



*Is Jesus Your King?*  
John 19:5-16

**5** Then Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. And Pilate said to them, "Behold the Man!"

**6** Therefore, when the chief priests and officers saw Him, they cried out, saying, "Crucify Him, crucify Him!" Pilate said to them, "You take Him and crucify Him, for I find no fault in Him."

**7** The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and according to our law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God."

**8** Therefore, when Pilate heard that saying, he was the more afraid,

**9** and went again into the Praetorium, and said to Jesus, "Where are You from?" But Jesus gave him no answer.

**10** Then Pilate said to Him, "Are You not speaking to me? Do You not know that I have power to crucify You, and power to release You?"

**11** Jesus answered, "You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above. Therefore the one who delivered Me to you has the greater sin."

**12** From then on Pilate sought to release Him, but the Jews cried out, saying, "If you let this Man go, you are not Caesar's friend. Whoever makes himself a king speaks against Caesar."

**13** When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus out and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called The Pavement, but in Hebrew, Gabbatha.

**14** Now it was the Preparation Day of the Passover, and about the sixth hour. And he said to the Jews, "Behold your King!"

**15** But they cried out, "Away with Him, away with Him! Crucify Him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar!"

**16** Then he delivered Him to them to be crucified. So they took Jesus and led Him away.

Pilate expecting a sympathetic reaction after presenting Christ, but instead the chief priests and the officers cry out CRUCIFY!

Pilate responds to this somewhat sulkily, he is clearly not happy about being used as a rubber stamp for their decision! Look you brought Him to me for trial, I have found nothing worthy of death in Him, but you aren't taking any notice – ok then YOU crucify Him if that's what you want.

He knows of course that they don't have the power to do that themselves, and that their method of execution was stoning, not the crucifixion they wanted.

So they change their tack, ok Pilate from your point of view Jesus is clearly not a threat, see it then from ours, we have a law against blasphemy, and this man has committed the greatest of all blasphemies by claiming to be the Son of God.

Now before you just dismiss that statement, keep in mind that the religious leaders are right, Jesus had claimed to be the SON of GOD. And that means that if all the people who go about proclaiming that Jesus was merely a **good man** but not the **GOD man** are right, then the sentence of the Jewish leaders would have been correct, Jesus WOULD have been guilty of blasphemy. The only way Jesus could actually be innocent of the charge of blasphemy is if He is God and that is precisely WHY he is innocent of their charge. Jesus is the Son of God.

Anyway, this increased the pressure on Pilate, because he was charged with upholding the local laws whenever possible, and he had just been informed that the highest court of the Jews had found him guilty of a capital crime.

But the saying also clearly frightened Pilate. Many odd things had been happening regarding this man before him. His wife had come to Him saying that she had had a very disturbing dream about him, and certainly Pilate could not help but be struck by Christ's calm peace and composure in the midst of the situation. Christ who showed no fear when he was with the disciples on the lake in the midst of the storm, even though they were terrified, would not have shown any fear in the midst of this storm and these would have shaken Pilate. *Who is this man really?* He must have been thinking. But of course he doesn't ask Jesus "Are you the Son of God?" that would have been too much of condescension for the proud governor, instead he asks *where are you from?* Which is really trying to get at the same thing - he is not merely asking what His hometown was.

But how could Christ have answered that question in a manner that Pilate would have understood? Here we have a deeply superstitious man who believed in a pantheon of false Gods, and in any event was not really interested in knowing the truth. What is truth, He had already said. Pilate was like so many people you run into today - superstitious, but not truly religious, scared but not convicted, curious but neither willing nor able to accept the answers his inquiries might produce.

So Jesus doesn't answer, and that irritates Pilate, and he makes his **don't you know who I am? Statement**. You aren't talking to me, listen I'm the one in charge here, I have absolute power - power to either put you to death or release you! Another ironic statement, here is a creature telling his creator, I have power over you when the man he is addressing is the one who keeps his atoms together. Jesus at this point corrects Him, No you could not have any power over me if it had not been given to you by God! This is going according to His will, not yours Pilate. You aren't in charge and neither is the mob, this is all proceeding according to the redemption plan of my Father.

And how often have earthly governors really thought they were in charge of things, instead of God? They become drunk with a power they don't really have.

And it is at this point that Jesus says that the greater sin lay with the one who had delivered Him, that is not Judas incidentally, because after all he had only delivered Jesus into the hands of Caiaphas. It was Caiaphas Himself, the High Priest and leader of the Jewish people who had delivered Christ to the Romans to be executed. While Pilate is not excused for his terrible act of moral cowardice and judicial

murder, it does mean that Caiaphas bears the majority of the blame, especially because his understanding was so much greater than that of Pilate.

But Pilate still tries to release Jesus, but to no avail. The Jewish leaders by now, seeing this and becoming frustrated descend into threats. If you release this man you are no friend of Caesar, Pilate. Now Pilate's mentor, Sejanus had just been executed in Rome for treason, and what the Jews are threatening is – you release this man and be certain a delegation from us will go straight to Tiberius saying “You know what Pilate did? We had this fellow a rebel who made himself out to be king, and we found Him guilty of treason against you o Caesar, but Pilate released him. Now would a friend of yours have released someone so clearly opposed to you Caesar?”

That's it of course for Pilate, he sits down at that point. His trial is over, and now he must pass sentence. He still gets in one more dig though, presenting Jesus and saying BEHOLD YOUR KING! This is of course Pilate mocking them. But I want you to see what a critical moment in History this was. We can think of missed opportunities in the history of nations, times when exactly the wrong man was selected for high office, and it has been their undoing. But here the Jewish are presented with their Messiah, their true king, the branch, the long awaited one, the king of kings and lord of lords, and yet they reject Him.

Worse they reject God the true King of Israel, and say instead, we have no King but Caesar! Here you have the leaders of the assembly of God, but they reject God and instead embrace the world and its ultimately powerless potentates. But how many religious leaders have done that since? Rejecting God and coveying up to kings and emperors?

The Jewish people crossed a line with God here, professing loyalty to the world and to men and 40 years later they would reap a terrible harvest at the hands of the very men they had falsely pledged loyalty to. It is as if God had said “To Caesar you have appealed to Caesar you shall go!”

Applications:

**1) God's Sovereignty even in the midst of terrible evil:**

Jesus in his statement in verse 11 points out two things, the sovereignty of God and the responsibility of man. This happened according to God's appointment, and yet the sin was still Caiaphas'

*Acts 2:23 "Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death;*

*24 "whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it.*

*Gen 50:20 "But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive.*

Men want to deny this,

Ridiculous email, that came out after the 9/11 attacks Where was God? – he was trying to stop people from getting on the planes or going to work – ***“He sat down and cried that 19 of his children could have so much hate in their hearts. That they didn't choose him, and now they are lost forever.”***

God no more sat down and cried on that day, than he did when His only begotten son was being put to death on that Friday, before the Passover Sabbath

*John Blanchard put it well in his booklet “where is God when things Go Wrong?”: Soon after the events of 11 September 2001, I was asked, ‘Where was God when religious fanatics killed those 2,800 people?’ I replied, ‘Exactly where he was when religious fanatics killed his Son, Jesus Christ — in complete control of everything that happened.’ This is the clear teaching of Scripture. Those who collaborated in the execution of Jesus are described as ‘wicked men’, yet his death was also according to ‘God’s set purpose and foreknowledge’ (Acts 2:23).*

Because God uses even the worst of suffering to bring about the greatest good and this brothers and sisters was the greatest example in history of that fact:

That cannot be?

Really? Did you create the universe? Do you know the end from before the beginning? Can you redeem a fallen and hopelessly wicked mankind? God did and does and is.

***Romans 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.***

If you do not believe that you have never read and understood Job, and seen that even terrible personal suffering can be used for your good and God’s glory. Or you’ve never heard of Joni Erickson Tada:

**My accident was not a punishment for my wrongdoing — whether or not I deserved it. Only God knows why I was paralysed. Maybe he knew I’d ultimately be happier serving him. If I were still on my feet, it’s hard to say how things might have gone. I probably would have drifted through life — marriage, maybe even divorce — dissatisfied and disillusioned...**

**I’m really thankful he did something to get my attention and change me. Today as I look back, I am convinced that the whole ordeal of my paralysis was inspired by God’s love. I wasn’t the brunt of some cruel divine joke. God had reasons behind my suffering, and learning some of them has made all the difference in the world.**

Far from gaining any sort of comfort in the idea that God isn’t in control in the midst of pain Joni has learned that it is only in God’s sovereignty that we can find TRUE comfort - **‘When we learn to lean back on God’s sovereignty, fixing and settling our thoughts on that unshakeable, unmoveable reality, we can experience great inner peace. Our troubles may not change. Our pain may not diminish. Our loss may not be restored. Our problems may not fade with the new dawn. But the power of those things to harm us is broken as we rest in the fact that God is in control.’<sup>1</sup>**

## **2) Who is the Church’s King?**

We have just seen graphically what happens when Religious leaders choose someone other than God to be their King.

***How to Become a Liberal Without Attending Harvard Divinity School***

***By Michael Lawrence***

*Other pastors, having started as evangelicals, become liberal. It's not that they begin to deny the Formula of Chalcedon or the Nicene Creed. It's not that they reject the bodily resurrection of Christ or the virgin birth. It's simply that, over the course of their ministry, sound doctrine increasingly takes a back seat to effective practice and the demands of a growing budget. Hard truths are replaced by happy thoughts, tips for a successful life, and programs designed to attract crowds whose content is devoted to making those crowds feel loved and accepted.*

*slide not into liberalism but into ineffectiveness. As we talked about the Bible's critique of their situation, I asked how they got to this point. One wise elder spoke up and said, "Too often in the past, in the conflict between relationships and faithfulness to God's Word, relationships have won out."*

Well that would never happen to you Andy, you have no idea how often people have asked me a question, or raised a subject, and I see before me two responses: the answer I believe is biblical but which I'm pretty sure will make the person asking me angry, and the shiny, candy-like, answer that will make them happy, and which I'm fairly certain I could cobble a text or two together to support. Besides, they want to hear it, so I won't have to support it that much, not like the unpopular answer I'm going to have to sweat bullets trying to defend.

*Love of the Sheep or Love of Yourself can get you to liberalism very quickly*

It is not that we aren't supposed to love the sheep, we are, but we love them best by Loving Christ most of all, just as the husband who loves Christ most is being the best husband his wife could have.

### **3) Who is your King?**

"In the end, everybody acts out of a desire to please men or to please God. There is no middle way. Pilate wanted to release Jesus, but he wanted to please men more. Most of all he did not want to jeopardize his standing with the emperor in Rome." – Gordon Keddie

Vox Populi, Vox Dei – *the voice of the people as the voice of God*

Is it you? Is it Caesar?

***Phil 2:9 Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name,***

***10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth,***

***11 and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.***