

Reasons

Certainly we like to be thought of as logical human beings, and because of that, we try to provide logical reasons for the things we do.

But we don't always provide the *right* reasons.

No, we're not above fooling ourselves, and even others, concerning our actions.

And certainly that was the case with religious leaders in Israel.

Quite naturally, they wanted to provide religious reasons for crucifying Jesus, reasons they could live with quite comfortably while pursuing their own agenda.

In fact, a couple of those reasons came up during that hasty and unofficial trial before the high priest.

First of all, there were the false witnesses, but their testimony didn't agree.

And then there were other witnesses who affirmed they had heard Jesus talking about destroying their beautiful temple. Now this was serious, but their testimonies didn't agree either.

They couldn't agree because He had never said any such thing.

He had never said He would destroy the temple.

He had only said He would raise it up in three days if *they* destroyed it.

And by the way, He was talking about the temple of His body when He said that.

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However, the high priest managed to save the day by bringing up something that was really true.

He asked Jesus point-blank---"**Are You the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?**"

And without hesitation, Jesus said He was.

And, in fact, He said a great deal more than that.

Mark 14:62 **"Jesus said, "I am. And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven."**

Well, that's exactly what the high priest wanted to hear.

V 63-64 **"Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, "What further need do we have of witnesses? "You have heard the blasphemy! What do you think?" And they all condemned Him to be deserving of death."**

Yes, this was blasphemy.

Here was a mere man who claimed to be equal with God!

Actually, He was a man who could heal the sick, raise the dead, and feed multitudes with a little boy's lunch, but they were quite prepared to forget all that.

They had found that *religious reason* for putting Him to death, and they were sticking with it.

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But even so, they would need a political reason to satisfy Rome.

Actually, that wouldn't be a problem.

They could just make one up.

Luke 23:1-2 **"Then the whole multitude of them arose and led Him to Pilate. And they 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."**

However, I don't think their initial argument was very convincing.

You see, Pilate already knew what their real reason was.

He already **"knew that they had handed Him over because of envy."**

Yes, the real problem was . . . they hated Him.

They hated Him because He threatened their power over the people.

And they hated Him because He had shown up their so-called piety as mere hypocrisy.

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But there was another reason for their animosity, and it had nothing to do with their personal feelings.

Actually, Jesus hit the nail on the head in a previous conversation---**"You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do."**

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And this brings us to another reason for Jesus' crucifixion.

You see, Satan had always wanted to destroy the Son of God.

At Jesus' birth, he incited Herod to kill all the young children in Bethlehem in order to get Him.

Now he was using the religious leaders for the same purpose.

And just before they arrested Him, and I think as a final act of kindness, Jesus encouraged them to carefully consider their actions.

Luke 22:52-53 **"Then Jesus said to the chief priests, captains of the temple, and the elders who had come to Him, "Have you come out, as against a robber, with swords and clubs? "When I was with you daily in the temple, you did not try to**

seize Me. But this is your hour, and the power of darkness."

Yes, **"the power of darkness."**

In their zeal to accomplish their own agenda, they were accomplishing Satan's agenda.

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And we must also ask the question, What was Pilate's reason for crucifying Jesus? After all, he was the one who gave the order.

And this, in spite of the fact that he had publicly proclaimed Jesus' innocence.

"I find no fault in this Man."

So why would he deny his own well-founded convictions?

It was because of those fateful words---**"If you let this Man go, you are not Caesar's friend,"** and they stopped him cold.

Yes, honesty and justice were simply too expensive.

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And then, of course, we must consider Jesus' reason for the crucifixion.

After all, He wasn't a helpless victim.

Concerning His life, He had said---"**No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself.**"

I think His reason is best summed up by His agonizing words spoken in the garden---"**O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will.**"

Yes, Jesus' reason was *God's* reason.

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And what was God's reason?

Well, it was a love unlike anything the world had ever seen before.

John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that
He gave His only begotten Son, that
whoever believes in Him should not perish
but have everlasting life."