

Series Slide

A year ago, Chance the Rapper released a song only as a Youtube video. Not sure how many views I've contributed to the 3 and a half million total, but...I don't know...maybe a couple thousand.

That's how much this song speaks to me.

I've read the lyrics over and over. I wish I had them memorized...but somehow my post-40 brain won't store stuff up like my teenage brain could. Which means I'm stuck with all three verses of Ice Ice Baby and some of C & C Music Factory's "Everybody Dance Now"...instead of the rich and deep lyrics of "The Heart and The Tongue".

I printed the lyrics off and posted them on the wall in my office so I see them everyday. That's how much they mean to me. So I'm gonna give you all 40 or so lines right now.

This WILL NOT be anywhere close to what you experience in the song- so be sure to look it up on Youtube later and watch the video.

**My heart and tongue are fightin', my mind is undecided
It's not like Trump and Biden, it's more like it's something
private
Like when your cousins fight and one of 'em get excited
You can't just jump the gun and pick a side and jump inside it
Remember Pontius Pilate hung a God and justified it
The truth is slow 'cause someone's always in a rush to hide it
The lies is golden 'cause the devil got a touch of Midas
The soul is brighter 'cause the Holy Ghost is ultraviolet
The tongue is violent when the spirit starts to hunger-strikin'
The thunder lightning makes the heart go under bunkers hiding
The lungs is silent when it hears the footsteps of the giants
And then the fingertips they twist up like Poseidon's trident
Remember safety if you ever running from the tight end
Remember Mookie if they ever come to cut the hydrant
They cut the heart out with the tongue, they want it undivided
You better not start, you make a fuss you, end up uninvited
My heart and mind are beefing, I call 'em Rhyme and Reason
They always going head to head, I'm trying to Siamese 'em
My father got a special set of skills like Liam Neeson
He told me faith and squinted eyes can turn the blind Venetian
I seen the sign, I'm in the den, I'm with the lions sleeping
I seen the wine, I seen the water turn to bright Tahitian
The heart is somewhere on Hawaiian beaches**

**Tying pigeons to the Giant Peaches
I want the beat to feel like diegesis
I'm tired of politicians tryna sell us diet Jesus
That's like dialysis was tryna sell us diabetes
Act like you was born yesterday and you gon' die a fetus
The mind's philosophy is old as Thales of Miletus
The mind is quite elitist, that's why they like choir preachers
They buy our leaders easier than I can buy a feature
That's why the genius always end up on the tightest leashes
That's how I wrote my whole entire thesis
My heart and flesh are racing, that's why I get complacent
That's why y'all get impatient, y'all don't get the invitation
I'm sitting courtside with the nurses during visitation
Watching the vitals with some popcorn and anticipation**

Wow.

There is SOOOO much in those lyrics. I can almost guarantee you that this one will come back for another sermon feature, but today I want to give the overview of what I think Chance is saying here...and then zero in on a couple of lines that really help me think through the text of Scripture we're gonna read today.

The song is about the difficulty in making decisions where your heart feels one way and either, what you have said (your tongue) or what you think (your mind) represents something different.

**My heart and tongue are fightin', my mind is undecided
It's not like Trump and Biden, it's more like it's something private
Like when your cousins fight and one of 'em get excited
You can't just jump the gun and pick a side and jump inside it**

It's not an external thing- like who you voted for President- it's private- an internal struggle. And if you jump on one side too quickly, you may have committed yourself to the wrong person. The question is Should I go with my heart- or go with the promises I've made- or the way I've represented myself in my words.

**My heart and mind are beefing, I call 'em Rhyme and Reason
They always going head to head, I'm trying to Siamese 'em**

At the start of the second verse- he shows you the struggle again- between the heart and mind. They're divided, but he wants to bring

them together. Should I go with my heart- the way I feel- or should I make my decision on reasoning through a situation?

This is the battle. This is the theme of the song.

Now for our purposes today-

Lets look at these lyrics. Because Pontius Pilate is going to be one of our main characters in this text today

**Remember Pontius Pilate hung a God and justified it
The truth is slow 'cause someone's always in a rush to hide it**

Pontius Pilate is the indecisive governor that had Jesus' fate (so he thought) in his hands. In the end- his verdict submitted to the will of the people to protect himself- instead of him recognizing who Jesus is and submitting to him.

At one point, in the events as described in John's gospel- Pontius Pilate asks Jesus sarcastically, "What is truth?"

Chance replies here why Pilate had such a hard time seeing who Jesus is. You have to be patient with the truth. Its slow to reveal itself- because someone is always frantically trying to cover it up for their own benefit.

**I want the beat to feel like diegesis
I'm tired of politicians tryna sell us diet Jesus
That's like dialysis was tryna sell us diabetes**

Diegesis is the telling of a story by a narrator in a movie. Think about a movie like Sandlot- where Smalls narrates the story as it happens. Diegetic music is music that can be heard within the film. So non-diegetic music is like a movie score- you know- in Jaws -no one could hear John Williams' famous "DUH NUH" "DUH NUH".

That's non diegetic. So when Chance says he wants his beats to feel like diegesis- he's saying "I want my music to help people understand how to live in daily life. I don't just want to narrate and comment OUTSIDE of the story- I want my music to bring the "DUH NUH" into the story...I want to reveal to the actors where the shark is and how to survive. "

**"I'm tired of politicians tryna sell us diet Jesus
That's like dialysis was tryna sell us diabetes."**

He's saying politicians are infamous for using part of Jesus to get elected. Holding up a bible. Quoting a Bible verse out of context...not really engaging with the fullness of how Christ presents himself...which would have the politician acting a completely different way.

He compares that to a dialysis selling diabetes. That is the cure selling you the disease- because if you don't have the disease- you don't need the cure. So politicians try to convince us we have a sickness that only they can cure in order to get elected...and they use Jesus to do it.

Title Slide: "Diet Jesus: Why Pontius Pilate Hung a God and Justified it... and So Will You"- Luke 22:63-23:25

Ok...file that away for a few minutes... those are word pictures that are going to help us understand what happens in a seemingly very tragic scene in Luke 23.

Luke 22:63-23:25

63 The men who were holding Jesus started mocking and beating him. 64 After blindfolding him, they kept asking, "Prophecy! Who was it that hit you? " 65 And they were saying many other blasphemous things to him.

66 When daylight came, the elders of the people, both the chief priests and the scribes, convened and brought him before their Sanhedrin. 67 They said, "If you are the Messiah, tell us."

But he said to them, "If I do tell you, you will not believe. 68 And if I ask you, you will not answer. 69 But from now on, the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the power of God."

70 They all asked, "Are you, then, the Son of God? "

And he said to them, "You say that I am."

71 "Why do we need any more testimony," they said, "since we've heard it ourselves from his mouth? "

CHAPTER 23

Then their whole assembly rose up and brought him before Pilate.

2 They began to accuse him, saying, "We found this man misleading our nation, opposing payment of taxes to Caesar, and saying that he himself is the Messiah, a king."

3 So Pilate asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews? "

He answered him, "You say so."

4 Pilate then told the chief priests and the crowds, "I find no grounds for charging this man."

5 But they kept insisting, "He stirs up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, from Galilee where he started even to here."

6 When Pilate heard this, he asked if the man was a Galilean. 7 Finding that he was under Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod, who was also in Jerusalem during those days. 8 Herod was very glad to see Jesus; for a long time he had wanted to see him because he had heard about him and was hoping to see some miracle performed by him. 9 So he kept asking him questions, but Jesus did not answer him. 10 The chief priests and the scribes stood by, vehemently accusing him. 11 Then Herod, with his soldiers, treated him with contempt, mocked him, dressed him in bright clothing, and sent him back to Pilate. 12 That very day Herod and Pilate became friends. Previously, they had been enemies.

13 Pilate called together the chief priests, the leaders, and the people, 14 and said to them, "You have brought me this man as one who misleads the people. But in fact, after examining him in your presence, I have found no grounds to charge this man with those things you accuse him of. 15 Neither has Herod, because he sent him back to us. Clearly, he has done nothing to deserve death. 16 Therefore, I will have him whipped and then release him."

18 Then they all cried out together, "Take this man away! Release Barabbas to us! " 19 (He had been thrown into prison for a rebellion that had taken place in the city, and for murder.)

20 Wanting to release Jesus, Pilate addressed them again, 21 but they kept shouting, "Crucify! Crucify him! "

22 A third time he said to them, "Why? What has this man done wrong? I have found in him no grounds for the death penalty. Therefore, I will have him whipped and then release him."

23 But they kept up the pressure, demanding with loud voices that he be crucified, and their voices won out. 24 So Pilate decided to grant their demand 25 and released the one they were asking for, who had been thrown into prison for rebellion and murder. But he handed Jesus over to their will.

Transition: There are 4 characters, beside Jesus, in this passage. The San Hedrin, Herod, Pilate, and Barrabbas. I want to show you something about those 4- each after something for themselves-

...and then we'll look at Jesus- after something entirely different.

1) You'll buy Diet Jesus when what you really want is control.

- To be clear, when I say "Diet Jesus" I mean not all of Jesus as he presents himself. Just part of him. The part that will help you, not get in your way.
- Like politicians want the parts of Jesus that help them get elected.
- They sell you the Diet Jesus- the Jesus that agrees with all of their agenda.
- Lets start with the Sanhedrin.
- In short, the Sanhedrin are a group of Jewish religious leaders.
- Did you get that?
- They are the leaders. In the religious world- they have top billing.
- **23:2**
- If Jesus is the Messiah, and the things he says are true- their control over other people is massively threatened. They would have to go back and re-interpret all of the Scriptures through the lens of Jesus being the Son of God.
- In other words, they would lose the control they had.
- Their diet Jesus is Jesus is just a rebel. Now, was Jesus a rebel? In some respect. Yes. But that is not PRIMARILY what he was.

- So, They take Jesus to Pilate, the governor and they now sell Pilate diabetes, so he'll cure it with Dialysis.
- They paint this picture of Jesus only as rebel. A rabble-rouser. A threat to the King.
- In other words, if they can convince Pilate that Jesus is a political rebel that wants to be King...they know he will be sentenced to die.
- Once again- it is a desire to control- to keep their position of power- that is at the heart of the Sanhedrin's inability to Jesus for who he fully is.
- Next, take a look at Herod.
- **23:8-9**
- Herod is another character who is all the way on top. Except not in the religious community as much as the political.
- Herod is King.
- Herod has as much control as anyone could have.
- And yet- you don't find a guy who is content and at peace.
- Instead- Herod is anxious and always wondering who is going to take his power from him.
- In fact, Caesar Augustus said of Herod- better to be one of Herod's pigs, than his son.
- Because Herod was notorious for killing even his own children if he suspected they were trying to take his crown.
- You get that here in the text in Herod's diet Jesus.
- First- Herod doesn't want all of Jesus. He doesn't want to deal with Jesus claims of Messiah ship or his calls to repentance and faith.
- Instead- he's interested in Jesus' power.
- Because for Herod- power is what rules the world. If you have no power- you are no threat.
- He cares about seeing Jesus' miracles, but is not really interested in Jesus as the Truth.
- He asks Jesus questions- but Jesus remains silent. Why?
- My guess is that the questions weren't sincere- or that the questions were just Herod's attempt to size Jesus up...to see if he really was after Herod's kingship.

- **23:11**

- Notice- it was never the Jews that mocked Jesus. Or hit him. Or provoked him. It was always the Romans.
- Why? Because they wanted to push Jesus- to press him with power...hoping to squeeze him hard enough that his true colors would show. That if he had the ability- he would call down fire from heaven. Or a million angels. Then- they would know he was a threat. But- like a bully- as long as Herod knew he could pick on Jesus- mock him and make him look stupid- without retaliation- he knew he had nothing to fear from Jesus- and he could get back to be paranoid about losing his crown to someone else.
- Herod's Diet Jesus was an inconsequential religious nobody with some cool parlor tricks.

- Now to Pilate

- **23:23-24**

- Pilate is different.
- He doesn't have religious power, like the Sanhedrin.
- And he's not in a ultimately powerful political position- like Herod.
- He's a governor in a backwater province of Rome.
- He's a power hitter for a single-A minor league baseball team.
- Think of Pilate as a big fish in a small pond.
- And he really would like to get promoted.
- So he's trying to please everybody.
- He is trying to control the Jewish crowds and the Sanhedrin. He doesn't want them to get upset...because if there is a political uproar in Jerusalem, Herod is not going to be happy.
- At the same time, He doesn't want to make Herod look foolish by crucifying Jesus when Herod as already determined that Jesus is a weakling that doesn't really pose a threat.
- So he's stuck. Trying to control what Herod thinks about him and trying to control this crowd.
- So what does he do?
- He pushes the decision back onto the crowd.
- He has Jesus whipped, like Herod does...and then lets the crowd make a decision based on an old custom they have, of swapping out a man on trial for a condemned man on the Passover.

- In John's Gospel, Pilate washes his hands as a symbolic act of blame shifting- its his way of controlling the situation. "I'm with Herod. If this gets out of hand- its because ya'll decided it...not me!"
- Pilates Diet Jesus?
- Jesus is just a bland every person not deserving of death, but not really deserving of any attention at all.
- Neutral.
- Finally- there is Barabbas.
- **23:18-19**
- Barabbas is revolutionary Jew. While the Sanhedrin sought to bring out about the redemption of Israel through ushering in the Messiah by keeping the demands of the Torah...
- ...Barabbas method of control was rebellion and violence.
- He interpreted the Jewish scriptures as "the ends justify the means".
- Israel is God's people- God's people should control God's land and God's temple- therefore- God's law can be ignored to get whatever God promised.
- So Barabbas was a zealot. He was another guy with two swords up his sleeves. He was EXACTLY the kind of guy that Herod and Pilate really feared....thats why he was already in prison.
- Barabbas' attempts to control came through violence.
- His diet Jesus?
- He was so busy about his own violent agenda- he didn't even seem to know who Jesus was. But he'll take the get out of jail free.
- To Barabbas- Jesus was a free pass- to avoid consequences and still keep trying to get control violently.
- Diet Jesus was freedom without repentance.

Back to 1)

- Now- lets bring this into 2022 for a minute. Because Jewish religious leaders, revolutionaries, ancient kings and near-eastern governors don't actually fit very well into a Tuesday morning meeting, a Thursday study session or a Monday pre-school pickup.

- But we're still buying diet Jesus left and right.
- You can buy the Sanhedrin's version of Diet Jesus.
- In John's gospel, Jesus addresses these Jewish religious leaders head on.

- **John 5:39-40**

- He says- You read the scripture meticulously...and you think that by doing so you have eternal life. But you have completely missed me. That they all are pointing you to me. And now- you are rejecting the very one who can give you eternal life.
- You buy Diet Jesus when you are religiously committed to reading the Bible, coming to church, even practicing spiritual disciplines- but coldly- you shut Jesus out. You never let your religion be about a person that you listen to. Instead. Its about doing a list of things to help you feel in control.

Back to 1)

- Or there is Herod's Diet Jesus.
- When Jesus is just a low level threat that might have potential to add something interesting to your life, but your eyes are on other people stealing your power.
- Is your mind constantly wrapped up in who is on top at work?
- As a parent do you find yourself always trying to guess which one of your children is trying to undercut your authority or go behind your back?
- Do you find yourself paranoid about losing power or position- and Jesus is just an inconsequential side show of no real importance in your life?
- Or there is Pilate's diet Jesus.
- Do you find yourself constantly trying to please everyone? Jesus is fine. You kind of like him. He seems good enough. But he gets shoved to the side in your life of controlling the way people feel about you.
- Finally, there is Barabbas' diet Jesus.
- Jesus who?
- Oh- I can pray a prayer, say "I believe you died on the cross for my sins" and get out of hell free- and head right back into living my life the way I want to live it. The ends justify the means. And as long as my causes are good...like ending abortion or helping immigrants- I can achieve them by any

means possible and act however I want to. My character and my life mean nothing- the ends justify the means. Jesus just makes sure I get a free pass in the end!- Jesus affects my life after death...but not my life before death!

- You see what's common in all of those Diet Jesus'?
- They take the parts of Jesus that allow you to be in control.
- That allow you to NOT divert from the path you're on.
- They let you call the shots.
- But none of them are really Jesus. They are all just projections of your desire to control others and protect your own power.

Transition: But if you are willing to take the long, hard, but beautiful road Jesus calls us to walk with him...you'll see...

2) The Truth is slow, but when you get all of Him- you get diegesis.

- Chance said
- **Remember Pontius Pilate hung a God and justified it**
The truth is slow 'cause someone's always in a rush to hide it
- We justify all our attempts to minimize Jesus down to DIET Jesus.
- But the truth is slow.
- It takes time.
- Jesus invited his disciples to come on a daily walk with him. For 3 years. It was a walk...never a hurried run.
- I'm always amazed that Jesus never ran.
- You never see Jesus in a hurry. Or anxious.
- Even in these unjust, completely despicable scenes of abuse and mocking- he remains silent...calm...his wits about him.
- Even when his disciples betray him at the end...he doesn't freak out about it. He doesn't sink into despair...even as he descends to death.
- Do you know why?
- Because Jesus has diegesis.
- He has a narrator- explaining the events around him to him.
- He spends time in prayer with his Father.
- He withdraws to deserted places and focuses on the Scripture he knows...in fact- in the darkest times on the cross- it's the

Scripture that flows from his mouth...that are all Psalms that foretell of the Messiah's suffering and ultimate triumph.

- I'm a UNC Basketball fan. Up 25. Then a bogus ejection...then no calls from the refs... then overtime.
- I was a rollercoaster mess. Because I didn't have diegesis...
- Jesus had this...in spades.
- But you don't get diegesis with diet Jesus.
- You only get it when you take him in his fullness.
- He is the fulfillment of the Scriptures that the Sanhedrin missed.
- He is the King of Kings, that doesn't compete with other Kings, but
- He is the Truth...that if Pilate would have calmed down long enough to let Jesus actually honestly respond to his sarcastic question- Pilate would have found the safety and security in a relationship he was looking for- instead of the constant people pleasing and bowing to power. Jesus is the one who can't be controlled, and doesn't wait for you to make the right move before you get his embrace and approval.
- And underneath all of this...at its foundation- we are called to see the fullness of Jesus that Barabbas missed.
- Jesus traded places with Barabbas. An innocent man condemned...and an unrighteous man declared innocent.
- This is the heart of the gospel of Jesus. We hung a God and justified it.
- And through that, God justified us.
- The penalty...the condemnation...the shame of all of your sin went to Jesus on the cross.
- And all of Jesus' righteousness...all of his innocence...his royalty...his beauty...and most importantly...his close access to God the Father and the Holy Spirit...
- It was all given to you.
- Its yours to receive.
- ...and when you do...when you know why Jesus died...you get his diegesis.

- Jesus said to his disciples that he would send us the Holy Spirit...as a Counselor...that he would lead us into all truth.
- ALLOWS YOU TO HEAR THE MUSIC- STAY IN STEP WITH THE SPIRIT.
- ALLOWS YOU TO RECALL THE SCRIPTURE YOU HAVE READ...the stories you know...and let them shape your reactions to situations.

Lords Supper Slide

Do this in remembrance of me.

- You know what this is?
- Its not "feel bad that Jesus dies."
- It's diegesis.
- It's a song in the movie that we can hear.
- Its bringing the narration to all our sin and all of the evil and darkness that has ever come against us.