

# GracePoint: A Weekly Sermon Discussion

## 90 – Pilate's Wife

### Announcements:

10/18 @7:30 -

Prayer

10/19 @6:30 -

Grace Group

10/20 - 10/22 -

Clarus Conference

10/22 @8:30 -

Sunday School

10/22 @6:00 -

Family Night

SMALL GROUPS

**ICE BREAKER:** Have you ever been in a play or program of any type?? What was it like?

**READ:** Matthew 27:15-19

If you spend any amount of time around theater type people you are bound to hear a certain phrase. It is meant to bring comfort, usually to someone who did not get the part that they wanted and instead are cast as “Tree number 4”. “There are no small parts, only small actors.” In other words, every part is critical and important. While this might not be entirely true with examples like above, the heart behind it can be seen often in the bible. We run into a whole host of different characters and they are all important. Some have big roles and we remember their names (like Judas, Peter, Pilate). While others play a much smaller role (the woman at the well, a roman centurion, or importantly here: Pilate’s wife). What we can learn is that each of these people can (and should!) teach us something. So while she only shows up in exactly one verse here (verse 19) there is a whole lot that we can learn by looking at Pilate’s wife.

Before diving into what she represents and *means*, We need to deal with what she does -- have a dream. Is this important? What does this mean? One of my commentaries is helpful here. “In antiquity dreams held greater authority than they do now, and in Matthew *every dream mentioned is from God.*” In other words we should really sit down and think about it this way: If David has a dream what does it mean? Probably not much. If someone in antiquity reports their dream what does it mean? Probably something more. If Matthew tells us that someone had a dream what does it mean? A whole bunch! Before we dive into who God spoke to, we can and should remember this: God will do whatever God wants to do to speak to the hearts, souls and minds of those whom he will speak to. He uses ordinary means like Scripture and preaching, he uses surprising means like a donkey or a worm, and sometimes he uses special means like dreams. The real question is are we listening and what do we do with it?

**DISCUSS:** Why is it important to know that God can use many different means to speak to his people? How should we approach these thoughts and what “guardrails” need to be in place to protect us?

Now we can ask: what is so special about Pilate’s wife? If we are being honest she didn’t really do anything to change the way the story unfolds here. She was not able to change her husband’s mind. She could not save Jesus. So what does she do? A whole lot, actually! In this entire section, really in the entire passion narrative, she is the **ONLY** person to stand up for Jesus. All of the disciples disappear in verse 56 of chapter 26. Peter denies Jesus three times. The only witnesses at the trial are false witnesses. Even Jesus himself here “gave him no answer, not even to a single charge.” (verse 14). And in the middle of all of that, here is this lone woman pleading with her husband and calling Jesus “that righteous man.” While she might not have moved the needle in terms of any action in the story, what she does do is testify the truth of who Jesus is into a very dark place and time. And even if just for that, she should be praised!

**DISCUSS:** It is important to note that the value of her words come from their **TRUTH**, not their **EFFECTIVENESS**. What does that mean for us, in our context?

Finally, we can wrestle through who she is. If all we knew are the few things we have covered so far: that God gave her a dream, that she is the only one who stood up for the messiah, we would probably be shocked to learn that she is a **GENTILE WOMAN!** Even here, we see the seeds of what God is doing. Even here we understand that Jesus came with a far greater mission in mind than just Roman oppression in palestine. Jesus came to make a people from “every tribe and language and people and nation.” This pagan gentile woman, one that all we know about here is that she is married to the arm of roman law in the area, plays a part in the story of salvation for all people! Even here, in the midst of the passion is this hope: that the gospel is for all people. The messiah came even for this type of person. In all honesty we don’t know what happened later in her life, she may very well have turned to follow the one that caused her to “suffer”, she may not have. But what we can know is this. Matthew is very intentional to include people from all walks and places of life in the gospel story. From the wise men in the beginning to various characters throughout the whole book to Pilate’s wife here and his final exhortation to make disciples of “all nations” -- Matthew wants us to see clearly that the gospel is for all people!

**DISCUSS:** In what ways can Pilate’s wife inspire us to take the hope of the gospel out? One other thing to note here is that she is an “unlikely candidate” to receive the gospel. But aren’t we all! Who in your life have you seen that was unlikely but God saved them? Who can you still have hope for?