

The logo for 'CLOSE ENCOUNTERS' features the text in a bold, white, sans-serif font. The letters are set against a dark background with vertical streaks of light in shades of red, orange, and blue, creating a sense of depth and movement. The word 'CLOSE' is on the left, 'ENCOUNTERS' is on the right, and they are separated by a thin white vertical line.

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS

²⁸ Then they led Jesus from the house of Caiaphas to the governor's headquarters. It was early morning. They themselves did not enter the governor's headquarters, so that they would

not be defiled, but could eat the Passover. ²⁹ So Pilate went outside to them and said, "What accusation do you bring against this man?" ³⁰ They answered him, "If this man were not doing evil, we would not have delivered him over to you." ³¹ Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and judge him by your own law." The Jews said to him, "It is not lawful for us to put anyone to death." ³² This was to fulfill the word that Jesus had spoken to show by what kind of death he was going to die.

³³ So Pilate entered his headquarters again and called Jesus and said to him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" ³⁴ Jesus answered, "Do you say this of your own accord, or did others say it to you about me?" ³⁵ Pilate answered, "Am I a Jew? Your own nation and the chief priests have delivered you over to me. What have you done?" ³⁶ Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from the world." ³⁷ Then Pilate said to him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice." ³⁸ Pilate said to him, "What is truth?"

After he had said this, he went back outside to the Jews and told them, "I find no guilt in him."

Series Lessons

John includes the STORIES of five people who ENCOUNTERED Jesus and their response.

- The RELIGIOUS Jn. 3

- The BROKEN Jn. 4

- The GUILTY Jn. 8
- The FORGIVEN Jn. 12
- The REJECTOR JN. 18

John includes these encounters to show that SALVATION is for EVERYONE.

The Ruler

Pilate was appointed GOVERNOR of Judea in 26 A.D. by Emperor Tiberius.

He has two major CONFLICTS with the Jews prior to his encounter with Jesus.

The STANDARDS Incident – Pilate backs down. **26-27 A.D.**

The Galilean Massacre – Worshipers are killed. **27-29 A.D.**

There were some present at that very time who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. Luke 13:1

The Aqueduct RIOTS - Pilate forcefully responds. **28-29 A.D.**

Because of his responses he is seen as a HARSH and insensitive ruler, and is very cautious of a THIRD imperial reprimand.

The Rejection

Jesus had SIX trials before his crucifixion. (3 Jewish; 3 Roman)

The Jewish leaders refuse to enter Pilates headquarters to protect their

CEREMONIAL cleanliness. (*Hypocrisy*)

²⁸ Then they led Jesus from the house of Caiaphas to the governor's headquarters. It was early morning. They themselves did not enter the governor's headquarters, so that they would not be defiled, but could eat the Passover.

Pilate did not want to get INVOLVED and tried to abdicate his RESPONSIBILITY.

. 29 So Pilate went outside to them and said, "What accusation do you bring against this man?" 30 They answered him, "If this man were not doing evil, we would not have delivered him over to you." 31 Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and judge him by your own law." The Jews said to him, "It is not lawful for us to put anyone to death." 32 This was to fulfill the word that Jesus had spoken to show by what kind of death he was going to die.

Pilate asks Jesus if he is a KING ?

33 So Pilate entered his headquarters again and called Jesus and said to him, "Are you the King of the Jews?"

Pilate asks the most important QUESTION to history's most important PERSON but doesn't WAIT for the most important ANSWER.

Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice." 38 Pilate said to him, "What is truth?" After he had said this, he went back outside to the Jews and told them, "I find no guilt in him.

Pilate is WARNED by his wife not to CONVICT Jesus.

19 Besides, while he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent word to him, "Have nothing to do with that righteous man, for I have suffered much because of him today in a dream." Matthew 27

The Reflection

Pilate ultimately had Jesus KILLED.

16 So he delivered him over to them to be crucified. John 19

In 36 A.D. Pilate pre-emptively kills Samaritan Pilgrims who were gathering, thinking that they were staging an uprising. He is recalled to Rome to give an account.

Church tradition states that Pilate committed SUICIDE.

“What is Truth?”

For Jesus, truth is more than just a correct set of FACTS, but it's a look at DIVINE reality.

“I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” John 14:6

²³ But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. ²⁴ God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.” John 4

Jesus is Truth INCARNATE.

¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. John 1

Truth demands a RESPONSE

Everyone who belongs to the truth listens (obeys) to my voice. V. 37

³⁰ Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹ but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name. john 20:30-31

TRUTH matters and the REJECTION of truth causes you to...

- PASS blame - Shift RESPONSIBILITY
- Violate CONSCIENCE - BECOME Indifferent
- Ask Questions w/o wanting an answer

In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes. Judges 21:25

Application:

What area of your life do you need to apply TRUTH to?

4. Consequences

These incidents made Pilate's tenure rocky from the start.

- Philo (in *On the Embassy to Gaius*) says that Tiberius had to send him orders more than once to respect Jewish customs.
- By the end of his career, Pilate had a long record of clashes with local leaders.
- His final crackdown on Samaritans (around A.D. 36) was so brutal that the Syrian governor Lucius Vitellius ordered him back to Rome to explain himself to Caesar.
- Before he could stand trial, Tiberius died, and Pilate's fate after that is uncertain (some traditions say he committed suicide).