

John's Gospel @ CF!

John 19:1-16

Sermon notes – BK

March 8, 2026

As much as I love to laugh... this passage in John 19 is no laughing matter...

That said...

It is so important to not just gloss over this to *get to the resurrection*.

We find **ourselves not only** in this passage today, but also **in the time of year this actually took place...** as we come into the **Passion week, starting Palm Sunday, March 29...**

We are in very interesting times –

- As much as is going on in the **Middle East** right now
- **The Blood moon** the other night...
 - o To have this “sign in the heavens” happen on **Purim** –
 - **Purim is a Jewish Holiday**
 - Remembering Esther and the **delivery of the Jews from the ancient Persians and Haman’s evil plot** to destroy the Jews...

All that is going on is not a message for today... but these are the kinds of signs in the heavens that should not be taken lightly.

ALL of that said... does it not feel like interesting times?

IN John's Gospel - LAST WEEK – Week one... of *Jesus before Pilate*

Pilate is trying to understand the situation

- Why are they bringing Jesus to him
- Who is Jesus
- Jesus tells Pilate His kingdom is not of this world
- Those who are of the truth listen to Him...
- Pilate asks, **“What is truth?”** – (*not listening at all!*)

It is clear, as Pilate learns more... he is doing all he can to release Jesus...

Pilate tries to direct them in observing a custom where Rome let's a prisoner go free on the Jewish Passover...

Pilate wanted to release Jesus –

Instead, they demand for the release of Barabbas.

That's where we left it off last week –

Now we come to the rest of the story...

SO... ~~the letter I sent out this week was a bit of a warning~~
we are covering a very difficult passage in the Gospel of John... but to allow the Lord to speak to you in honest and thoughtful ways.

As Esther's Cousin Mordecai said,

Esther 4:14

“...for such a time as this...”

Today, we continue with Jesus before Pilate, and how the narrative plays out with the Jews... So very violent...

Before we read this, I have to say, I don't like violence.

For some parts of the world, in some cultures... and even in some US sub-cultures, violence is embraced

- Embraced as an acceptable response to get or do what they would like or think they need... or need to do in order to get what they want.
- Embraced as sport... we all have our tolerances I suppose...

Violence.

This brings us to one of the most difficult passages for me to teach through... maybe ever, for sure in the book of John... A very violent scene...

These are verses that affect me every time...

- I'm glad it does, it is horrific on every level
- I'm glad it does, it shows I'm not totally desensitized...

I bring this up here, because I think we can easily read over this and it not impact us. We see and read about violence all the time.

It is a sad commentary that a story like this could ever be passé, or “old news...”

This was *more* than the death of "the Passover lamb."

Honestly, that would have been done in a merciful way - a quick death to the lamb, etc...

This was not that.

This carried with it great and evil violence

We will pray, then read it... and then highlight some parts together.

John 19:1-16

Then Pilate took Jesus and flogged him. ² And the soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head and arrayed him in a purple robe. ³ They came up to him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and struck him with their hands. ⁴ Pilate went out again and said to them, "See, I am bringing him out to you that you may know that I find no guilt in him." ⁵ So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Behold the man!" ⁶ When the chief priests and the officers saw him, they cried out, "Crucify him, crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and crucify him, for I find no guilt in him." ⁷ The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die because he has made himself the Son of God." ⁸ When Pilate heard this statement, he was even more afraid. ⁹ He entered his headquarters again and said to Jesus, "Where are you from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. ¹⁰ So Pilate said to him, "You will not speak to me? Do you not know that I have authority to release you and authority to crucify you?" ¹¹ Jesus answered him, "You would have no authority over me at all unless it had been given you from above. Therefore he who delivered me over to you has the greater sin."

¹² From then on Pilate sought to release him, but the Jews cried out, "If you release this man, you are not Caesar's friend. Everyone who makes himself a king opposes Caesar." ¹³ So when Pilate heard these words, he brought

Jesus out and sat down on the judgment seat at a place called The Stone Pavement, and in Aramaic Gabbatha. ¹⁴ Now it was the day of Preparation of the Passover. It was about the sixth hour. He said to the Jews, “Behold your King!” ¹⁵ 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 So he delivered him over to them to be crucified.

Pontius Pilate –

- The Roman prefect (governor) of Judea (26-36 AD)
- The one making the decision about Jesus.
- Pilate was in this political position because he married-up, not for his leadership skills
- Pilate only had his position because he married the granddaughter of the emperor.

John gives us much more than the other Gospels about Jesus’ interaction with Pilate, as we talked about last week...

Pilate has a face-off with these accusers of Jesus – doing just what Satan does, the one who...

Revelation 12:10b

“...who accuses them day and night before our God.”

Pilate saw through their motivation...

...but he could not see his way out of this situation...

SO...

“...Pilate took Jesus and flogged him.”

What happens here, I am guessing some of you have heard or read in detail somewhere...

Here are some facts –

- **Flogging was brutal – it was a whip made of strands of leather, weighted and fitted with sharp pieces of bone and metal. It would literally shred the back of the one they were whipping.**

The Romans used it to –

- **Try get confessions,**
- **To punish,**
- **To weaken the prisoner, so they would die more quickly on the cross.**

- **Many would die from this process alone...**
 - **From the trauma**
 - **From the blood loss**
 - **Etc.**

To top that off, they mocked Jesus, as a way of mocking the Jews in general.

John 19:2-3

And the soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head and arrayed him in a purple robe. ³ They came up to him, saying, “Hail, King of the Jews!” and struck him with their hands.

- **There would be much tension between the Jews and the soldiers**

- This was likely an opportunity to take out that frustration here on Jesus
- This was ruthless treatment, designed to humiliate

How do you humiliate...

The Creator of the world?

The Perfect one,

Without sin

Without spot or wrinkle

Without pride

There is nothing to humiliate... The humiliation was theirs.

- Those without any real power, acting powerful
- Those without any real authority, acting like they are in charge.

THIS is the paradox – the ALL-POWERFUL submitting to total weakness, disguised as control.

The underlying truth to all of this... God was in control... even in this horrific situation.

Isaiah 53:4

Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.

This life can be devastating.

It can be cruel.

It can be unjust.

It can be totally evil.

God knows – He was there.
Jesus experienced this in full...

After this...

John 19:4-5

⁴ Pilate went out again and said to them, “See, I am bringing him out to you that you may know that I find no guilt in him.” ⁵ So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, “Behold the man!”

It seems Pilate was hoping this would be enough – that this would appease the blood-thirsty religious leaders...

He would have been *bloody, swollen, almost beaten* beyond recognition...

Maybe Pilate was hoping they would have compassion on Jesus...

BUT... there was no mercy, no letting up of the hate and the vitriol.

John 19:6-7

⁶ When the chief priests and the officers saw him, they cried out, “Crucify him, crucify him!” Pilate said to them, “Take him yourselves and crucify him, for I find no guilt in him.” (Pilate’s frustration and sarcasm, knowing they had no power or authority to do so) ⁷ The Jews answered him, “We have a law, and according to that law

he ought to die because he has made himself the Son of God.”

There is no debate why Jesus was crucified. Jesus claimed to be equal with God... John made that clear earlier...

John 5:18

“This was why the Jews were seeking all the more to kill him, because not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God.”

AND - the words of the Jews against Jesus...

John 10:33

“It is not for a good work that we are going to stone you but for blasphemy, because you, being a man, make yourself God.”

Jesus was guilty as charged... **BECAUSE IT WAS TRUE!**

This kinda knocked Pilate a bit sideways though...

John 19:8-9

⁸ When Pilate heard this statement, he was even more afraid. ⁹ He entered his headquarters again and said to Jesus, “Where are you from?” But Jesus gave him no answer.

**Jesus was not playing games, He already gave all the information about that he would give...
And it set this up perfectly...**

10 So Pilate said to him, “You will not speak to me? Do you not know that I have authority to release you and authority to crucify you?” 11 Jesus answered him, “You would have no authority over me at all unless it had been given you from above. Therefore he who delivered me over to you has the greater sin.”

Pilate, tries to flex here...

Do you not know that I have authority to release you and authority to crucify you?

- **A sign of his fear**
- **A sign of his frustration to the situation**
- **A sign of his limited power...**
 - **He had the authority and power to crucify Jesus**
 - **He had the authority, but did not really have the “power” to release Jesus...**
 - **Pilate was trapped... looking for a way out.**

Pilate’s use of “authority” – The power of judicial decision

Jesus responds with “authority” – The power of deciding against one...

Jesus sets the record straight that He was not there because of the Jews, He was not there because Judas’ betrayal...

Jesus was there only out of obedience to the Father.

Philippians 2:5-8

⁵ Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷ but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. ⁸ And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Jesus continued with Pilate...

“Therefore he who delivered me over to you has the greater sin.”

It was not that Pilate was without sin, but Jesus knew he was just a tool.

**He may have been a rock-splash in the water...
THEY were a boulder-splash.**

The consequences of their sin was far greater, due to their hardness of heart and unwillingness to recognize the day of God’s coming. (Lk.19:44)

John 19:12

¹² From then on Pilate sought to release him, but the Jews cried out, “If you release this man, you are not Caesar's friend. Everyone who makes himself a king opposes Caesar.”

Check-mate on Pilate. Releasing Jesus was not a risk he was willing to take.

John 19:13-16

13 So when Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judgment seat at a place called The Stone Pavement, and in Aramaic Gabbatha. (It was an elevated seat, likely several steps up)

LET'S bring in a little snippet from Matthew as well...

Matthew 27:19

"...while he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent word to him, "Have nothing to do with that righteous man, for I have suffered much because of him today in a dream."

This made his decision all that much more difficult, but Pilate still would not release the one he declared innocent on multiple occasions...

John continues...

14 Now it was the day of Preparation of the Passover. It was about the sixth hour. He said to the Jews, "Behold your King!" 15 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 So he delivered him over to them to be crucified.

I do not want to give Pilate too much credit here, but John includes all these references to Jesus being King for a reason...

- Pilate went from mockery to declaration of Jesus as King
- The Jews rejected Jesus as King
- The Jews then declared Ceasar to be their only King.

Ultimately the will of God prevailed... Jesus was delivered over to be crucified...

In our day, our church culture is all over the map when it comes to how we approach this part of the Gospel.

- Some have such a grace-centered culture that there is no real accountability, no full embrace of truth...
 - The focus is **all because He loves us... almost like we are the ones God exists for.**
 - This leads to entitlement
- THEN there is the church culture where Jesus is always on the cross
 - Yes, our sin put Him there, but His power did not leave Him there
 - This can lead to a works-driven salvation...

BUT... That is us not how this day was...

**THIS day had been in the works for hundreds of years.
THIS day was to fulfill all righteousness (Matthew 3:15)
THIS day would be the conduit from which God's justice will be satisfied...**

Matthew 12:18-21

“Behold, my servant whom I have chosen, my beloved with whom my soul is well pleased. I will put my Spirit upon him, and he will proclaim justice to the Gentiles. ¹⁹ He will not quarrel or cry aloud, nor will anyone hear his voice in the streets; ²⁰ a bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not quench, until he brings justice to victory; ²¹ and in his name the Gentiles will hope.”

And just a little before this, Jesus told Pilate

John 18:37b

For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice.”

John makes it clear in his recording of this part of the story... God is sovereign and Jesus, His Son will fulfill all God Set out to do to revive.

We will get to the actual crucifixion next week...

There are some vivid people profiles here –

- **The Disenfranchised (Some of the onlookers, Judas)**
- **The threatened and power-hungry (Religious leaders)**
- **The Scared disciples scattered throughout the city**
- **The one in “power” – but no where near in control (Pilate)**
- **The Saviour Jesus Christ – who takes it all and is the only one who is in control.**

Where would you be in this story?

Where are you in this story today?

There is much more... but don't skip ahead too fast... let the gravity of all of this sit... listen to what the Lord is saying to you in the middle of all of this.