

THROUGH THE BIBLE STUDY

LUKE 23:1-56

If your house has a gas furnace, you're familiar with the pilot light. It's the starter flame that triggers the bigger burner. The pilot light stays perpetually lit. It's what ignites the furnace when you crank up the heat.

You can't fire up the furnace without the pilot.

And the Jewish hierarchy couldn't kill Jesus with *the Pilate*. Pontus Pilate, the Roman governor of Judea, was the trigger they had to squeeze to execute Jesus.

Over ten years earlier, in 19 AD, the Romans had stripped the Jews of their right to capital punishment. Thus, a death sentence could only be handed down by Rome and its agents. Thus, *Pilate* was the *pilot light*.

Pontus Pilate is one of the most infamous villains in history. He ruled Judea for a decade - from 26-36 AD.

But for the 1900 years since, there was no historical or archaeological proof that Pilate even existed... *until modern times*. In 1961, archaeologists excavating the amphitheater at Caesarea discovered an ancient limestone tablet engraved with the name, "Pontus Pilate." It was another proof of the Bible's reliability.

And those of you who've been with me to Caesarea-by-the-sea have seen the replica on display there. The original is tucked away safely in the Israeli museum.

Most of what we know about Pilate is from the Bible, and yet legends abound... One story says Pilate ended up overcome with guilt and committed suicide.

Another story says the Caesar in Rome became ill, and hearing of Jesus' miracles, he sent to Pilate hoping to see Jesus. Pilate stalled in answering since he'd already crucified Jesus. A woman named Veronica had followed Jesus to the cross and wiped His brow with her handkerchief. The cloth held a mysterious image of the face of Jesus. Veronica went to Rome and gave the cloth to the Emperor. Tiberius was miraculously healed but was furious at Pilate. He had the governor executed. You could say, Tiberius turned off the *pilot*.

Well, Luke's account focuses on truth, not legend. Verse 1 begins, "Then the whole multitude of them (the Jews that is) arose and led Him (Jesus) to Pilate."

Pilate was a great enigma. He hated the Jews and Jewish custom, but he often appeased the Jewish leaders to keep the peace. In fact, Pilate tried Jesus three times - acquitted Him after each attempt - yet still sentenced Jesus to death to placate the Jews.

Pilate was the consummate politician. He was more concerned with *posturing* than *principle*. Pilate cared more about *the political ramifications* of his decisions than he did *the moral or spiritual consequences*.

"And they (the Jews) began to accuse Him saying, "We found this *fellow* perverting the nation, and forbidding to pay taxes to Caesar, saying that He Himself is Christ, a King." All

three accusations violated Roman law. And could potentially get Jesus executed.

Of course, the first two charges were lies. *Jesus never perverted the nation.* And *He paid taxes.* Once, He paid the Temple tax with a coin from a fish's mouth.

Pilate knew the first two charges were bogus, so he locked onto the third. "Then Pilate asked Him, saying, "Are You the King of the Jews?" He answered him and said, "It is as you say." Jesus never voiced any political or military ambition, yet He did claim to be a King. He was King of a spiritual, eternal kingdom, that posed no immediate threat to Pilate and Rome. "So Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowd, "I find no fault in this Man." Romans tried to rule with equity and fairness.

But they (the Jews) were the more fierce, saying, "He stirs up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee to this place." When Pilate heard of Galilee, he asked if the Man were a Galilean. And as soon as he knew that He belonged to Herod's jurisdiction, he sent Him to Herod, who was also in Jerusalem at that time." And here Pilate acts like the consummate politician - the governor passes the buck.

Herod Antipas, the son of Herod the Great, was ruler over the region of Galilee. He too was in town for the Passover. *This should be a matter for him to decide...*

Verse 8, "Now when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceedingly glad; for he had desired for a long *time* to see Him, because he had heard many things about Him, and he hoped to see some miracle done by Him."

Realize, Herod had no desire to follow Jesus. He viewed Him as a sideshow - a curiosity - a circus act.

And Jesus refused to perform! “Then he questioned Him with many words, but He answered him nothing.”

Jesus said nothing, but in doing so spoke loudly! In fact, His silence fulfilled a Messianic prophecy. Isaiah 53:7 had said of the Lord’s Suffering Servant, “He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so He opened not His mouth.”

But Jesus’ cold shoulder rankled the Jews. “And the chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused Him. Then Herod, with his men of war, treated Him with contempt and mocked *Him*, arrayed Him in a gorgeous robe, and sent Him back to Pilate.”

Sadly, the Son of God had become a political football. Here, Herod punts Jesus back to Pilate.

And as is often the case, these two men’s resistance to Jesus created an unlikely alliance. “That very day Pilate and Herod became friends with each other, for previously they had been at enmity with each other.”

“Then Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests, the rulers, and the people, said to them, “You have brought this Man to me, as one who misleads the people. And indeed, having examined *Him* in your presence, I have found no fault in this Man concerning those things of which you accuse Him; no, neither did Herod, for I sent you back to him; and indeed nothing deserving of death has been done by Him. I will

therefore chastise Him and release *Him...*” In Pilate’s perspective, Jesus had done nothing to deserve death.

And here he tries to pacify the Jews by having Jesus scourged or beaten. *It was typical Pilate politics.* He sidesteps the truth and tries to strike a compromise...

Verse 17, (for it was necessary for him to release one to them at the feast).” It seems the governors in Judea had started a tradition. The feast of Passover was all about freedom from bondage; so to celebrate he would set a Jewish prisoner free. Pilate was hoping to use this tradition as a loophole. He could release Jesus without calling the Jewish charges *bogus*.

“And they all cried out at once, saying, “Away with this *Man*, and release to us Barabbas” - who had been thrown into prison for a certain rebellion made in the city, and for murder.” Pilate couldn’t believe his ears.

From all accounts, Barabbas was a terrorist. He was an enemy of Rome and a threat to the peace. His goal was insurrection. Upset Rome by keeping Jerusalem on pins and needles. If innocent people died; so be it!

Surely the Jews hated this outlaw every bit as much as they did the Romans. Pilate thought they’ll never want Barabbas back on the streets. But on this day, none of Pilate’s instincts will prove right. Here, he underestimates the Jews’ intense hatred for Jesus.

Verse 20 “Pilate, therefore, wishing to release Jesus, again called out to them. But they shouted, saying, “Crucify *Him*, crucify Him!” And realize the Jews responsible

for railroading Jesus were the chief priests and rulers. This wasn't the same crowd that hailed Jesus as Messiah the previous Sunday. Most ordinary Jews were still waking up after the Thursday night Passover Seder. Jesus' arrest and the phony trials that followed were carried out in the early morning hours, unnoticed by the masses of common people in the city.

“Then (Pilate) said to them the third time, “Why, what evil has He done? I have found no reason for death in Him. I will therefore chastise Him and let *Him* go.”

But they were insistent, demanding with loud voices that He be crucified.” Never underestimate the fervor of religious prejudice. Jesus was a threat to the whole religious system of Judaism. They wanted Him gone.

Often Christianity's fiercest opposition comes not from the State, or secular society, but from religion.

“And the voices of these men and of the chief priests prevailed.” Often this happens. It isn't the voice of truth and righteousness that prevail, *but the loudest voice*

“So Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they requested. And he released to them the one they requested, who for rebellion and murder had been thrown into prison; but he delivered Jesus to their will.”

In Matthew's account, at this point we're told, “Then he released Barabbas to them; and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered Him to be crucified.”

This scourging was the “*chastising*” Pilate had threatened several times previously. It was a savage beating. The Romans called it “the halfway death.”

A cat-o-nine-tails with little bits of lead and ivory embedded into the cords was used to churn the victim’s back into hamburger. Usually, the lacerations were so deep the victim’s internal organs were exposed. Often, a rib or bone would fly off the body during the beating. At the conclusion of the ordeal, the victim was cut down, and he would hit the pavement in a puddle of his own urine, feces, sweat, and blood.

Many victims of a Roman scourging died during the beating and never actually made it to the cross.

Those who were unfortunate enough to survive the scourging were made to carry their own cross to the place of execution. Which was Jesus’ experience...

“Now as they led Him away, they laid hold of a certain man, Simon a Cyrenian, who was coming from the country, and on him, they laid the cross that he might bear *it* after Jesus.” He was grabbed randomly from the crowd. Simon may’ve just been a passer-by. He was from North Africa, so he likely had black skin.

Perhaps, he was on a Passover pilgrimage and was on his way to the Temple when he stumbles across this awful procession. He stopped on the curb to observe the entourage, when the point of a Roman spear pressed him in the back and called him into duty.

Ironically, Simon had journeyed to Jerusalem to draw closer to God. Who could've imagined he would draw this close - *to carry His Savior's cross?*

And there's evidence that suggests Simon became a believer. In Mark's Gospel, which was directed to the Romans, Simon of Cyrene is further identified as the father of Rufus and Alexander. Apparently, these men were known to the church at Rome. When Paul writes in Romans 16:13, he greets Rufus and his mother as members of the church. It's likely this was the same Rufus - the son of Simon - who was now a Christian.

Put the pieces together, and we can assume Simon was converted by this experience, returned home, led his family to Christ, and later relocated to Rome!

This proves that seemingly random encounters can actually be divine appointments. Who knows what a day may bring! God uses chance events to alter lives.

It's also interesting there'd been another Simon, who a few hours earlier boasted, "Lord, I am ready to go with you, both to prison and to death." Now when he's needed, he's nowhere to be found. This Simon fills in.

Verse 27, "And a great multitude of the people followed Him, and women who also mourned and lamented Him. But Jesus, turning to them, said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. For indeed the days are coming in which they will say, 'Blessed are the barren, wombs that never bore, and breasts which never nursed!' These were not the women who

followed Jesus from Galilee. These gals were "*daughters of Jerusalem*" who felt it their duty to weep and wail, and stage a display of grief, whenever a Jew was crucified. They wept with crocodile tears.

Jesus tells them to cry for themselves. He sees into Jerusalem's future. In 70 AD, the Romans will crackdown on the city's uprising with a vengeance. Jesus is saying, "*If they do this to a man they know is innocent, what will they do to those truly guilty of insurrection!*"

"Then they will begin *'to say to the mountains, "Fall on us!" and to the hills, "Cover us!"* In Revelation 6, this is what the Jews say in the future, in the tumultuous time called *Great Tribulation*. At the end of the age, the daughters of Jerusalem will wail again. *Even at His crucifixion, Jesus was thinking of His second coming!*

He says, "*For if they do these things in the green wood, what will be done in the dry?*" In terms of Israel's history, this was springtime, the green wood, when hope was fresh, and alive, and new. But if the Jews are so callous in a time of opportunity what will they be like when hope has dried up and the fires of judgment threaten? Jesus is mourning their hard hearts.

Verse 32 "*There were also two others, criminals, led with Him to be put to death.*" Three crucifixions were on the Roman docket that day. *Isaiah 53:12 had said that Messiah "would be numbered with the transgressors."*

"*And when they had come to the place called Calvary...*" "*Calvary*" is the English word for the Greek "*kranion*" or our "*cranium.*" "*Calvary*" was the name for an outcropping of rock

outside Jerusalem's north wall. It looked like a skull. The locals call the site, "Skull Hill."

In building the Temple, King Herod used the upper portion of Mount Moriah as a stone quarry. The result was this formation. Today, Skull Hill sits right behind an Arab bus stop. Erosion has diminished the resemblance of the skull. A hundred years ago it was more discernible. but you can still see the skull's eyes.

This hill has always been associated with travel. In Roman times, crucifixions were carried out by a roadway where as many local citizens as possible could witness the consequences of rebellion. It was a stern deterrent. A main thoroughfare from Jerusalem to Damascus ran by Skull Hill, *and still does*. Jesus was crucified either on top or at the bottom of Skull Hill.

For we're told, "there they crucified Him..." In one short sentence Luke sums up the most torturous form of execution ever devised, "*they crucified him.*"

Lethal injection, electric chair, firing squad, guillotine, hangman's noose were designed to make execution as quick and painless as possible. Crucifixion, on the other hand, made the act torturous and interminable.

Seven inch iron spikes were driven into His hands and feet. Add to Jesus' ordeal a crown of thorns. He was hoisted into the air on a beam - His bodyweight pressing on His wounds. Each breath required Him to hike up His torso, pressing down on the nails and causing excruciating pain to ricochet through His body.

Most crucifixion victims suffered for days before they finally died. Often vultures would arrive before death - to start nibbling and feeding on the victim's flesh.

The dignified Roman, Cicero, once said, "The idea of the cross should never pass through the thoughts, eyes, or ears of Roman citizens." Official Romans deserving of capital punishment were beheaded, not crucified. Crucifixion was for non-Romans - for slaves and savages on the outskirts of the empire.

And also crucified with Jesus were "the criminals, one on the right hand and the other on the left."

Reminds me of the old pastor in the hospital on his death bed. He only had a few days to live. He kept crying out to the nurse, "Please, call my Congressman and my Senator. I want to die in peace." The nurse thought it a strange request, but she complied.

When the two politicians entered the room the pastor told one of them to stand on either side of his bed. The pastor sighed, "Now I can die in peace." The nurse had to ask, "Pastor, what does having your Congressman and Senator by your side have to do with you dying in peace?" The old pastor answered, "Nurse, now I can die like my Lord Jesus - between two thieves."

Actually, we know from Romans 6:6 the identity of one of the thieves. It was the Apostle Paul's dad. For Paul writes, "my old man was crucified with Christ."

On the cross, Jesus will make seven statements...

To the repentant thief He'll say, "Today, you will be with Me in paradise." He'll turn over the care of His mother to John, "Woman, behold your son! (then He said to John) behold your mother!" And as the sky goes black for three hours, He'll cry in anguish to His Father, "My God, My God, why have you forsaken Me?"

His last three statements will come at the end, in a flurry. The first of these three is preparation for the last two. When He cries "I thirst" it causes the soldiers to moisten His lips so He can utter His grand finale, when He makes the momentous statement, "It is finished!"

And in a last gasp, He'll breathe, "Father, into Your hands I commend My spirit." Luke records just three of these statements, but He provides us with the first...

Verse 34, "Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do." And this is truly amazing grace! Jesus has compassion on the very people who are *spitting in His face, pounding nails into His flesh, screaming at the top of their lungs, "Crucify Him."* Here is the heart of God. "Father forgive them."

From the Garden of Eden humanity has rebelled against its Creator, yet He keeps loving, and reaching, and wooing, and longing for the rebels to return.

If these Romans and Jews had known God's heart, they would've never killed Jesus... They would've fallen on their faces in appreciation, and praise, and surrender. Instead, they remain blinded by ignorance.

"And they divided His garments and cast lots."

Jesus wore an outer, single-piece tunic. It was of some value, so rather than tear it into equal shares, the soldiers attending His crucifixion, gambled it away.

Think of the irony... This is God, yet they shoot craps for His coat. This fulfilled Psalm 22:18, "They divide My garments among them, and for My coat they cast lots."

Verse 35, "And the people stood looking on. But even the rulers with them sneered, saying, "He saved others; let Him save Himself if He is the Christ, the chosen of God." The soldiers also mocked Him, coming and offering Him sour wine, and saying, "If You are the King of the Jews, save Yourself." What evil!

Angry taunts came from both *religious Jews* and *secular Romans*. What no one understood, and wouldn't until after the resurrection, was that God had deliberately chosen *the way of weakness*.

Realize, power is a two-edged sword. It ends suffering for some, yet at the expense of others. But love absorbs everyone's pain! Here God was renouncing power in order to demonstrate true love.

It was once wisely said, "The only ultimate way to conquer evil is to let it be smothered within a willing, living human. When it is absorbed there, like blood in a sponge, or a spear into one's heart, it loses its power and goes no further." Jesus was the ultimate shock absorber! Rather than save Himself, He absorbed the world's evil and extinguished it with His love.

Verse 38, "And an inscription also was written over Him in letters of Greek, Latin, and Hebrew: THIS IS THE KING OF

THE JEWS. Typically, a wooden plague listing the prisoner's crimes was nailed to the cross just above the head of the victim. The accusation against Jesus was written in the three main languages of the first century - **Greek**, the language of culture. **Latin**, the language of government. And **Hebrew**, the language of religion... And all three crucified Jesus.

Everyone though was able to read the sign.

"Then one of the criminals who were hanged blasphemed Him, saying, "If You are the Christ, save Yourself and us." He joined the jeers of the crowd.

"But the other, answering, rebuked him, saying, "Do you not even fear God, seeing you are under the same condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man has done nothing wrong."

This thief agreed with Pilate, *Jesus is innocent*, but he goes further. He acts on the truth He knows. He has faith. He trusts Jesus with His eternity.

"Then he said to Jesus, "Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom." And Jesus said to him, "Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise." And Jesus rewards not just assent, but faith.

It's interesting, the Greek term translated, "*criminal*," means "*one who uses violence to rob openly*."

Understand, this man wasn't being crucified for credit card theft. He was an armed robber - guilty of murder and mayhem. On earth he undoubtedly deserved death, but in eternity he's given Paradise. *And why?*

It had nothing to do with *the work of his hands*, they were nailed to a piece of wood... It had nothing to do with *the places he went to spread God's kindness*, for his feet were also nailed to that wood... And it wasn't because *he joined a church* - nailed to a cross, you can't go to church... There was only one thing this man could do, and that was have faith, and look to Jesus. **This was all he could do, but it was all he had to do!**

We all come to God by grace through faith.

I think of this boy's poor parents. They went to bed that night, and every night thereafter, thinking their son was burning in hell... *But you never really know what happens in a man's heart during his final seconds.*

There is such a thing as a death bed conversion!

It's said, **"God included one death bed conversion in the Bible to give us hope, but only one so as not to create false hope."** You may die in an instant and not have a final chance. There's no guarantee. That's why you need to come to Jesus today, while you're able.

Verse 44, **"Now it was about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour."**

That's from noon until 3:00 PM - darkness covered the earth. Nature knew that something was wrong. The lights went out. Amazingly, *it was midnight at midday.*

Recall in Egypt, Israel experienced *three days of dark* prior to Passover and their exodus. Now on Calvary, the world experienced *three hours of darkness* as the blood of our Passover lamb was shed to set us free.

“Then the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was torn in two.” Hebrew scholar, Alfred Edersheim, quotes the Jewish Talmud as saying that forty years before the Temple was destroyed - *what he believes was the year Jesus was crucified* - the Temple doors miraculously opened of their own accord. His quote is a non-Christian, Jewish source validating Luke and the Gospels. ***The Temple veil was torn in two.***

It’s interesting though the Talmud interprets it as a judgment, while the Gospels treat it as a sign of grace. In Christ, the door to God is now open. There’s access.

“And when Jesus had cried out with a loud voice, He said, “Father, *‘into Your hands I commit My spirit.’*” Having said this, He breathed His last.” Jesus quotes Psalm 31:5, used as a bedtime prayer for Jewish kids.

Despite His obvious searing pain, He died peacefully. Jesus died like a little child curling up in His Father's arms to go to sleep. Composure and peace still characterized Jesus even in the throes of death.

Verse 47, “So when the centurion saw what had happened, he glorified God, saying, “*Certainly this was a righteous Man!*” Roman centurions - the equivalent of our sergeant - were the backbone of the Roman legion.

Here was a man who knew men. Sizing up and training men was his job. *And it didn’t take him long to draw a bead on Jesus. Here was a man among men.*

He says, “*Certainly this was a righteous Man!*”

Matthew records more of what he said. "Truly, this was the Son of God." I'm sure the Sarge said both.

"And the whole crowd who came together to that sight, seeing what had been done, beat their breasts and returned." The dark sky and convulsions of nature silenced the mocking and scoffing. Those who stayed to the end knew something serious had happened.

"But all His acquaintances, and the women who followed Him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things." Jesus had a few followers, particularly the women, who stuck with Him to the end. *But where were Pete and the boys?* They were AWOL.

Verse 50, "Now behold, *there was a man named Joseph, a council member, a good and just man.*" He served on the Jewish Sanhedrin - the same body who had condemned Jesus to death earlier that morning.

But they'd done so without Joseph's approval. Luke writes, verse 51, "*He had not consented to their decision and deed. He was from Arimathea, a city of the Jews, who himself was also waiting for the kingdom of God.*" Mark 14:64 reports the Sanhedrin's verdict on the fate of Jesus, "*They all condemned him to be worthy of death.*" Their verdict was unanimous.

Since Luke tells us Joseph had not consented - we assume he must've been absent that morning.

Up until this point, Joseph had been a *covert Christian - a secret saint*. John 19:38 describes him as "a disciple of Jesus, but secretly, for fear of the Jews."

It's interesting, the crisis of the cross sent the disciples who'd previously been open about their faith underground; while bringing the underground disciples out into the open. The twelve hide for their lives, while Joseph realizes it's time to come out of the closet!

Of course today, *coming out of the closet* is quite fashionable. Every sexual attraction or gender dysfunction feels the liberty to identify and celebrate itself. Well, if you've been an undercover Christian I think it's time for you to come out and identify?

Be bold in your faith - stop hiding your light under a basket - it's time to shine! Our world needs Jesus!

"This man (Joseph) went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus." There's an ancient legend that has preserved the dialogue between Pilate and Joseph.

When Joseph asked for the body, Pilate said, "Do you realize this will be costly? Have you priced tombs lately? You'll lose a brand new tomb?" Joseph replied, "Aw, not really, Jesus only needs it for the weekend!"

Verse 53, "Then he took (the body) down, wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a tomb..." The Jews buried the corpses under mounds of spices - wrapped the bodies tightly in a linen shroud - and then laid them in a tomb.

And Luke describes the specific tomb, “*(it) was hewn out of the rock, where no one had ever lain before.*”

Often Jewish tombs were double or triple occupancy.

The Garden Tomb just north of Skull Hill - believed by many to be this very tomb - the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea - was actually cut out for four people.

And it was a new tomb. You can see chiseling that was never finished. The tomb that housed the body of Jesus was empty when His body arrived, and it was empty when He departed. Jesus came into the world through a *virgin's womb* and left through a *virgin tomb*.

Verse 54, “*That day was the Preparation, and the Sabbath drew near.*” Jesus died shortly after 3 PM. The Jewish day ended at sundown. Thus, the Sabbath began at 6 PM, leaving little time to prepare His burial.

John 19:31 says the next day was a special Sabbath. Some folks think there was an extra Sabbath that year observed on Friday. If so, Jesus was crucified on *Good Thursday*, not *Good Friday*. It can be debated.

What's certain though is Jesus died and was buried.

For “*The women who had come with Him from Galilee followed after...*” These women weren't the “*daughters of Jerusalem*” - the fair weather mourners on the streets of Jerusalem - these were devoted disciples who'd been with Jesus from Galilee onward.

“*And they observed the tomb and how His body was laid.*” Notice, “*they observed the tomb.*” These gals weren't caught up in the hysteria of the moment so that they forgot where

Jesus was buried. Skeptics like to say the resurrection was a case of *mistaken tomb*.

The women forget where they laid Jesus. That's silly, it doesn't fit the facts. These women paid attention. They were very careful to note exactly where He was buried.

They would be returning Sunday to finish His burial.

“Then they returned and prepared spices and fragrant oils. And they rested on the Sabbath according to the commandment.” Within 100 years of Jesus, at least fifteen Jews claimed to be Messiah - each one flamed, then fizzled, and was eventually snuffed out.

The women and Joseph went home thinking that another flame had been extinguished. They had no idea that in a few hours the whole course of human history would be forever altered. **As the poet, John Donne, wrote, "Death, be not proud."** At the moment death seemed victorious, but a new fire is about to rise from cold ashes! *It's Friday, but Sunday is a'coming...*

Let me close with a question that needs to be asked before we close... ***Who was it that killed Jesus? Was it Pilate? Or Herod? Or the Romans? Or the Jews?***

Of course, they all were accomplices, but when we search for the smoking gun we have to look deeper.

It was my sin and your sin that nailed Jesus to the tree. I killed Him. And you killed Him. We can't pass the buck. We're all guilty of killing the Son of God.

Jesus died because of our sin. And He did it willingly.

And now it's our responsibility to make sure He didn't die in vain. And we do that by humbling ourselves, opening our hearts, and surrendering our lives to Him.

Today, ask Jesus to forgive you and set you free!