The Conflicts of the Crucifiers

**Read:** Matthew 10:1-5

**Introduction:** I was reading some scriptures and it occurred to me that of the persons in this story there were some major inner conflicts and it interested me how they responded to these conflicts. I want to see if perhaps you can relate to at least one of them.

**I. The Conflict of Judas:** He knew the spiritual but yielded to the material. This Man walked and talked to Christ. He heard the same parables and experienced the same power as each of the twelve disciples. He was one sent out to minister and, no doubt, saw people healed and saw lives changed. He lost all reason to live when he made the choice to lay aside the Godly for the material world. Do you know any folks who spend their whole life chasing the good life only to find that they have been looking in the wrong place? Everybody loved Robin Williams, he had incredible wealth and success but he could find no reason to live; for the path he was on did not lead him in the right direction. Judas recognized who Christ was and observed His provision every day but still chose material things over Christ.

**II. The Conflict of Peter:** He knew Christ but yielded to fear. The scriptures don’t tell us if he was afraid for his life or if he simply feared the disapproval of the crowd but he certainly denied that he knew Him at all. He had been warned by Christ that he would do exactly what he did and yet he did nothing to avoid it. Jesus was never wrong and Peter knew that. Looking at the situation what could he have done? Perhaps fallen on his knees in repentance and ask for cleansing from the weakness that would cause him to deny the savior. Why is it that we seem to fear taking a stand for Christ? What is the response that we are fearful of? It may be uncomfortable to initiate a conversation or to stumble around a bit when we are asked about our faith but where do you think that the deep, deep, fear comes from? Why would someone deny Christ?

**III. The Conflict of Pilate:** He knew that Christ was innocent of the charges brought against Himself but yielded to political pressure and sentenced Him to die. His wife warned him. His conscience warned him. He even declared Him innocent as he sentenced Jesus to death. This man was not a fearful man. He was a courageous soldier who had worked his way up the Roman chain of command to finally become a ruler. He was an important man in an important position. He could disperse the crowd and set Jesus free. This was his moment to show what type of leader he was and he knowingly kowtowed to the lies of the Jewish leaders in a failed attempt to keep the people happy.

**IV. The Conflict of Caiaphas:** he knew God but yielded to the insti-tution. He was a high priest who wavered on who Christ was. On several occasions he seemed prophetic and spoke with admiration of Jesus but on this night he led the crowd in condemning Him. Have you ever observed two people arguing? One throws down the gauntlet and convinces you that he is right but then the other person speaks up and counters the first argument that you decide that they are right after all. It seemed that whoever got to Caiaphas last, won the argument. He was unstable and pliable and the other Jewish leaders took advantage of this.

**Conclude: The Obedience of Christ:** He knew the plan of His Father, worked with 12 fallible men, did only good for anyone and everyone who asked, and experienced the world turn on Him. He felt the agony as the sins of the world were placed on Him, in the garden, and yielded to His Father anyway.

Are you conflicted today? Which one of this cast of characters is you? What weakness do you see that needs to be worked on today? Is there something that you heard today that causes concern?