



GROWTH GROUP WINTER 2019 – ONE ON ONE WITH JESUS

WEEK 6 – APRIL 14, 2019 - JOHN 19:1-16

GETTING TO KNOW ONE ANOTHER

- 1) Read John 19:1-16. Pray for your time together. Have you ever been in a “crowd” that could have, or did, turn into a “mob?” Share a story, if you are willing.

SETTING THE CONTEXT

The gospel of John spends a significant amount of time describing and detailing the last week of Jesus’ earthly life. No other gospel spends this much time on his final week. From John 13-19 we read about the final days of Jesus. And in John 19 this journey comes to an end as Jesus is sentenced to death by Pontius Pilate and led away by the guards to be crucified.

In John 1:14 we were told that the “word became flesh and dwelt among us.” From that time on John has been showing us what this statement was all about. In John 19:9, Pilate is still trying to sort out what all of this means and he asks Jesus where he comes from. Pilate has no real idea of who it is that is standing in front of him. Pilate is trying to make sense of what he is hearing and what kind of decision he needs to make. He is more than likely nervously seeking out the truth.

If Pilate lets Jesus go free, he runs the risk of the religious leaders going to Caesar and telling him that Pilate had let a rebellious king go free. This would have meant certain punishment and possible removal. Pilate would no longer have the power and prestige that he had been given by Rome. And if Pilate chooses to crucify him, he is concerned that he is condemning an innocent man.

Pilate engages Jesus in a conversation about power. Jesus doesn’t really challenge the power that Pilate has over him, but instead reminds him that ultimate power comes from God. Jesus seems to acknowledge the “secular power” that Pilate is claiming to wield. The apostle Paul wrote about secular authority in Romans 13:1-7. However, both Jesus and Paul make it clear that God is still the one who is over all of these things.

In the end, Pilate hands Jesus over to death. He has moved from saying, “here is the man” in verse 6 to “here is your king” in verse 14. Jesus had already been flogged, had a crown of thorns placed on his head, been clothed in a purple robe, and now he will be delivered over to death. We are given a very clear understanding of the purposes of God. Jesus will suffer and be betrayed. But all of this will be done for the sake of humanity. God is working his purpose out and will bring reconciliation out of this dark and troubling time.



EXPLORING THE TEXT

Read John 19:1-16

¹ Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. ² The soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head. They clothed him in a purple robe ³ and went up to him again and again, saying, "Hail, king of the Jews!" And they slapped him in the face. ⁴ Once more Pilate came out and said to the Jews gathered there, "Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know that I find no basis for a charge against him." ⁵ When Jesus came out wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe, Pilate said to them, "Here is the man!" ⁶ As soon as the chief priests and their officials saw him, they shouted, "Crucify! Crucify!" But Pilate answered, "You take him and crucify him. As for me, I find no basis for a charge against him." ⁷ The Jewish leaders insisted, "We have a law, and according to that law he must die, because he claimed to be the Son of God." ⁸ When Pilate heard this, he was even more afraid, ⁹ and he went back inside the palace. "Where do you come from?" he asked Jesus, but Jesus gave him no answer. ¹⁰ "Do you refuse to speak to me?" Pilate said. "Don't you realize I have power either to free you or to crucify you?" ¹¹ Jesus answered, "You would have no power over me if it were not given to you from above. Therefore the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin." ¹² From then on, Pilate tried to set Jesus free, but the Jewish leaders kept shouting, "If you let this man go, you are no friend of Caesar. Anyone who claims to be a king opposes Caesar." ¹³ When Pilate heard this, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judge's seat at a place known as the Stone Pavement (which in Aramaic is Gabbatha). ¹⁴ It was the day of Preparation of the Passover; it was about noon. "Here is your king," Pilate said to the Jews. ¹⁵ But they shouted, "Take him away! Take him away! Crucify him!" "Shall I crucify your king?" Pilate asked. "We have no king but Caesar," the chief priests answered. ¹⁶ Finally Pilate handed him over to them to be crucified. So the soldiers took charge of Jesus.

- 2) Compare and contrast the reactions of the Romans and the Jewish leaders regarding Jesus. What were the issues for each?
- 3) Should we feel sorry for Pilate, and/or for the Jewish leaders? Why? Why not?
- 4) Verses 10-11 indicate that God has the power and authority in this situation. How much "actual free will" do you believe was exercised in the actions of Pilate and the religious leaders? How much free will do you believe YOU exercise in your own life?
- 5) When have you made a decision based on fear and/or ambition, rather than "doing the right thing?" What was the outcome?
- 6) Why do you think Jesus HAD to die? What might his death imply about humanity, and about you personally?
- 7) Verses 14-15 mention two different kinds of kings. How would you characterize the two kinds of kings and their kingdoms? Are there "kings" and "kingdoms" in your life today? If so, what do those look like?

BRINGING IT HOME

- 8) As we finish our Lenten journey and approach Easter, reflect individually, or as a group, about how well the disciplines of Lent have gone for you this year. What did you gain from your Lenten practices, as well as from the LJPC sermon series?