

24. The Life of Christ and The Virgin panels – Christ Before Pilate Panel



BURRELL COLLECTION: LIFE OF
CHRIST WINDOW WITH DETAIL
OF CHRIST BEFORE PILATE
BELOW



In the Bible story of Jesus before Pilate, we are told that Pilate was convinced that Jesus was innocent, saying seven times, "I find no fault in him". His wife urged him not to sentence Him. Pilate sent Jesus to Herod, who returned Him. Pilate then tried to get the populace to convict Barabbas in His place. Finally, Pilate sentenced Jesus to be crucified.

The Boppard window may be the scene before Jesus is scourged as he is dressed and has no crown of thorns. The accusers behind are clearly eager to inflict harm on him – they are angry and animated. Pilate sits on his throne with his left hand open as though willing Jesus to declare his innocence. In his right hand is a sword, perhaps a symbol of his authority and power. Jesus looks patiently downwards. The rope that is tied around Jesus' waist is wrapped around the armoured soldier's hand. The panel is beautifully composed and the faces and painted with realistic expressions. The colours are fabulous!



BOPPARD CHRIST BEFORE PILATE PANEL

The colours are fabulous!

Another example of Christ before Pilate in the Burrell Collection can be seen in the Life of Christ window which is on display .

This window has two lights with four scenes from the life of Christ; the Nativity, Christ before Pilate, the Crucifixion and the Resurrection. It is a French window dated to the first half of the 15th century, just like the Boppard windows.

Although stylistically very different there are several similarities between the composition of the French Christ before Pilate panel and the Boppard panel. Pilate wears a hat and an ermine collared red tunic. Jesus has a calm sad face and between Pilate and Jesus is an accuser with a red angry face. The black and white tiled floor is also very similar in the two panels.

The big difference is the use of an architectural canopy in the background to the French panel. Although the figures in colour stand out against the areas of canopy, the image is far more confusing due to many mending leads used during previous restorations and therefore lacks the impact of the Boppard panel.