

Interview Part 1 - Peter (The arrest & denial)

(lights up, music stops)

Host: Thankyou, Good evening and welcome. My name is Gary Simons. Tonight we bring you an interview from the past. An interview with a number of people who were involved in an event which shaped history. The event we are referring to is the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. There are those who would also believe that this man Jesus rose from the dead some three days later. Fact or Fiction? - You be the Judge. as you join me now in welcoming our first guest tonight, ... Peter.

(lights come up more, Peter enters a little uneasily, looks around studio as he makes his way to the chair, sits a little uneasily on the chair)

Host: Peter, Welcome. Uh... now I've read some of your background and involvement in the event we're talking about, but there are many who wouldn't know your story, and some of the ah... extraordinary claims which you have made about this man Jesus. Perhaps you could give us some insight into the events leading up to the arrest of Jesus. I believe you were present at the time?

Peter: Yes, that's...that's right.

Host: What happened that night Peter?

Peter: Um... well, We , ah that is Jesus was Praying at the time....

Host: And what were you doing Peter?

Peter: Um.... Sleeping...

Host: I see, go on.

Peter: (clears his throat) hmmm... At that time Jesus came and woke us, and said that he was about to be betrayed.

Host: Hang on.... he KNEW he was about to be arrested, but he did nothing?

Peter: (defensively) That's right, He knew everything. (calming down) But he allowed them to come and take him away. I was scared and drew my sword and chopped one of the guards ear off....

Host: If I could just stop you there.... You say you cut a man's ear off?

Peter: (hot tempered) Yes, and I would have done it again if.. if... Well... (calming down) not if I'd know then what I know now I..I... wouldn't, But Jesus, He touched the man's ear and it was restored.

Host: I see,.... Perhaps you only thought you made contact with the ear, but in fact missed - it was dark after all.

Peter: (hot tempered again) NO... No.. I saw it come off, But Jesus healed the man as he had done many times previous.....

Host: (interrupting) Peter, I guess you knew Jesus well before he died?

Peter: Yes, very, but he is no longer dead, he.....

Host: Peter, Have you ever been known to say that you didn't even know Jesus, to even deny his existence?

Peter: (hangs his head) Yes... (but then looks host in the eye) But Jesus knew that would happen also, and what's more He forgave me for those lies, just like he can forgive all those people who don't believe he is the Son

of God, just like he can forgive you Mr. Simons. (he gives host a deep look)

Host: (feels uncomfortable slightly, loses his train of thought for just a second).. Ah... thank you... Peter for ah... that (professionally) We will continue our interview after this commercial break from Linden in Studio 2.

(lights down) host and Peter appear to be chatting, though no sound is audible.

(‘Advertisement’ nor announcement could be inserted here)

Interview Part 2 - Pilate (The trial and sentencing)

(lights up)

Host: Welcome, back. We are privileged to have join us now the Governor at the time, Please make welcome Mr Pontius Pilate. (*applause, pilate walks in business like, heads for Peters chair shakes hands, Peter moves down one*) Pilate, welcome.

Pilate: Thankyou Gary, It’s a pleasure to be here. And yes, I was governor at the time Jesus was brought before me.

Host: Now Pilate, I have never fully understood why Jesus was brought to trial, what He had done? I get the impression that Jesus was basically ah... what a, a good person. Were the charges made against him fabricated or true?

Pilate: If I can just make very clear, ah.. Gary,... It was not the governing forces who brought Jesus Christ to trial, we can't be held responsible for that. It was the Jewish population themselves who created the situation. And, for the record, Jesus Christ was not brought to trial for what He had done but rather for who he was. (Stops, smiles self consciously, continues). Excuse me, of course I should have said, for **who He claimed** to be. You see, Jesus made claim to being God and this, the Jewish people would not condone.

Host: And for this you had Him killed?

Pilate: Again, Gary, If I can make this clear... Jesus could have walked away a free man - All he had to do was deny that he was God, that he was the King of the Jews, But (shakes head) he stuck to his story. I could not find any fault worthy of death in this man, though I tried hard, so my decision was to hand him over to be whipped.

Host: And Killed?

Pilate: (a little uncomfortable for the first time) Ah.... Not exactly Gary, You see ah.....the people there, they were calling for his death, I had to do what I thought right at the time, what was best for the people and....

Host: If I can just interject there Pilate, we do have some footage of the event you have just described. If I could ask you to watch that now and then give me your comments. (nod’s to projectionist)

(Jesus Video - The trial before Pilate)

Host: Would you call that a fair trial Pilate?

Pilate: (shifts in his seat, while his voice sounds confident his body language is quite the opposite, clears his throat) Gary, what was done, was done with the best interest of the Jewish people at heart. It was their request and I did as they asked.

Host: Thankyou for your comments Pilate.

Pilate: (nods) Thankyou Gary.

Host: As the events continue to unfold, we find that Jesus is whipped and uh...beaten, and he is made to carry - as was the custom of the day - a large wooden cross which was to be His instrument of death. He carried the cross down a long road known as the Via dolorosa, which led to a place called Calvary..(pause - to

audience) we will continue with our third guest in just a moment, but before we do we have some more footage from that fateful day when Jesus was killed on that Roman Cross.

(song "via dolorosa" , while **Jesus video of crucifixion** runs)

Interview Part 3 - Soldier (the Crucifixion)

Host: Thankyou Vicky.....Our third guest tonight was present during these events, (centurion enters, nods in respect to pilate then takes his seat next to the host, the others move down one) in fact he oversaw many of them in his official duties as a Roman soldier. Please welcome the head Centurion at the time of Jesus Crucifixion. (applause - to soldier) what happened next?

Soldier: As you have said, my soldiers led Jesus away and made Him carry His cross from Antonio to a small hill outside the city wall. We call it Calvary; the Jews call it Golgotha. There they nailed Him to the cross with large spikes in his hands and feet, and dropped it into a hole. He hung just a few feet off the ground.

Host: Now, you would have been in charge of many crucifixions previous to this one, was there anything different about Jesus?

Soldier: (thinking) Yes...., I had many opportunities to witness crucifixions. Crucifixions were as common as mealtime gatherings. But this one was very different.

Host: In what way?

Soldier: Well, all through His awful suffering He had a,a kind of serenity, as though through it all He was somehow.... in control. As I looked at Him I noticed that He was praying. Now, many men about to die will pray for deliverance or for revenge. But Jesus was praying for forgiveness,.... forgiveness for those who put Him in this position. He said, (remembering) "Forgive them Father for they know not what they do". and I.... I realized that Jesus was also praying for. . .for.... me. I couldn't understand.

Host: (surprised) Now hold on, you say He was praying for forgiveness for you? Are you sure about this?

Soldier: (a little choked) Yes,.... It was then that I understood,... that I believed that he was the Son of God.

Host: (sits up startled at this confession) Now... Now you believe he WAS the Son of God,... That... that was what he was sent to trial for ah... correct?

Soldier: Yes that's right.

Host: But now, you're saying that you believe he **was** God?..... But wasn't he just an ordinary man?...

Soldier: (shakes his head, firmly) He was no ordinary man.

Interview Part 4 - Mary (The death & forgiveness)

Host: Well.... ah..., now we have one more guest with us tonight, (Mary enters, smiles at host warmly and at the others there, esp. Peter and Soldier) and her name is Mary Magdalene. Could you please welcome Mary Magdalene. (applause.... Mary sits in Soldiers chair)
....Mary, I guess it's fair to say that you have had a rather...ah... unusual background - how then do you fit into the story?

Mary: (Sad, but honest)Yes, It's true I was once possessed by demonic forces... I was known as a lowly woman, but Jesus,... my Saviour,... freed me from all of that and He **forgave** me for my **many** sins.

Host: (sarcastically) What..... Just like that,... he forgave you?

Mary: (joyfully, earnestly) Yes that's right. I pray that you will believe what I say!.... Oh, not that you believe me, that's not important..... But that you would believe in **my Saviour!** You seem so angry and so much

like I was before I came to know Jesus. You need the touch of the Saviour!

Host: (getting uncomfortable again) Ah... If I could direct you back to the question... ah, how do you fit into the events surrounding Jesus Death were you there?

Mary: Yes,.... I was there.... I saw him being nailed to the cross, ... I saw him pray for forgiveness for those around him,... I even heard him forgive the sins of the criminal hanging on the cross next to him...

Host: (confused) But surely you can't believe the words of a ... a beaten, dying man?

Mary: I believed **every** word my Saviour said. He used to talk a lot about how He would be put to death, and then something about coming back on the third day. He referred to Himself as the Lamb of God and He told us how God's plan was to be fulfilled through Him....

Host: But the point we seem to be missing here is that **he died**. ... Couldn't you see that he was dead?

Mary: I saw his body die, yes..... and as he did, he committed His spirit to His Father, God, ...and then... then the whole earth went black... the Temple curtain was miraculously torn in two from top to bottom,... everything He said came true. It was then that I knew that the world would never be the same again.... and I knew that **I would never be the same again**.

Host: Well, these are....ah.... amazing claims, that Jesus has changed you life in such a way. (to audience) We will continue with our interview shortly, but before we do we are going to have another song. Thanks guys.

(Song - "I will never be the same again")

Interview Part 5 - Conclusions

Host: Thankyou Jo.... and welcome back. If youve just joined us we are interviewing four people who were all present at the time that Jesus died on a Roman cross. And the Question I would like to pose to them now is - where were **you** when Jesus died what were you **doing**, and how did you feel?
Ah... Pilate If I could ask for you response first.

Pilate: I uh... I guess. ah.. Gary, that I was feeling much the same as anyone in Jerusalem that day. These things are not pleasant, but they need to be done in order for the Roman empire to run effectively. Many people, even my own wife did not understand fully the pressures of being Govenor .

Host: Your wife?

Pilate: (sighs half annoyed, half relief) Yes, ... it seems my wife had some sort of dream warning her that Jesus was innocent, that I shouldn't get involved with his sentencing. She... She thought He was innocent too...

Host: Innocent **too**.... so do we understand from this statement that you also thought Jesus was innocent.

Pilate: (defensively) No.... That's no what I .. um..... (for the first time he is beginning to lose his commanding role) ... Look whether this man Jesus was innocent or not, I did want I was expected to do, what I was **told** to do by the Jewish people and their leaders. I have to live with my decision, no matter how unpleasant it seems.

Host: So... (getting to the truth) In **your** opinion Was Jesus innocent?

Pilate: Undeserving of death.... perhaps... but certainly guilty of proclaiming that he was Son of God.

Peter: (fed up with the political speeches of pilate) But that's because he **WAS**.

Host: Which brings us to you Peter, as you still obviously believe that this.... Jesus was God's Son. What were **you** doing at the time of Jesus death, how did you feel?

Peter: At the time of Jesus death I am ashamed to say that I was in hiding, watching from afar and fearing for my own life. (resolvedly) But no longer. I am proud to say that I am a follower of Jesus Christ and I teach this to all people wherever I go.

Host: But Peter, (searching) You let him down... You failed, How can you think that Jesus still accepts you? I thought you Christians were supposed to be perfect.

Peter: No (looking him in the eye) That is not true. Christian are not without sinfulness, we still do things wrong, but we have a God who sent his Son Jesus, he was the one who was perfect, and because of him our sins.... **my sins** have been washed away. Jesus died on that cross for me Mr. Simons, ... (pauses) ...and for **you** also.

Host: For Me?.....I don't understand why Jesus ...would die on a cross... for me.

Soldier: (suddenly) Me either..... At least you were not the one who nailed him to a cross with your own two hands. I saw His pain, I saw him praying for me, forgiving me.... I saw him die...., but I also saw the great stone which was rolled away from in front of His grave. It was not done by human hands, for I **knew** the guards who were watching him that night, there was no way it could have been done by his followers or friends.

Host: So you believe that Jesus came back to life again? That He is still alive?

Soldier: Yes I do, because I saw the empty tomb with my own eyes. Roman soldiers are not known for their laziness, what happened in that tomb was an act of God himself.

Host: But you saw an empty grave, not a living man.

Mary: I saw him alive. (all eyes on Mary) Yes, (smiling) just three days after I had wept at His feet as he died, I stood there before him again, but this time with tears of joy in my eyes. For my Saviour was alive again, Just as He promised.

Host: Now, I find this very ah... interesting Mary, that you testify to seeing Jesus alive again. If you really did see Him alive, did you... feel... shocked, scared... what?

Mary: (gently) Yes, I felt like that at first,.... You see, where Jesus' body had been laid in the tomb there were two men dressed in glowing white. Jesus bandages were there, still in the shape of His body, but it was completely hollow inside. I was distressed and began looking for him and then (smile) ... I heard him call my name. "Miriam." That was my Aramaic name, the name by which my parents and friends addressed me. A gardener would not have spoken Aramaic to me. Neither would a Roman. it could only be one person. When I realised who it was I felt so... so amazed and so excited,... so joyful.... as I looked into the eyes of my Saviour I saw nothing but love and compassion, and I knew that my Saviour had completed the work his Father God has sent Him to do.

Host: But are you sure it was Jesus you saw.... I mean .. **really** sure?

Mary: Oh yes, ... you see when someone changes your life in such a way like Jesus did, you don't forget His face. Jesus did change my life Mr. Simons, he changed it completely. I was a woman who had no hope, no friends, no control over even my own actions, But Jesus changed all of that, and now I have a life that is worth sharing, a Joy that overflows, and a peace that fills my heart in every way..... Could**you** say the same thing Mr. Simons?

Host: (is almost broken) I...have to admit that it would appear that you have ah... something... um... that is very special to you. I can also see this in you Peter, and even in this soldier here... but I'm not sure what it is exactly.... I do thank each one of you for **answering** my questions honestly, and um.....

Peter: (interrupting suddenly) What about **you** Mr Simons?

Host: I'm... Sorry?

Peter: What about you Mr. Simons, Why don't you answer the question?

Host: The.. question? - I'm not sure what you mean....

Peter: (looks him in the eye) "Where were you when Jesus died?"

(cut all lights to black)

(Song - Were you there when they Crucified my Lord?)

End.