

## John 18:28-19:16 - "The Governor"

Starter: What's the furthest you've ever been away from home (where home was where you were living at that time)?

The passage this week is about Pilate. Pilate was a Roman appointed governor (prefect) over the region of Judea. There was much animosity amongst Jews and Romans and Pilate had a reputation for being brutal. Of course the Roman rule of Israel was what the Jews were hoping the Messiah was coming to end (hence the cheering during the Triumphal Entry of Jesus into Jerusalem).

Read John 18:28-32

The Jews couldn't enter into the house of a Gentile during Passover so they shout to Pilate from outside. The Jews are only interested in having Jesus killed which is why they take him to Pilate.

Q. What do you suppose John means in v32. What kind of death was Jesus going to die?

Read John 18:33-40.

A concern of Pilate's would have been that Jesus really was the King of the Jews and therefore would usurp his power. When Jesus reveals that his kingdom is "not of this world," it appears that Pilate gets on board with him.

Q. Would you agree? Even though Pilate has a history of violence against Jews it appears he does not want to kill Jesus?

Q. What is truth?

NB. Note the irony that Barabbas means "Son of the father" where Jesus is Son of the Father. At first glance, Barabbas (the insurrectionist) was a much bigger threat to Rome than Jesus.

Read John 19:1-16

Pilate flogs Jesus and the soldiers mock dress him up as a king in the hope that this appeases the crowd. It doesn't!

The Jew's law states that blasphemy is punishable by death by stoning (Lev 24:16 - note this is Old Testament law which Jesus fulfilled and we no longer live by). Roman rule trumps Jewish law but Pilate seems to be more scared for his own life here so he goes back inside to question Jesus again.

Q. In v11 who has the greater sin? Does this strike you as Jesus releasing Pilate from guilt?

Eventually the crowd figure out that Jesus is breaking Roman law by claiming to be king (although Jesus' claim is that he is a king outside of Caesar's dominion). Also, IF Jesus had claimed to be Son of God which he never directly calls himself, he would have been putting himself on a par with Caesar who were all Sons of the Gods.

Q. What do you suppose you'd do in Pilates situation?

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Q. Is Jesus guilty of anything? Has he been given a fair trial? Do you find yourself rooting for his acquittal? This all happened because it was God's will.

The sermon application on Sunday was that John's gospel has pointed to Jesus being Prophet, Priest and King forever. The only other leadership position in Israel had been Judge which Jesus would also one day become (at the eschaton - John 12:47-48).

John says all you have to do is believe in Jesus. The rest of the New Testament backs this up adding that this belief is life changing!

Who you see Jesus as being will affect your whole life. While apologetics is good for answering people's questions ultimately all that matters is this - Who Is Jesus?

Final: Well... who is he? Keep your responses personal - answers like "God" or "The Son of God" or even "My Saviour" are a little simplistic. How, if at all, have you reasoned yourself into the position of saying that Jesus is God, Son of God, or Saviour?