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A Play in One Act

by

DOROTHY FOX, GEORGE FOX, NANCY S.
HUBLEY, REGINALD HUBLEY, JOAN
TRESSLER AND JACK TRESSLER

The Case of Humanity
vs. Pontius Pilate



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(THE CASE OF HUMANITY VS. PONTIUS PILATE)

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The Case of Humanity vs. Pontius Pilate

A Play in One Act

FOR TEN MEN AND FIVE WOMEN

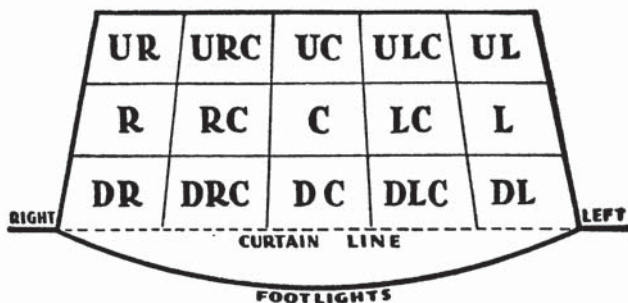
"The Case of Humanity vs. Pontius Pilate" was first presented at the First Baptist Church of Greater Cleveland in Cleveland Heights, Ohio, Easter 1955. It was directed by Nancy S. Hubley, staged by William Wierts and had the following cast:

BAILIFF	<i>Harold Bender</i>
COURT REPORTER.....	<i>Dorothy Fox</i>
PONTIUS PILATE.....	<i>Reginald Hubley</i>
DEFENSE ATTORNEY	<i>George Fox</i>
PROSECUTION ATTORNEY.....	<i>Jack Tressler</i>
JUDGE	<i>William Wierts</i>
JOSEPH OF ARIMATHEA.....	<i>William Cope</i>
ESTHER, <i>Joseph's daughter</i>	<i>Margaret Wierts</i>
NICODEMUS	<i>Tom Kilmer</i>
MARY MAGDALENE.....	<i>Peg Cope</i>
SALOME, <i>wife of Zebedee</i>	<i>Winifred Birnbaum</i>
ANNAS, <i>High Priest Emeritus</i>	<i>Kenneth Warren</i>
CAIAPHAS, <i>High Priest</i>	<i>Kenneth Birnbaum</i>
CLAUDIA PROCULA, <i>Pilate's wife</i>	<i>Joan Tressler</i>
REPORTER	<i>Charles Norris</i>

PLACE: *A courtroom.*

TIME: *The present.*

CHART OF STAGE POSITIONS



STAGE POSITIONS

Upstage means away from the footlights, *downstage* means toward the footlights, and *right* and *left* are used with reference to the actor as he faces the audience. R means *right*, L means *left*, U means *up*, D means *down*, C means *center*, and these abbreviations are used in combination, as: U R for *up right*, R C for *right center*, D L C for *down left center*, etc. One will note that a position designated on the stage refers to a general territory, rather than to a given point.

NOTE: Before starting rehearsals, chalk off your stage or rehearsal space as indicated above in the *Chart of Stage Positions*. Then teach your actors the meanings and positions of these fundamental terms of stage movement by having them walk from one position to another until they are familiar with them. The use of these abbreviated terms in directing the play saves time, speeds up rehearsals, and reduces the amount of explanation the director has to give to his actors.

PRODUCTION NOTES

The idea of the play, "The Case of Humanity vs. Pontius Pilate," is humanity's trying Pilate for his "crime against Christianity" in his ordering the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. The setting is a modern courtroom, and the costume is modern dress. Although the time of the play is the present, the testimony of the witnesses is based upon their sentiments shortly after Christ's crucifixion. The play attempts to re-examine the events when the situation was fresh.

Every attempt was made by the authors to present both sides of the case as fully and accurately as possible, with no desired or even contemplated verdict in mind. The verdict, doubtless, will be different with each performance, for the verdict is left entirely in the hands of the jurors.

The jurors are chosen at random from the audience. As the audience arrives, each member is asked to write his name on a slip of paper. Just before curtain time, the names are collected into a box, which is placed on the Bailiff's table.

Although all the witnesses and Pilate are long dead and gone, this play "brings them back to life," as it were, and attempts to examine their parts in the greatest "crime" ever committed as if it had happened only yesterday.

No curtains are used in the play. The courtroom setting is open for all to see, to give more of the feeling of being in court. As the play opens, the house lights are dimmed only a little. The Bailiff, the Court Reporter and the Judge are the only actors to enter the stage through the door on stage. All the other characters, including the witnesses, approach the stage from the audience. They are seated near the front. Upon a signal, the two attorneys and Pilate walk up onto the stage as if preparing for their day in court, and the Bailiff and the Court Reporter ready their equipment and get the court in order for the day's business. The witnesses rise and come forward from their seats as they are called, and after giving their

testimony they return to their seats. This play, although not originally presented in the round, would lend itself well to that medium.

DESCRIPTION OF BIBLICAL CHARACTERS

PILATE: Pontius Pilate, Procurator of Judea, is a young Roman in his early thirties. He is a proud, hot-tempered autocrat of obstinate disposition. A military man all his life, he is blunt and uncomplicated, with little understanding or compassion, but drawing the respect of his office.

JOSEPH: Joseph of Arimathea is an elder judge of the Jewish Sanhedrin, and a secret follower of Jesus. A just and righteous man, he is willing to consider both sides of a question. Although he speaks well and carries himself surely, he displays a tension that indicates an inner struggle.

ESTHER: She is the devoted daughter of Joseph. She is shy and innocent, with a slightly immature manner.

NICODEMUS: He is an elder judge of the Jewish Sanhedrin. He is very smart, folksy, religious, law-abiding, not too complicated, and realizes Jesus to be the Messiah.

MARY MAGDALENE: She is one of Jesus' most faithful and devoted followers. She occupied a position of prominence among the women disciples. She is an intelligent and observant woman, with a serene, soft-spoken but persuasive manner.

SALOME: Salome, wife of Zebedee, is the sister of Mary, the mother of Jesus. She is one of Jesus' followers. She is middle-aged. Although outwardly composed, she is nevertheless inwardly turbulent.

ANNAS: Annas, High Priest Emeritus, is the power behind the Sanhedrin. Formerly unscrupulous and hard, he is at the time of the play a broken, bitter, moody and remorseful man, with little regard for those about him.

CAIAPHAS: Caiaphas, High Priest, is a blustering, strutting, high-handed braggart. He is a cunning schemer with no conscience or scruples. He is also a vain clotheshorse. Constantly imagining threats to his position, he is unsure of himself and panics at the slightest trouble.

CLAUDIA PROCULA: Claudia, Pilate's wife, has the air of nobility expected from the granddaughter of Caesar. She is cultured, calm and speaks with firm conviction. She is obviously superior in intellect and energy and reveals occasional glimmers of mischievous, twinkling amusement.

PROPERTIES

GENERAL: Judge's bench and high-backed chair; gavel on bench; witness stand; small table and two chairs for Bailiff and Court Reporter; gavel, Bible, box with names for selecting jury, dictation pads and pencils (or machine to take down dictation), on small table; jury box with twelve chairs; Defense Attorney's table and chairs; Prosecution Attorney's table and chairs; pitcher of water and glass on attorneys' tables; small table and telephone for newspaper reporter. Attendant (offstage): twelve slips of paper, twelve pencils and sheet of paper for tabulating ballots.

DEFENSE ATTORNEY: Brief case and papers.

PROSECUTION ATTORNEY: Brief case and papers.

NEWSPAPER REPORTER: Notes, cigarettes and matches.

TEMPO

Nothing adds more to the polish of a production than the quick picking up of cues. Unless there is a definite reason for a pause, train your actors to come in with their speeches "on the heels," so to speak, of the preceding speeches. When a production lags, audience interest likewise will lag.

It is always advisable during the last week of rehearsals to hold one or more sessions during which the actors merely sit around in a circle and go through lines only with the express purpose of snapping up cues.

The Case of Humanity vs. Pontius Pilate

SCENE: *A courtroom. There is only one entrance to the room, U L. At U C stage, facing the audience, is the Judge's bench, with a high-backed chair behind it. To the left of the Judge's bench, on a slightly raised platform, is the witness stand. A small table is right of the Judge's bench, with two chairs behind it for the Bailiff and the Court Reporter. Running up and downstage at L is the jury box. There are twelve chairs, enclosed by a railing, with an opening at one end for the jury to enter or leave. The back row of chairs in the jury box is raised slightly from the row in front. At D R stage, facing L, is the table for the Defense Attorney, with two or three chairs behind it. A similar table is placed slightly upstage of R C stage, and facing the audience. Behind it are two chairs. This is the Prosecution Attorney's table.]*

AT OPENING OF PLAY: *PILATE, the PROSECUTION ATTORNEY and the DEFENSE ATTORNEY take their places at their proper tables. The COURT REPORTER and BAILIFF enter U L and take their places. The ATTORNEYS scan their notes in preparation for their presentations. PILATE whispers with the DEFENSE ATTORNEY. As the audience quiets down, the JUDGE enters U L, and the BAILIFF rises.]*

BAILIFF. *Everyone in this courtroom please rise! [Members of cast in audience rise, and rest of audience follows suit. BAILIFF raps with his gavel on his table three times.] Hear ye, hear ye, this court is now in session. [Everyone sits down.]*

JUDGE [*stepping behind his bench and addressing BAILIFF, who is still standing*]. What is on the docket this morning?

BAILIFF. The Case of Humanity vs. Pontius Pilate.

JUDGE [*sitting, addressing audience*]. I am going to ask the Bailiff to draw twelve names, of people who are being asked to serve as jurors in this case of Humanity vs. Pontius Pilate. If your name is called, will you kindly step forward and take your seat in the jury box. [*Indicates jury box with a motion of his hand.*]

BAILIFF. Will the following people please come forward for jury duty. [*One by one, he calls out twelve names as he draws them from box on his table. He helps jurors get settled in jury box, as they come forward onto stage. Then he sits down.*]

JUDGE. Are both counsels satisfied with the jury?

DEFENSE. Yes.

PROSECUTION. Yes.

JUDGE [*addressing JURY*]. Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, this case—the Case of Humanity vs. Pontius Pilate—has been brought to this court on the request of the defendant, Pontius Pilate, who is now appealing his case. For nineteen centuries the defendant has felt that humanity has persecuted him unjustly for the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. He is now appealing his case in an attempt to clear his name of one of the most tragic acts of history. I want you to listen carefully to all the evidence that will be given by the witnesses. At the conclusion of this case, it will be your solemn duty to determine whether this defendant is guilty or not guilty of *treachery, in his decision to have Jesus Christ crucified*. A man is always presumed to be innocent until proven guilty. The responsibility lies with the prosecution to prove beyond all reasonable doubt that this man is guilty. [*Looks toward ATTORNEYS.*] Are you gentlemen ready to proceed? [*ATTORNEYS nod "yes."*] Due to lack of time, both attorneys have agreed not to make opening statements but to proceed with the witnesses. If the prosecution is ready, you may call your first witness.

PROSECUTION ATTORNEY [*rising*]. I should like to call Joseph of Arimathea to the stand as our first witness.

BAILIFF [*rising*]. Will Joseph of Arimathea please take the

stand. [JOSEPH comes up on stage. He stands before BAILIFF in front of witness stand to be sworn in. BAILIFF holds out Bible. JOSEPH places left hand on Bible and raises right hand.] Do you solemnly swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

JOSEPH. I do. [BAILIFF sits at his table; JOSEPH sits in witness stand.]

PROSECUTION [approaching JOSEPH]. Your name, sir?

JOSEPH. Joseph of Arimathea.

PROSECUTION. And what is your occupation?

JOSEPH. I am a member of the Sanhedrin.

PROSECUTION. Will you explain to the jury just what the Sanhedrin is?

JOSEPH. Certainly. [Turns toward JURY.] It is a court of seventy judges that interprets and enforces Hebrew law.

PROSECUTION. Is this the body that tried Jesus before He was sent to Pilate?

JOSEPH. Yes.

PROSECUTION. You are one of the elders of this group, are you not?

JOSEPH. Yes. I have served twenty years.

PROSECUTION. You were quite familiar with all the rules and regulations of this body?

JOSEPH. Yes.

PROSECUTION. You heard and weighed all the testimony against this Man?

JOSEPH. That I did.

PROSECUTION. And after you heard all this testimony and carefully considered it, how did you vote?

JOSEPH. I voted for acquittal.

PROSECUTION. Why?

JOSEPH. Because the testimony against the Man was false, and I believed Him innocent of any wrong.

PROSECUTION. Were you also present when Pontius Pilate persecuted Jesus?

DEFENSE [*rising*]. Your Honor, I object. The prosecution has not established any persecution.

JUDGE. Sustained. Re-phrase your question, please. [DEFENSE *sits again.*]

PROSECUTION. Were you present when Jesus was brought before Pontius Pilate for sentencing?

JOSEPH. Yes, I was.

PROSECUTION. If you had been in Pilate's place, what would you have—

DEFENSE [*more strongly, jumping up*]. Your Honor, I object!

JUDGE. Sustained. Proceed. [DEFENSE *sits again.*]

PROSECUTION. As a *judge*, would you say that Pilate judged and sentenced Jesus fairly?

JOSEPH. He *judged* Him fairly—[*Turns to JURY.*—]but he sentenced Him unjustly. If he had sentenced Him fairly, he would have had to set Him free.

PROSECUTION. Because He was innocent?

JOSEPH. Of course! [*With scorn.*] Pilate's judgment was founded, not on facts, but on his own weakness and prejudice!

PROSECUTION. To what are you referring?

JOSEPH. A man of stronger character would have acted justly in spite of the influences of self-seeking persons and the intermittent shrieks of the obviously paid hecklers in the mob.

PROSECUTION. I see. And you say that he was prejudiced? In what way?

JOSEPH. *Everybody knows he despised the Jews!*

DEFENSE [*jumping to his feet*]. I object, your Honor! [*Very strongly.*] That is an unfounded generality!

JUDGE. Sustained. [*To COURT REPORTER.*] Strike that from the record. [DEFENSE *sits.*]

PROSECUTION. Very well, your Honor. Strike it from the record. [*To JURY.*] But we will prove beyond a shadow of a doubt the truth of his statement! That is all. [*To DEFENSE.*] Your witness. [*Returns to his table and sits down.*]

DEFENSE [*rising, crossing to witness stand*]. You stated that you were present when Pilate announced his decision.

JOSEPH. Yes, I have already stated that I was.

DEFENSE. Then your own ears heard him say, "I find no cause in this man"?

JOSEPH. Yes, but he didn't—

DEFENSE. Isn't it also true that you heard with your own ears these same words uttered by Pilate at the time Jesus was returned from the hearing by Herod?

JOSEPH. That is so, but the important thing is—

DEFENSE [*bearing down*]. And isn't it true that you again heard him plead for Jesus after He had been beaten?

JOSEPH. Yes, yes! But the fact remains that he didn't use his power!

DEFENSE. You do admit, however, that you heard him make these repeated pleas to the mob for the release of Jesus?

JOSEPH. Yes, that is true.

DEFENSE [*more pleasantly now*]. You have said you were a Jewish councilor, a member of the Sanhedrin?

JOSEPH. Yes.

DEFENSE. Weren't you also secretly sympathetic to Jesus' teachings?

JOSEPH. Yes.

DEFENSE. Now, being a sympathizer, what did you do to aid Jesus during His trial?

JOSEPH [*firmly*]. At the trial, I acted in the capacity of a judge and not as a sympathizer! I pointed out to my colleagues the inconsistency of the witnesses' testimony; at one point I stood and proposed the entire case against Jesus be dismissed—and ultimately I voted for acquittal.

DEFENSE. Is that *all*?

JOSEPH. Yes. [*Excitedly.*] What else could I have done?

DEFENSE [*intensely, leaning close to him*]. You said you realized the mob that was shouting for blood was *paid*, didn't you?

JOSEPH. Yes, I did.

DEFENSE. Wouldn't it have been possible for you to organize

some leaders to at least split the mob and perhaps influence them the other way?

JOSEPH. No, I don't think so.

DEFENSE. Why—because you were too weak? And yet you accuse Pilate of being weak!

JOSEPH [*very strongly*]. Yes!

DEFENSE. The least you could have done would have been to warn Pilate not to pay any attention to what the mob wanted—since they were being paid to shout what they did.

JOSEPH. I thought Pilate obviously would know.

DEFENSE. This is something you thought, not something you knew?

JOSEPH. Well . . . it's a known fact that many mobs were organized by paid leaders.

DEFENSE. That isn't answering the question. [*Impatiently*]. Did you *know* that Pilate knew this mob was paid?

JOSEPH. No, I didn't.

DEFENSE. You *were* a follower of Jesus at the time?

JOSEPH. Yes.

DEFENSE [*sympathetically*]. You were a follower of His teachings, a witness of His miracles, and loved His personality?

JOSEPH. Yes.

DEFENSE [*turning away in disgust*]. And yet, when Jesus needed you most, you didn't do your utmost to aid Him! Was this because you had your job to think about? [JOSEPH *does not answer*.] You had to be careful?

PROSECUTION [*jumping to his feet*]. Your Honor, I object! Is the defense attorney forgetting who is on trial here? It is not this man, but Pilate, who must answer for his actions!

DEFENSE. Your Honor, I am trying to bring out how *values* by which men directed their lives were different in Jesus' day from the present. And it is very necessary to my case.

JUDGE [*thinking a moment*]. Objection overruled. Proceed. [PROSECUTION *sits again*.]

DEFENSE [*turning back to JOSEPH*]. You had to be careful lest you lose your job?

JOSEPH. Careful? [*Speaks with wounded pride*.] Was I care-

ful when I asked Pilate for Jesus' body and buried it in my own garden!

DEFENSE [*turning quickly to JURY*]. Yes, but I am sure the jury will agree that this is the act of a remorseful man, wishing he had done more for Jesus in His hour of need! [*Wheels around to JOSEPH.*] You did have to be careful, didn't you, Joseph of Arimathea? [*JOSEPH remains silent, looking down at his hands.*] Or perhaps I should say, you *thought* you had to be careful! Is that right?

JOSEPH [*without heart*]. Yes.

DEFENSE [*turning with a dramatic largeness*]. And you were one of Jesus' disciples! That's all. Your witness. [*Crosses briskly to table and sits down.*]

PROSECUTION [*rising, crossing close to JOSEPH, putting hand on his arm*]. You *are* remorseful that you didn't do more for Jesus, aren't you, Joseph? But the main thing you could have done and didn't do was to advise Pilate that the mob was only a paid one. Isn't that right?

JOSEPH. Yes.

PROSECUTION [*directing next statement to JURY*]. But you were firmly convinced that Pilate *did* know this was a paid mob, weren't you?

JOSEPH [*firmly*]. Yes, I was!

PROSECUTION. Now, the defense attorney asked why you didn't organize opposition to this paid mob. Why couldn't you do this?

JOSEPH. I didn't realize at first that it was necessary. I thought Pilate would recognize and disregard these paid hecklers. Then once it became apparent that he was going to let himself be influenced by these rowdies, it was too late to organize others. Things happened quickly. It was too late to help Jesus.

PROSECUTION. Thank you. That is all. You may step down. [*JOSEPH goes back to his seat.*]

JUDGE [*addressing PROSECUTION*]. Will you please call your next witness.

PROSECUTION [*pausing near jury box*]. I would like to call Esther to the stand.

BAILIFF [*rising*]. Will Esther please come forward and take the stand. [*ESTHER comes up on stage and stands to be sworn in.*] Do you solemnly swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

ESTHER. I do.

BAILIFF. You may be seated. [*ESTHER sits. BAILIFF takes his seat.*]

PROSECUTION. Will you state your name, please?

ESTHER [*shyly*]. Esther.

PROSECUTION. You are the daughter of Joseph of Arimathea?

ESTHER. Yes, I am.

PROSECUTION. Did you know that your father was deeply impressed by Jesus' teachings?

ESTHER. Yes, I did.

PROSECUTION. Do you feel that his *not* openly avowing his beliefs before the Sanhedrin—in advance of the trial, that is—marks him as a man afraid?

ESTHER [*hesitatingly*]. I . . . I never felt that my father was really afraid of any person or situation.

PROSECUTION. Would you say that your father was in a somewhat ambiguous position—that is, he was loyal to his colleagues, yet because of his sense of justice, he wanted to be fair to Jesus' ideas as well?

ESTHER. Yes, and he told me that he had several times shown this to the Sanhedrin. They knew of his open-mindedness before the trial.

PROSECUTION. Do you feel, then, that his integrity had been strengthened, not weakened, by his attitude?

ESTHER [*gaining more confidence now*]. Yes! Everyone recognized his earnestness in trying to be honest to both sides.

PROSECUTION. I see. I have no further questions. [*Turns to DEFENSE.*] Your witness.

DEFENSE [*without looking up*]. No questions.

PROSECUTION. You may step down, Esther. [*ESTHER quickly leaves stand; she almost hurries to her seat.*]

JUDGE. Will you please call your next witness.

PROSECUTION. I'd like to call Nicodemus to the stand.

BAILIFF [*rising*]. Will the witness, Nicodemus, please take the stand. [*NICODEMUS comes up on stage and is sworn in.*] Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

NICODEMUS. I do. [*BAILIFF indicates witness stand, and NICODEMUS takes his seat. He seems quite at home, crossing his legs, swinging one, and seems to be enjoying prospect of his questioning. BAILIFF has returned to his seat.*]

PROSECUTION. Please state your name and position.

NICODEMUS. Nicodemus, member of the Sanhedrin.

PROSECUTION. Were you present at the trial of Jesus before the Sanhedrin?

NICODEMUS. That's correct. [*Smiles at JURY.*]

PROSECUTION. And how did you vote?

NICODEMUS. I voted for His acquittal.

PROSECUTION. Why?

NICODEMUS. Because I believed Him innocent of the charges.

PROSECUTION. Of the seventy judges comprising the Supreme Council, you are one of the most experienced, are you not?

NICODEMUS. Well-I-I, I've been a member of it for a longer time than most of the others.

PROSECUTION. Aren't the elders' opinions thought of most highly?

NICODEMUS. Yes, that is true.

PROSECUTION. Were you able to speak in Jesus' behalf at this trial?

NICODEMUS. Yes, and I did so. [*To JURY.*] He was being trapped by obviously conflicting testimony, and I asked often that the case be dropped. Good heavens, in the middle of the night! Why, the whole trial was illegal to begin with!

PROSECUTION. I see. Then you felt that it was brought about to secure a false verdict of "guilty" that could then be presented to Pilate, demanding the death penalty?

NICODEMUS. Exactly.

PROSECUTION. Thank you. [*Turns to DEFENSE.*] Your witness. [*Sits down.*]

DEFENSE [*rising, approaching witness stand*]. Now, Nicodemus, you were one of Jesus' sympathizers, weren't you?

NICODEMUS. Yes.

PROSECUTION. What did you do for Jesus at His trial?

NICODEMUS. I told the whole Sanhedrin to let Jesus go, for He'd done nothing wrong—[*With a twinkle.*]*—*that we all ought to go home to bed!

DEFENSE. Anything else?

NICODEMUS. I voted for His acquittal, when Caiaphas claimed to have found Him guilty of blasphemy.

DEFENSE. Having been a member of the Sanhedrin for many years, you knew all the rules and laws that governed procedure, didn't you?

NICODEMUS. That's right.

DEFENSE. There is one rule that stated that if all the judges voted a man guilty, the man was *freed*, on the theory that the element of *mercy* was lacking in the court. Did you know this law?

NICODEMUS. Of course I was aware of it.

DEFENSE. The vote was taken orally, wasn't it?

NICODEMUS. Yes.

DEFENSE. And you and Joseph of Arimathea were the last two to vote?

NICODEMUS. Yes, we were.

DEFENSE. Then you had the opportunity to hear the entire vote. [*Bearing down.*] And by your own admission of the acquaintance with the law, you realized that your votes of acquittal actually convicted Him?

NICODEMUS. No, I had not thought of this.

DEFENSE [*to JURY*]. Does this sound like consistent reasoning by a man professing to aid Jesus? That's all. [*Turns and sits down.*]

PROSECUTION [*rising, moving toward stand*]. Now, then, sir, you have said that you knew Hebrew law well?

NICODEMUS [*looking a bit worried*]. That's correct. To the last detail.

PROSECUTION. And as a long-time member of the Sanhedrin, you certainly felt a great loyalty to these laws and the rules that it followed, didn't you?

NICODEMUS. That's right.

PROSECUTION. However, you also believed that Jesus was the Messiah, didn't you?

NICODEMUS [*humbly*]. I did.

PROSECUTION. Did you believe in His holiness and that He was the true Son of God, and in all of His teachings?

NICODEMUS. Most definitely.

PROSECUTION [*pointedly*]. Among His teachings was the instruction to *be true to oneself*. Did you believe that?

NICODEMUS. Yes, I did.

PROSECUTION. Do you feel you did all you could for Jesus at the trial?

NICODEMUS. Yes. Now, about that vote—

PROSECUTION. Ah, yes, the vote. [*Turns to JURY.*] The defense has painted it as actually having sent Jesus to His death. [*Addresses NICODEMUS again.*] But after you had done all you could for Jesus as a judge, didn't you feel that you must vote the way you *felt*? In other words, be true to your convictions and to yourself?

NICODEMUS. That's exactly how I felt. It wouldn't have been quite ethical to speak in Jesus' behalf and then to turn around and vote Him guilty!

PROSECUTION. Weren't you displaying an act of faith in declaring openly at Jesus' greatest hour of suffering that you believed in Him?

NICODEMUS. I suppose so.

PROSECUTION. And no matter what the outcome, didn't you feel it absolutely essential that you make this most righteous and noble gesture?

NICODEMUS. Well, I don't know about a *gesture*. I just couldn't find it in my heart to deny Jesus my faith by voting Him guilty.