

Small Group Guide: "The Compromiser"

Series: Bad Boys of Easter

Week 3: Pilate

Scripture Focus: John 18:28–19:16

Opening Prayer (5 minutes)

Begin your time by thanking God for bringing your group together. Ask Him to give each person honesty and courage—not just to recognize truth, but to respond to it. Pray that God would reveal any areas where fear or pressure may be influencing decisions more than faith.

Icebreaker (10 minutes)

Question: Have you ever known the right thing to do... but doing it would have cost you something?

What made that situation difficult?

Key Takeaways from the Sermon

- Knowing the right thing isn't enough – Pilate knew Jesus was innocent, but still chose compromise.
- Truth requires courage – Recognizing truth and acting on it are two very different things.
- Pressure can override conviction – Pilate gave in to the crowd to protect his position.
- Neutrality is a decision – Trying to stay neutral about Jesus is still choosing a direction.
- You can't avoid responsibility – Pilate washed his hands, but he couldn't remove his role in the decision.
- Following Jesus often costs something – Fear of that cost can keep us from fully surrendering.

Discussion Questions (30–40 minutes)

Understanding the Scripture

1. Read John 18:33–38. What stands out to you about Pilate's interaction with Jesus? What do you think Pilate understood about Jesus in this moment?

2. In John 19:12, the crowd says, “If you let this man go, you are no friend of Caesar.” Why do you think this statement carried so much weight for Pilate?

Personal Reflection

3. The sermon highlighted that Pilate knew the truth but lacked the courage to act on it. Why do you think it’s sometimes difficult to follow through on what we know is right?

4. Pilate tried to stay neutral by “washing his hands.” Where do people today try to avoid responsibility instead of making a clear decision?

5. The message suggested that “the crowd will always be louder than your conscience.” What kinds of “crowds” influence our decisions today?

Applying the Truth

6. When have you felt pressure (from people, culture, or circumstances) to compromise something you knew was right?

7. The question Pilate asked was, “What is truth?” What do you think keeps people from fully embracing truth even when they recognize it?

8. The message asked: “Who is deciding what you do with Jesus?” What voices tend to influence that decision in people’s lives?

Practical Applications (15 minutes)

Individual Commitments

1. **Courage Check** – Ask yourself this week: Where do I already know the right thing to do? Write down one area where you feel God prompting you to act.

2. **Take One Step** – Choose one small but clear step of obedience in that area—even if it feels uncomfortable.

3. **Daily Alignment Prayer** – Each morning, pray: “God, give me the courage to follow you today, even when it costs me something.”

Group Accountability

Share one area where you want to grow in courage this week (only what you’re comfortable sharing). Check in with one another mid-week to encourage and pray.

Closing Exercise (10 minutes)

Read John 18:37–38 together.

Go around the group and complete this statement:
“One truth I feel challenged to act on this week is...”

Prayer Time (10 minutes)

Break into groups of 2–3 and pray for one another:

- Pray for courage to act on truth
- Pray for strength when facing pressure
- Pray for clarity in difficult decisions
- Pray for boldness to follow Jesus fully

Challenge for the Week

The Courage Challenge: Each day this week, ask: “God, where do I need to choose truth over comfort today?” Write down what stands out and be ready to share next week.

Scripture for Further Study

- John 18:33–38 – Pilate questions Jesus
- John 19:12–16 – The crowd’s pressure
- Matthew 27:24 – Pilate washes his hands
- Proverbs 29:25 – Fear of man vs. trust in God
- James 4:17 – Knowing the good you ought to do

Leader Notes

- Create a safe space where people can be honest about fear and pressure
- Avoid turning the discussion into political or cultural debates—keep it personal
- Emphasize that this message is not about guilt, but about invitation to courage
- Help participants move from “I know” to “I will”