

"What If?"

Trilacoochee October 9, 2022		
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Slide: What If

Introductions.

Slide: What If..the earth stopped rotating?

What If..the earth stopped rotating?

Slide: Just 40 Seconds

It wouldn't be good..even if it lasted only 40 seconds.

At the Equator, the earth's rotational motion is at its fastest, about a thousand miles an hour.

If that motion suddenly stopped, the momentum would send things flying eastward. Moving rocks and oceans would trigger earthquakes and tsunamis.

The still-moving atmosphere would scrape the landscapes.

Slide: What If..Saturn replaced our moon?

What If..Saturn replaced our moon?

The Earth will crash into Saturn in less than one day.

And that's the end of that scenario.

Slide: What If..Judas had not betrayed Christ?

What If..Judas had not betrayed Christ?

His name is synonymous with infamy.

He betrayed Jesus for 30 pieces of silver.

Slide: 1 Timothy 6:10

Judas loved money.

He exemplified what we read in 1st Timothy 6:10--
the love of money is the root of all evil.

He was a crook, an embezzler of funds.

The Apostle John called him a thief in John 12:6.

But if Judas didn't act according to prophecy God's
credibility was at stake.

Slide: Zechariah

Listen to Zechariah's prophecy 500 years before
Judas betrayed Christ:

Animation: (**Read Off Screen**) (Zechariah 11:12)

Judas suffers remorse and returns the 30 pieces of
silver.

The high priests reject Judas –and even proclaim:
We don't care! It's your problem!

Five centuries earlier listen to the prophecies of
Zechariah—he even foretells the thoughts of Judas:

Animation: (**Read Off Screen**) (Zechariah 11:13)

Slide: David

One thousand years before Jesus is betrayed by
Judas, David tells his prophecy:

Animation: (**Read Off Screen**) (Psalm 41:9)

Slide: Jesus

Here's what Jesus says in the Book of John:

Animation: (**Read Off Screen**) (John 13:18)

Slide: Isaiah

Isaiah prophesied Jesus death:

Animation: (**Read Off Screen**) (Isaiah 53:7-8)

Slide: David

David told us in advance the soldiers would wager
for the clothes of Jesus at the crucifixion:

Animation: (**Read Off Screen**) (Psalm 22:18)

Slide: David

And that famous statement made by Jesus on the cross – David prophesied it first:

Animation: (**Read Off Screen**) (Psalm 22:1)

Had Judas not betrayed Christ he would not have been condemned by Pilate.

Slide: What If...Pilate had not condemned Christ?

What If...Pilate had not condemned Christ?

Slide: Pilate and Jesus Before the Jews

Pontius Pilate is best known for presiding over Jesus' fate and ordering his crucifixion.

Pilate's political position put him over the judicial system of Judea, and civil control over the Sanhedrin, the body of Jewish leaders who wanted Jesus crucified.

Yet why would Pilate send an innocent man to his death?

Especially when one considers the relationship between Pilate and the Jews: it was toxic!

Pilate had a chance to do something good here in this PR department.

But Pilate's hatred for the Jews was intense, and he deliberately infuriated them.

Under Jewish law, images of the Roman government were forbidden in Jerusalem, but Pilate once allowed troops to carry shields with the image of Roman Emperor Tiberius into the city.

Amination: As one historian writes:

(Read Off Screen)

Christopher Klein wrote that—he is an author and freelance writer specializing in history and a frequent contributor to histoty.com.

Slide: Passover

One of Pilate's duties—as far as Rome was concerned—was keeping the peace during Passover. It was at this time Jesus was brought to him.

The Sanhedrin wanted him to pronounce Jesus guilty of capital treason.

Slide: Purple Robe

Hearing Jesus was from Galilee, Pilate sent Jesus to Herod Antipas, who sent him back to Pilate wearing a purple robe in mockery.

Slide: Pontius Pilate

Pilate was arrogant.

Animation: (**Read Off Screen**) (John 19:10)

Slide: John 19:11

Jesus answered him:

Animation: (**Read Off Screen**) (John 19:11)

Slide: The Jews

Pilate had a big problem. The Jews were not making an idle threat. The message being communicated to Pilate is that if you let this man live, we're going to tell on you. We're going to make sure Caesar knows that someone in your province put himself above the Emperor, and you let Him go.

Another bad report reaching Rome would certainly have caused Pilate to lose his position, or even his life. But wouldn't any leader in the Roman Empire fear bad news reaching Rome?

Animation: (**Read Off Screen**) (John 19:12)

Slide: Easton's Bible Dictionary

Pilate eventually bowed to the demands of the people, ordering Jesus to be whipped.

We read this in Eastern's Bible Dictionary:

(Read Off Screen)

Slide: Lictor (Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia)

By the way—a lictor was a Roman civil servant who was an attendant and bodyguard to a magistrate.

Lictors were instituted by Rome's first king, Romulus.

They carried rods that exhibited an axe—this symbolized the power to carry out capital punishment.

Slide: Pilate's Wife

Pilate was no stranger to persecuting the Jews, and yet he could not find fault with Jesus.

Even Pilate's wife warned him not to execute this just man:

Animation: **(Read Off Screen)** (Matthew 27:19)

Could it be that Pilate's wife recognized Jesus more than the Jewish people who were supposed to know unequivocally who He was?

Slide: Yes; Maybe; No

What is known *historically* about Pilate would not predict his hesitation at the execution of a Jew. He profoundly and outspokenly hated them.

Pilate caved in fear of the threats being made against him.

But following a custom during Passover—releasing a prisoner, Pilate lets Barabbas go free.

The Jews are okay with that.

But they did not want Jesus to live.

Slide: Dr. Ray Pritchard

Dr. Ray Pritchard writes:

(Read Off Screen)

Dr. Ray Pritchard is president of Keep Believing Ministries, an internet-based organization serving in 225 countries, and he is the author of 29 books with Christian themes.

Only God knows that Pilate, although a brutal leader, actually had much free will to decide matters between the Jews wanting Jesus dead and the reactions from Roman authority.

Rome respected authority—and local leaders in the Empire who are decisive

But we read this in the NT:

Animation: (**Read Off Screen**) (John 18:33)

Neither Pilate nor his wife were of Jewish heritage, yet here they are playing a part in the greatest story of all time.

But Pilate is still uncertain.

Slide: Pilot Washes His Hands

Pilate knew Christ was innocent but lacked the moral fiber to face the mob with a verdict against their wishes.

He attempted to default responsibility of Jesus' crucifixion to the people demanding him to make the decision.

Animation: We read this in Matthew 27:24:

(**Read Off Screen**)

Unfortunately for Pilate, any attempt to disassociate himself with the decision to crucify Jesus is futile.

Scripture clearly states we are each responsible for our own choices and will suffer the consequences.

God knows the finite details of the hearts of oppressive leaders like Pilate that make decisions affecting the people they lead.

Had Pilate not condemned Christ he would not have died on the cross.

Slide: What If...Jesus had not been born?

What If...Jesus had not been born?

Slide: "It's a wonderful Life"

In 1943, an unknown author wrote a short story called "The Greatest Gift." He tried to get it published to no avail. So, he printed 200 copies himself and distributed them to friends and family.

One of those copies made its way to Hollywood, where it eventually fell into the right hands and was converted into a screenplay. The name of the project was changed to "It's a Wonderful Life." The film was released in 1946 and has now become a holiday classic.

You have seen the movie--a troubled man named George who is rescued by an angel trying to earn his wings—and in the process shows George how terrible things would be in Bedford Falls if he had never been born.

If Jesus had never been born—there is no comparison how terrible the world would be.

Slide: Empty!

What you see is a blank screen—nothing is there----
no spiritual future for those who have not confessed
Christ before men.

They are dead spiritually—whether they know it or
not are not!

Slide: The Cross

We can read in the book of Hebrews, chapter 2,
verses 9–18, three outcomes if Christ was never
born:

Animation: Number one: There would be no
salvation from sin.

If Christ had not been born, then his death on the
cross would have never taken place, and there would
be no forgiveness of our sins, no Plan of Salvation
from God:

Animation: (Read Off Screen) (Hebrews 2:9):

This scripture tells us that Jesus was born to die.

That his death might give eternal life to everyone
who believes in Him.

In verse 10, of Hebrews chapter 2--the only
begotten Son of God is coming down from heaven to
earth, so that the many sons and daughters of Adam
and Eve might become children of God in Christ:

Animation: (Read Off Screen) (Hebrews 2:10):

The word “perfect” here means complete—Jesus is our perfect High Priest, who is able to cleanse sins through His own sacrifice.

Animation: Number two: If Jesus had never been born, there would be no victory over death

The world fears death.

It is shocking to know that the average number of people who die every day is over 150,000. Or that nine souls enter eternity every five seconds.

But those who living apart from Jesus Christ—they have the fear of the Judgement Day.

But we our believers, we should not have a fear death:

Animation: **(Read Off Screen)** (Hebrews 2:14-15):

Again, the emphasis is on Christ’s death on the cross—and although He was sinless, His death liberated us from both sin and spiritual death.

We would still be slaves to the fear of death, and we would have had no future but hell itself.

Animation: Number three: If Jesus had never been born, there would be no mediator between God and man:

Animation: **(Read Off Screen)** (Hebrews 2:16):

There is no help for fallen angels. Christ came to help all whom He would redeem both Jew and

Gentile—all those who through faith would believe in Him.

Animation: (Read Off Screen) (Hebrews 2:17):

Christ alone is the mediator because only He can relate to God as God and, since He Himself was tempted, and suffered as a man, He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted and suffering.

Animation: (Read Off Screen) (Hebrews 2:18):

Having experienced life on this earth for more than 30 years, the Lord Jesus Christ can relate to us as a sympathetic Savior.

If Jesus had never been born, we would have no salvation from sin, no victory over death, and no mediator between us and God.

And no hope of eternal life in heaven.

Slide: What If...you are not saved tonight?

What If...you are not saved tonight?

Slide: Bottomless Pit

This is a bottomless pit—you are heading nowhere--there is no direction spiritually for those who are not members of the body of Christ at the end of time.

And only God knows when that will happen.

If you do not confess Christ before men—that's made on your own free-will—despite everything that God has done for you with his Plan of Salvation.

Slide: The Three Crosses

There are over 300 prophecies in the Bible that Jesus Christ fulfilled by his birth, death and resurrection, as well as his ascension and being seated on the right hand of the throne of God.

Also, some 40 generations--all of them leading to the death of Jesus and to fulfilling God's Plan of Salvation.

The same Plan of Salvation the Apostle Peter spoke about on the Day of Pentecost.

The same Plan of Salvation that saved the Ethiopian Eunuch from his sins.

Slide: 2nd Timothy 3:16-17

Remember, scripture is perfect, infallible and cannot be broken.

Three thousand souls were saved on the Day of Pentecost.

One soul was saved when Philp baptized the Ethiopian Eunuch.

Slide: Now is the time of salvation

What is the condition of your soul tonight?

2nd Corinthians 6:2 tells us:

“...behold, now *is* the accepted time; behold, now *is* the day of salvation.”

Loretta Lynn died this past week—the country western superstar was 90 years old.

In her 1976 autobiography, Lynn writes of her baptism at age 42:

“I was real nervous because the Bible says you have to be immersed, and like I’ve said so many times, I’m scared to death of water.”

Lynn was a member of the church of Christ.

One of her band members was also a member—she saw his life changed when he was baptized.

He stopped drinking and staying out late.

Whenever they were on the road on Sundays-- he bought communion on the bus for the Lord’s Supper.

(Invitation)

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SAVE: Knowing-Jesus.com

SAVE: HeartHymn.com