

What Evil Has He Done?

By David Wright

Pontius Pilate, the Roman procurator of Judea at the time of the crucifixion, was reluctant to put Jesus to death. The Lord's profound speech and a disturbing message sent from the governor's own wife combined to make him nervous. Pilate repeatedly tried to convince the Jews that Jesus ought to be released, but every effort failed. "Let him be crucified," they clamored (Matt. 27:22). Finally, Pilate asked: "Why, what evil has he done?" (v. 23).

This is a profound question. What evil did Jesus do? Did he sin with his hands? The Lord's hands were certainly busy, but their activity was always good. The touch of his hand comforted and cleansed the leper (Matt. 8:1-3), blessed innocent children (19:13-15), and restored life to the dead (9:25). No, Jesus never did any evil with his hands. In the home of Cornelius, Peter reminded his audience of "how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed by the devil" (Acts 10:38).

Well, then, did Jesus sin with his lips? No. The Gospel writers recorded many of the Lord's words, and all of them were good. He prayed, gave wise instruction, exposed and corrected insincerity, gave encouragement, and expressed love. But he never once said the wrong thing. Peter affirmed that Jesus "committed no sin; no guile was found on his lips. When he was reviled, he did not revile in return" (1 Pet. 2:22-23). Since Jesus perfectly controlled his tongue, we know that his heart was perfect too (Jas. 3:2; Matt. 12:34-35).

What evil has Jesus done? None, actually. He died on the cross for the evil we have done (2 Cor. 5:21).

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