

Taking the Blame

Scripture Reading — Matthew 27:3-5, 24-25

Pilate ... took water and washed his hands in front of the crowd. "I am innocent of this man's blood," he said.

—Matthew 27:24 —

Taking the blame requires character. But we often prefer excuses to responsibility. I saw this alot when I used to visit the county jail as part of a weekly ministry: almost everyone there had a story of innocence.

The characters in Jesus' trial were no different. After designing a plan to lure Jesus into the Jewish leaders' trap, Judas could not bear to take the responsibility for Jesus' arrest. He returned the money and wanted to undo what he had done. But it was too late.

Pilate tried to avoid blame by suggesting that Barabbas might take Jesus' place. Pilate knew Jesus was innocent, but he could not find the strength to act on his convictions. So in a final act of avoidance, Pilate washed his hands in front of the crowd and claimed he was innocent of Jesus' blood. He didn't have the backbone to stand for the truth.

But excuses, rationalization, and avoidance of the truth have no place in the presence of God. Each of us must face our own guilt, our own responsibility for the death of Jesus, our own accountability to the Almighty. The Son of God came all the way from heaven to earth, and we killed him. God was among us, but we failed to recognize him.

Only when we take the blame can we receive the blessing of forgiveness and new life that he came to provide for us.

Prayer

Jesus, Son of God and Lamb of God, I deserved to die, but you took my place. I was the guilty one, but you took the blame on yourself instead. What a Savior! Amen.

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