



## JESUS, PART 12: BEFORE PILATE

At Passover, Jesus gathered his followers and spelled out a new relational arrangement between God and humankind: “As I have loved you, so you must love one another.” But Jesus wasn’t celebratory. He seemed troubled. Initiating this new covenant with God would require sacrifice. What came next would confuse his followers and send them scattering.

**THE BIG IDEA:** When Jesus died, everybody unfollowed and everybody unbelieving.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. With your Bible and Bible App, [read Mark 14:61–65](#).

*<sup>61</sup> But Jesus was silent and made no reply. Then the high priest asked him, “Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?” <sup>62</sup> Jesus said, “I AM. And you will see the Son of Man seated in the place of power at God’s right hand and coming on the clouds of heaven.” <sup>63</sup> Then the high priest tore his clothing to show his horror and said, “Why do we need other witnesses? <sup>64</sup> You have all heard his blasphemy. What is your verdict?” “Guilty!” they all cried. “He deserves to die!” <sup>65</sup> Then some of them began to spit at him, and they blindfolded him and beat him with their fists. “Prophecy to us,” they jeered. And the guards slapped him as they took him away. [Mark 14:61–65 \(NLT\)](#)*

2. What implications did Jesus’ answer to the Sanhedrin’s question have for the old covenant? Why do you think they responded so violently to his words?
3. With your Bible and Bible App, [read John 19:10–12](#).

*<sup>10</sup> “Why don’t you talk to me?” Pilate demanded. “Don’t you realize that I have the power to release you or crucify you?” <sup>11</sup> Then Jesus said, “You would have no power over me at all unless it were given to you from above. So the one who handed me over to you has the greater sin.” <sup>12</sup> Then Pilate tried to release him, but the Jewish leaders shouted, “If you release this man, you are no ‘friend of Caesar.’ Anyone who declares himself a king is a rebel against Caesar.” [John 19:10–12 \(NLT\)](#)*

4. What do these two verses reveal about the nature of power? Why does Jesus seem to have greater authority than Pilate even though he’s in a position of weakness?
5. [In John 18:36, Jesus told Pontius Pilate](#), “My kingdom is not of this world.” What are some ways Jesus’ kingdom operated differently than the empire Pilate served? What are some ways Jesus’ kingdom continues to defy the assumptions of our modern world?
6. Throughout the story, we watch Jesus surrender: he didn’t fight in the garden, he was silent when the Pharisees questioned him, and he didn’t defend himself to Pilate. How hard is giving up control for you? What keeps you from trusting God and surrendering more to him?
7. Jesus’ actions in his final days were unexpected and hard to understand for his followers. Have you ever expected God to do something but he didn’t? How did this affect your belief in him?
8. During the message, Seth said, “When Jesus died, there were no Christians. There was no dream to keep alive. There was no movement to keep moving.” The crucifixion surprised even his closest followers. In what ways does Jesus continue to defy our expectations of him? Does that ever make it difficult for you to follow him?

## MOVING FORWARD

After the crucifixion, even Jesus' closest followers expected him to do what dead people usually do—stay dead. They had no idea the next few hours would change the course of history. For what the Pharisees and Pontius Pilate intended as an end was just the beginning of something new.

## WEEKLY READING

Spend some time this week reading and reflecting on John 19:1–16; Mark 15:22–24; Matthew 27:62–66.