dude that they had in the prison, and he said, I'll tell you what, I'll release Jesus or this madman Barabbas, and you know what they said? Give us Barabbas. Now, that's the third suspect. The crowd could've turned it around for Jesus, and by the way, where were all the people that Jesus healed and blessed and touched? Why weren't they there when he needed them? That's another whole story, isn't it? A lot of us are fair weather friends of Jesus.

When we need help, oh, Jesus help me. When Jesus needs someone to stand for him, we're watching American Idol or something, so that's the last suspect, the crowd, because all the crowd had to say was, release Jesus, do not give us Barabbas. No, no, give us Barabbas, crucify Jesus.

Well, we know that that crowd was manipulated. One of the things that put Jesus on the cross were simple people who were manipulated by other people, because the religious leaders had fed him all these lies, and none of them had the intelligence to investigate and find out, like, what's really going down with this guy? What does he teach? Who did he ever hurt? Who has he helped? Let's look at this. You know, is it true Lazarus came out of a tomb? You can actually go and see Lazarus.

Lazarus, yo, were you dead? I was, and you're alive. Wow, this guy can't be, you know, all bad. No, they weren't gonna investigate.

It's like some of us here. Go to church on Palm Sunday, go to church on Christmas, Easter, whatever. Don't open a Bible, don't study, don't find out what Jesus is really about.

Don't find out what God is about. Don't find out what life and death is about in eternity. Just trifling surface religion, and then you can be manipulated because you don't know the truth, and if you don't know the truth, you'll fall for a lie.

So they said, give us Barabbas, crucify Jesus. We have no king but Caesar, very nationalistic. We're the Roman Empire.

Ignorant people, easily manipulated, and of course, what's stuck in the craw of most people about Jesus and what probably the religious leaders used to get them stirred up was this. You know what he says? He says you're not good enough the way you are. He says you gotta repent, you gotta change.

Imagine that, we go to the temple regularly, we're good Jews, we try to live a good life, and he says it's not enough. See, now that'll get you turned against real quick. Not just 2,000 years ago, today.

You just tell anybody in the building, you know what? No matter how hard you try to be good, it doesn't make it. All we like sheep have gone astray. There is none righteous, no not one.

See, Jesus came and his message was repent. To who? To everybody. But no, I'm a religious leader, you gotta repent too.

Unless you believe in me, you'll never enter the kingdom of heaven. And see, that narrow message gets a lot of people upset. That's the way it is here today.

Listen, I've counseled a few thousand people in my life. I've preached thousands of sermons. You can say a lot of things to get people all stirred up.

You tell them they gotta change, and what do you, who are you to tell me I gotta change? Who are you, you're so hot? And Jesus told everybody, you gotta change. He told a religious leader named Nicodemus, you must be born again. Not, I suggest, you must be born again.

Nicodemus said, I'm a grown man, how am I gonna go back in my mother's body? He said, no, no, it's not that. You gotta be born from above, or you'll never see the kingdom of heaven. You go to church on Palm Sunday, it'll get you zero.

You can have grown up in church, in Trinidad, in Jamaica, in Poland, Brooklyn, the Bronx, Africa. Growing, going to church doesn't change you. It's a good practice, it has much value, according to the Bible, it gathered together with other Christians.

But to have salvation, you have to be born again. To know that you're gonna live forever when you die, you must be born again. You gotta come to a crisis in your life where you say, you know what? I don't cut it, I need a savior.

I need someone to help me. My life is not right. I have to cry out to God, have mercy upon me, oh Lord.

And see, you tell people, you have to cry out, have mercy, they go, what are you talking about? You think I'm some loser, a degenerate? What am I, a drug addict? But see, to everybody here, Jesus says the same thing. And that's why the crowd could be manipulated. You know what he says? Get him killed, he says, your religion is not enough, you gotta believe in him, imagine that.

Imagine that. So we got our three suspects. Should we do a vote? Let's see, it's the religious leaders, for sure, it all began with them, didn't it? Envy, jealousy.

Number two, Pontius Pilate, play the middle ground, compromise, don't rock the boat, don't be fanatical. Just play the middle ground. That's what put Jesus, and that's why Mary was sobbing and crying.

That's why his hands were torn. Thirdly, the people, manipulated, shallow, silly, no depth, just go along with what everybody's shouting. Well, let's see, in law and order, how would we do this? Wait a minute, wait, I just thought of something.

It's all wrong. Everything I just told you, that wasn't it. But hundreds of years before Jesus was born, a man began to prophesy, and there's no way that this prophecy could come true by Jesus trying to get it to come true.

Because Isaiah in 52 and mostly in 53 describes the way he was arrested, the way he was beat, the way he looked, and then it actually tells us that he wouldn't stay in the grave. It tells us that people would jeer at him. It tells us that he was such a mess, people would look away.

Hundreds of years, how did Jesus get that to come to pass? If he's not God, how did God, how did Jesus get all that fulfilled, because he couldn't do it by himself, it wasn't like one day a man will climb on a mountain and say 10 words. Then you climb on a mountain, say 10 words, and you say, see, I fulfilled it.

But this involved a whole bunch of stuff out of your control.

Oh, and I just got it. Erase everything I just said. Forget all those suspects.

Isaiah told us who killed Jesus. You did. I did.

For he was wounded for our transgressions. He was smashed because of my filthy sins. Oh no, not Pontius Pilate.

Not the religious leaders, not the crown. That's not who killed Jesus. I killed Jesus.

I didn't really kill him. He laid down his life for us. Because our sin is so serious that the only way God could forgive us is as Isaiah said, he laid upon him the iniquity of us all.

Now I could keep you here till Easter Sunday just telling you about all my sins. And I'm just one. Among all the thousands of you and across the street.

And then add all the sins of the whole world. What kind of pain was that that Jesus suffered? Do you ever sin and your conscience terrorizes you? Do you ever sin and feel guilty and horrible? Do you ever sin and lose your fellowship with God? How did Jesus feel when he took the sins of the whole world on him? Because the only way God could forgive us was to punish somebody else for what I did and you did. That's, brothers and sisters, ladies and gentlemen, this is what the gospel is.

The innocent one was punished so that the guilty one could be free. In the Old Testament, the sheep died for the shepherd. In the New Testament, the shepherd dies for the sheep.

He died for you and me. We can't judge anyone. Pontius Pilate, I let you go.

Religious leaders, I have no word of condemnation for you. Crowd that yelled, give us Barabbas, I'm not saying a word to you because he was wounded from my transgressions. Thank God.

So on Friday, Good Friday, when it comes up, just remember when they reenacted and when we see it, just remember the soldiers with the lashes and that get them up there and they nail it and everybody goes, oh, it's terrible why they do that to him. You did that to him. I did that to him.

Without my sin, he's not on the cross. And that's why you must believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. Because when you turn away from him and don't make him the center of your life, what you're saying is, God, I reject the sacrifice you made for me.

That's what damns a person. That's what sends somebody off into eternity without God. Not their sins.

Of course, we all sinned. We're all sinners. Who of us here can judge anybody else? Why, you're so perfect? No.

You know what damns a person? Jesus said, a day is gonna come, there'll be the sheep and the goats. Some will come with me, others away for all eternity. It won't be your sins that will do it.

It'll be the fact that you didn't believe in the sacrifice that Jesus made for you, for me. I don't know about you, I love him so much today. Anybody here with me, do you love him today? But you got to know that you're something more than religious.

You gotta have a relationship with Jesus Christ. He's gotta be the center. After what he did for us, you're gonna fit him in your life? I'm gonna fit him in some place in my life.

Like, yeah, I'm busy with a lot of things, but you know, on Sunday, I like to be in the tab and you know, and all. No, he's gotta be the center. Let's close our eyes.

Some of you I'm gonna ask to have stand in a moment across the street because we'd like to pray for you. I wanna be a faithful messenger. I'm nothing.

I am nothing in myself. But today I have authority because I'm proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ to you. That whoever would call upon the name of the Lord would be saved.

All you have to do is say, Pastor, you're right, I'm wrong. My life is not what God wants it to be and I have not made Jesus my number, numero uno, number one, my savior, my lord. I have not given my life to him.

I believe maybe in my head, intellectually, that he came, that he died, but in terms of that relationship that changes everything. If you're here today and would like me to just pray with you and then we'll dismiss you, Pastor Cimbala, pray for me that I will be born again. That my life will change as of this moment as I receive Jesus.

I humble myself and I believe what you're saying and I know that right now my life is not right what God wants it to be. It's not right. It's not what God wants it to be.

I'm in church, but my heart, my life is not what God wants it to be. Would you just stand where you're sitting? I know that takes some courage, but if he went to the cross and died for us, you can stand where you're sitting. Just stand up and say pray for me.

If you want us to pray for you, just stand and say this message was for me. God brought me here today. It's a setup.

In his love, he brought me here today so that I would hear the good news. This is not bad news. This is good news.

Jesus said I didn't come into the world to judge the world. I came into the world that the world through me might be saved. I'm a doctor.

I don't hurt people. I heal people. If you're standing, come out of your seat and come up here.

Come on down from the balcony. Across the street, just stand where you are. The pastors and deacons will help you.

Every eye closed, pastor, not joining your church because your church has no power. Not going to become your disciple because I need Jesus, not you. But I do need the Lord.

Remember the simple things that kept people back from serving the Lord, especially Pontius Pilate. Just that middle ground. I'm not going to be against them, but I'm not going to be all out for them.

It might be too risky. You're going to start a new life starting Palm Sunday. What a beautiful way to start a new life on Palm Sunday, 2013.

I'm going to follow Jesus. Trust Jesus. He's going to help me.

I open my life to him. I admit my failures to him. I don't keep anything back.

I'm not going to justify myself. I'm going to humble myself and just say Jesus, I need you and he will help you. The Bible says to as many as received him.

That's in contrast to this. He came unto his own, but his own received him not. But as many as received him, that means accepted him and his teaching and his person and his name and his role as savior of the world.

To as many as received him and humbled themselves and opened their heart and said, I need you. He gave them the power to become members of the family of God. Changed their life.

Not by them trying, but by them receiving. By them believing. Pray after me, everyone in the church, so we can help our friends.

Pray after me. Dear God, I believe in Jesus, who was born of a virgin, crucified under Pontius Pilate, buried in a tomb, but on the third day, he rose again. I know why he was on the cross.

He was wounded from my transgressions. He was bruised from my sin. And I repent of those sins.

And I put my faith in Jesus, the savior of the world. Lord, I will follow you by your grace all the days of my life. And you will help me through every difficult place for such is your promise.

Teach me your word. Teach me how to pray. Give me good Christian friends.

Keep me unspotted from the world. And I will give you all the glory. Father, I thank you for your word.

We now know who did it. Not Pontius Pilate, not the leaders, not the crowd. You laid down your life for us.

Gracias, Senor, por todo. Te amo mucho, mucho, Senor. We love you today for washing away all the guilt of all of our sins.

And now bless the people. Give us a beautiful Palm Sunday. Be with your people now.

We pray in Jesus' name. And everyone said. Amen.

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# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

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