# JOHN'S GOSPEL: JESUS IS THE SON OF GOD 75. "Pilate Could See Their Motive for Wanting Jesus to be Crucified" John 19:1 – 16

## **Introduction:**

We are studying the Gospel of John in order to take a good and honest look at who Jesus is; His nature, His teachings, His work on our behalf in redeeming us. John tells us who Jesus really is: The One and Only Son of God who alone can introduce us to the blessing of **Knowing** God **Personally**! John tells us Jesus offers us the awesome blessing of **Spiritual Adoption**, entering into a deepening relationship with His Father as His very own sons and daughters.

John 14:8 – 10a "Philip said, 'Lord show us the Father and that will be enough for us.' Jesus answered: 'Don't you know me Philip, even after I have been with you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father?' 'Don't you believe that I am in the Father and that the Father is in me?'"

It is only by believing in Jesus, that is making personal what He has done for us all to remove from us our sins, preventing us from knowing and walking with God that we may experience in a real way, the Life and the holy, self-emptying, other-oriented Love of heaven living in us right now! Jesus is quoted by John as saying in John 10:10: "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they might have life and have it to the full."

John tells us in the text why he wrote this testimony to Jesus. His internal reason for writing the Gospel is found in John 20:30, 31: "Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name."

John tells us a key truth by referring to belief in Jesus twice in his purpose for writing the book: **Believing** in Jesus is crucial to John: "that by believing you may have life in his name." It is vital that we understand what is behind that first word "believing" isn't merely giving mental assent to a list of facts. Believing is absolutely entrusting one's entire being to Jesus, that what He came to do was for me personally!

This kind of believing, **Submitting** myself to be the **Possession** of the Spirit of Jesus, results in my spirit that was dead in sins being made alive to the things of God. That brings us to the second word in the text: **Life**. This is not just human life. It is being made alive to God by His Spirit in my spirit being that was dead in sins. John describes it as "eternal life." It isn't only the promise of the future with God but also that I get to live my life here on earth with the presence of the Spirit of Jesus living in me, moving me to **Think**, **Desire** and **Act** differently!

As we study together the last hours of Jesus' human life on earth, the thing that has me gripped in heart to unpack with you this morning is this profound truth: Jesus is living by the power of

the indwelling Holy Spirit, the life and the love of heaven that He is about to clear the way for you and me to be able to live two thousand years later!

In a very heated confrontation with the Jewish religious leaders, Jesus made an assertion, an open invitation for the hearers to prove Him guilty of sin. John 8:46 "Can any of you prove me guilty of sin?" That open invitation to those who hated Him and wanted to see Him dead, and their inability to prove Him guilty of sin, still stands as we look at the end of Jesus' life on earth. No matter how closely we look at Jesus, as He prepares Himself to die on the Cross for us all, there is not a hint of sin, that is breaking one of God's laws, nor is there a hint of the **Essence of Sin: Selfishness and Self-Interest!** 

Permit me to remind you of the things we studied last week, which are foundational to the things we will be studying together this morning. As we looked into the Word together last week we did three studies in character and made an application from each character study:

First, the Jewish leaders are blinded by their hatred of Jesus that they chose to abandon their own moral compass, in order to procure Jesus' death on a Roman Cross. We made the application point that we are called to be people who live out the ethics of the kingdom of God, and His holy kingdom of the heart is characterized by love. We must not, we cannot permit hatred to grow in us blinding us and enslaving us the tyranny of being motivated by what we oppose!

Second, Pontius Pilate knew Jesus was innocent of the charges being leveled against Him and he knew that it was out of envy the Jewish religious leaders brought Jesus to him to get the death sentence. But he chose to permit himself to be swayed by political maneuvering in the human arena and abandoned his own sense of right and wrong, justice! We made the application that we cannot and must not permit ourselves to be told how to think by our culture, the media and the entertainment industry. We must get alone with the Word of God and be Guided and Counseled by His Voice in our own spiritual life!

Third, Jesus the Son of God knew two things Pilate did not know. Jesus knew that He was innocent of His own sin, but as He stood before Pilate, He was bearing the cup of suffering, your sins and mine, so He was guilty of sins, just not His own. And Jesus knew the Father's decree was already given: Jesus the Son of God must die on a Cross, the Innocent for the Guilty, to be the Lamb of God who Takes Away the sin of the world!

#### I. The King of a Kingdom that Originates in Heaven!

John 18:36, 37 "Jesus said, 'My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place.' 'You are a king then!' said Pilate. Jesus answered, 'You are right in saying I am a king. In fact for this reason I was born, and for this reason I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of the truth listens to me."

There are a number of facts we need to take into consideration as we seek to better understand what is happening in Pilate's palace. Let's dig deeper together as we see Jesus standing in the presence of Pilate with Jewish leaders vehemently accusing Him of crimes worthy of death.

First, the religious leaders in Jerusalem have convicted Jesus of the charge of blasphemy against God, and have issued the death penalty on Him. They have come to Pilate's palace early in the morning to procure that death sentence to be carried out on a Roman Cross on Golgotha. They knew Pilate couldn't have cared less about a Jewish blasphemy law, so they changed the charges from blasphemy to inciting rebellion as an alternative king to Caesar, Tiberius the emperor.

When they accused Jesus of being called the "king of the Jews" they had Pilate's attention because it was his responsibility to insure that there was absolute allegiance to the Roman crown in all of the provinces of Palestine at the time. Pilate is cross-examining Jesus to get at the facts. Is this poor Galilean man trying create an uprising and insurrection in Jerusalem during the Passover Feast when there would be secretly armed Zealots in the city by the thousands.

There are two things Pilate knew for absolutely certain as Jesus stood before Him. I mentioned these two things last week in the message from John 18.

We know for sure that Pilate knew Jesus was Innocent. John 19:4 "Once more Pilate came out and said to the Jews, 'Look I am bringing him out to you to let you know I find no basis for a charge against him."

We know for sure that Pilate knew it was out of Envy, Sheer Spite and Hatred that the Jewish religious leaders have brought Jesus for the death penalty. Mark 15:9, 10 "'Do you want me to release to you the king of the Jews?' asked Pilate, knowing it was out of envy that the chief priests had handed Jesus over to him."

So given what we know about the history between Pilate and these Jewish religious leaders and given the fact He knew Jesus was innocent and they had brought Him to his judgment hall for the death penalty out of sheer envy and hatred, Pilate is now left with an interesting choice to make between two polar extremes isn't he?

Pilate can do the right thing and act out of what he knows to be <u>True, giving Jesus Justice</u>. On the other hand he can cave in to political pressure these leaders are putting on him and cement his legacy forever as the man who gave the final consent to Roman execution of Jesus on the Cross. We all know how the story ends.

It is beautiful and quite remarkable to me that Jesus gently, calmly, yet most assertively makes sure Pilate knows He isn't interested in causing any human disturbances in Jerusalem during the Passover Feast. Jesus makes it absolutely clear that His kingdom is Not of This World System at all! He says governor if my kingdom were of this world system of things my servants would have already fought to prevent my arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane. Rest assured governor, I am not here to set off human fuses on the powder keg of broiling emotion that Jerusalem already is!

Jesus says in essence, Pilate I am a king but it is in the hearts of men and women who will respond to my sacrifice for them. I am a king of a kingdom that originates in the heart of God. Sir it is God who has given you the authority to execute the judgment that is sure to come in just a few hours.

John 19:11 "You would have no power over me if it were not given to you from above." Jesus is not talking about Caesar. He is talking about the Father God who has issued the decree that His One and Only Son must die the innocent for the guilty, as <u>Lamb of God who Takes Away the</u> Sin of the World."

Pilate is absolutely blown away. There is a majesty and serene courage about Jesus the likes of which Pilate has never seen. He is overwhelmed by the **Responses of Jesus**, and even more blown away by the **Silence of Jesus** in answering the charges leveled against Him that could and will result in His death. Pilate is accustomed to people manipulating every way they can, pulling every string they can think of to get off from death by Roman crucifixion.

Jesus stands before Pilate a man of **Divine Love** who is telling him about the will of heaven in the face of His own death by crucifixion on a Cross in a matter of hours! He says the entire reason why He came into this world was to testify to the truth of God in human hearts and minds: To make it real!

#### II. Jesus Barabbas or Jesus Bar-Abba:

John 18:38b – 40 "With that Pilate went out again to the Jews and said, 'I find no basis for a charge against him. But it is your custom for me to release to you one prisoner for the time of Passover. Do you want me to release the king of the Jews?' They shouted back, 'No not him! Give us Barabbas!' Now Barabbas had taken part in a rebellion."

Remember the context of this text is that Pilate is desperately trying to find a way to release Jesus from the political and human web that has been spun around him by the religious leaders who want him dead. We know this is true because his wife told him not to harm Jesus, and that he was a special innocent man, because she had dreamed about him. (See Matthew 27:19) So he tries bargaining with them. Here is a man who is much worse than Jesus, choose between them!

There is a fascinating play on words here that we should not miss. The historians of the day tell us Barabbas carried the surname Jesus, so he was Jesus Barabbas. When you dissect his name Barabbas, it is made into a compound word from two words "Bar" meaning "son of" and "Abba" meaning "father or spiritual leader." So his name means "son of the father."

As an illustration of "Bar" meaning "son of" as a prefix on a name in Matthew 16:17 Jesus called Simon Peter, "Simon Bar-jona," meaning Simon son of Jonah. Jesus our Lord and Savior is "Son of the Father God." So He could rightly be called "Jesus Bar-Abba," or Jesus the Son of the Father God in heaven. I want to make sure you see this incredible wordplay in this text. Two men with almost the exact same "name" who couldn't possibly be more different!

Historians tell us it is very likely that Barabbas grew up in a strict religious home in Israel, that his views on Jewish superiority were wired into his little mind as a child in a very strict, perhaps Essene home. These people were ascetic and believed in beating the body into submission. If that is the case, as Barabbas saw the horrific injustices done to the Jewish people at the hands of the Roman occupation forces over time he became a violent zealot with the passage of time and too many injustices for him to be able to handle any other way than by violence.

So as Pilate stands on the outer porch of his judgment hall he stands between two men who have the exact same name in the Aramaic words: Jesus Son of the Father. But Jesus Barabbas is a man of hatred and violence, who believes the only way to rightly settle the dispute with Rome is by force, the only they understand is more violence than they can handle. He has led an insurrection in the past and has murdered for his beliefs.

Jesus the Son of God, Son of Abba is a man of holy, self-emptying, other-oriented love who believes the only way to deal with the conflicts that exist in the human heart is by **Pursuing Peaceful solutions**. Hatred, use of power, and violence does not cure hatred, use of power, and violence. At best it can only hope to contain it for a short time. If the hatred and violence are still in the heart they will find ways to escape the container and act!

For Jesus the Son of God, He makes outrageous statements that we tend to ignore in the church in North America. "If someone slaps you in the face, turn the other cheek. If you are forced to carry a load for an oppressor 1 mile, carry it 2 miles. If you have two tunics share one of them with the one who has none." The cure for hatred and violence must take place in the human Heart and Soul, where Sinful Self-Interest have caused the person to be self-consumed. Only the blood of Jesus can wash away, forgive and cleanse sins and self-interest from the human heart and soul!

Pilate stands between the two men who represent the two ways human beings have chosen to deal with conflict for thousands of years. One man represents the way of violence and power, manipulating events that take place in the human arena by insuring we can inflict more damage to them than they can inflict on us. The other man, our Lord Jesus, represents the way of holy, self-emptying, other-oriented love that chooses to bless and forgive those who break our hearts! Which way will you and I choose the next time someone crosses us?

### III. Pilate had Jesus Scourged:

John 19:1 – 5 "Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. The soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head. They clothed him in a purple robe and went up to him saying again and again, 'Hail king of the Jews!' And they struck him in the face. Once more Pilate came out and said to the Jews, 'Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know that I find no basis for a charge in him.' When Jesus came out wearing the purple robe, Pilate said to them, 'Here is the man!'"

One more time permit me to remind you that Pilate is desperately trying to get Jesus released from the human web political intrigue spun by the religious leaders in Jerusalem. In just a few verses when the Jewish leaders tell Pilate Jesus "claimed to be the Son of God," Pilate will be even more afraid to proceed with Jesus' death than he was before. He is a superstitious man and those words hit him like a ton of bricks in his already frazzled emotions and questioning mind.

He tries one more last-ditch effort to free Jesus from the Cross. John rightly puts the flogging before the final word of consent and not right before the Cross as reported by the other writers. John wrote well after the other Gospel writers had written their accounts and he wants the

readers to know where the flogging, the scourge really was chronologically as he stood there near Jesus and watched it all unfold. Here's what John alone wants us to see going on in Pilate's mind, on Jesus' behalf. Pilate is thinking, "If they can see Jesus beaten to pulp, within an inch of His life, perhaps then they will see He doesn't deserve what is happening to Him!"

The historical evidence from the first century gives us pieces of information about the scourging Jesus took at the hands of the Roman soldiers that day. It only gets a few words in Scripture probably because it was written in a time period where everyone knew what a Roman Flagrum was! I read numerous accounts of people quoting the history this week as I prepared this message with the Spirit of Jesus for today.

The first verse of John 19 just states it point of fact: Pilate took Jesus and had him emastigosin, which can be rendered either: "whipped, or scourged, or flogged, or chastised." Everyone reading his words in the first century knew what the verb "mastidz" meant: To be beaten severely by the Roman Flagrum! Here is a picture of a Roman Flagrum and note that it is made of leather, led balls, metal shards, and sheep bone shards. It was intended to mercilessly beat a person within an inch of his life.

Listen to one historical account edited for you: "When a man was scourged he was tied to a whipping-post in such a way as his backside of his body was fully exposed. The lash was a long leathern thong, studded at intervals with pellets of lead, balls of lead and sharpened pieces of bone. It literally tore a man's back into strips. Few remained conscious throughout the ordeal and some lesser men died, while others went raving mad. Jesus took that and then still stood before Pilate and the Jewish leaders."

Why is it important for us to know what a Roman Flagrum was and that it was used on Jesus? Great question! I commend you for thinking of it. It is because Jesus is the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies about what the Christ must come and do, His suffering was accurately foretold hundreds of years before it took place. The prophet Isaiah writes in 712 B.C. for instance:

The Sin-Bearing Servant: Isaiah 52:12 – 15 NKJV "Behold, My Servant shall deal prudently; He shall be exalted and extolled and be very high. Just as many were astonished at you, so <u>His</u> visage was marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men; so shall He sprinkle many nations. Kings shall shut their mouths at Him; for what had not been told them they shall see, and what they had not heard they shall consider."

Isaiah 53:1 – 6 NKJV: "Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, and as a root out of dry ground. He has no form or comeliness; and when we see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him. He is despised and rejected by men, a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed. All we like

sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; and the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all."

# JOHN'S GOSPEL, JESUS IS THE SON OF GOD: 75. "Pilate Could See Their Motives for Wanting Jesus Crucified" John 19:1 – 16

# **Introduction:**

The goal of our series in John is to take an honest look at the life, teaching, and work of Jesus on the Cross for us! Only Jesus can introduce us to a life of knowing the Father personally, our <b>S</b> by the Father. John 14:8 – 10a
In John 10:10 we learn "believing Jesus" results in forgiveness of sins, the gift of real <u>L</u> and the experience of holy <u>L</u> in our hearts.
John tells us why he wrote this Gospel, John 20:30, 31
He wants us to know $\underline{\mathbf{B}}$ Jesus is crucial. This kind of belief is $\underline{\mathbf{S}}$ myself to be the $\underline{\mathbf{P}}$ of the Holy Spirit.
The Spirit's presence living in us gives us $\underline{\mathbf{L}}$ , the desire and ability to $\underline{\mathbf{T}}$ , $\underline{\mathbf{D}}$ , and $\underline{\mathbf{A}}$ differently!
As we study the end of Jesus' life, as He is walking out the Father's will by the Holy Spirit, there isn't a hint of <u>s</u> in His life, nor the essence of sin: <u>s</u> and <u>s</u> .
Last week we did three character studies and made some applications:  1.) The Jewish religious leaders motivated by <u>H</u> that blinded them from truly seeing!  2.) Pontius Pilate who was swayed by human opinions and politics! We must get alone with an open Bible and <u>L</u> to His <u>V</u> !  3.) The Lord Jesus who came to die as the Lamb of God who <u>T</u> <u>A</u> our sins!
I. The King of a Kingdom that Originates in Heaven: John 18:36, 37
Some truths we know: These Jewish Religious leaders have accused Jesus of T making Himself "King of the Jews."
We know two things for sure about what Pilate was thinking: He knew Jesus was <u>I</u> John 19:4 and he knew they brought Jesus to him out of <u>E</u> , sheer <u>S</u> Mark 15:9, 10.
Pilate has an interesting choice to make. He can act in keeping with what he knew to be true, giving Jesus J or he can cave in to their political pressure and have Jesus crucified. We all know how the story ended!
In light of what is about to happen Jesus calmly assures the governor that He is not trying to incite a rebellion. He said His kingdom is $\underline{\mathbf{N}}$ of this $\underline{\mathbf{W}}$ $\underline{\mathbf{S}}$ .
When Jesus said the words of John 19:11, He was telling Pilate the Father's decree was in. Jesus must die as the Lamb of God who <u>T</u> <u>A</u> the sin of the world!
Pilate is impressed with Jesus, both His <u>R</u> to him and His <u>S</u> they accused Him.
II. <u>Jesus Barabbas or Jesus Bar-Abba</u> : John 18:38b – 40

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The truth is Pilate is looking for a way to save Jesus from crucifixion  $\dots$ 

The interesting play on words here Barabbas had the surname Jesus. His name Barabbas is a compound word "Jesus – son of the father." Matthew 16:17 Peter is called "Simon Bar-Jonah."
Pilate stands between two men called "Jesus son of the father" and Jesus: Abba's One and Only Son! The one is a man of $\underline{V}$ and the other believes in $\underline{P}$ political solutions to conflict They represent two different ways people choose to deal with conflict!
III. Pilate had Jesus Scourged: John 19:1 – 5
Pilate is trying to free Jesus. When the leaders tell him, "He claimed to be the Son of God," he is even more <b>A</b> to <b>P</b> with the death sentence for Jesus.
John rightly puts the scourging of Jesus before the actual sentence while the other writers have it just before the crucifixion. John's reasoning is perhaps Pilate thinks, "If they see Jesus beaten mercilessly perhaps they will realize he doesn't deserve what is happening to him!"
John 19:1 simply states Pilate had Jesus flogged. The word is emastigosin in the Greek, "flog, whip, scourge, or chastise." The picture of this awful weapon: The Roman Flagrum.
Why do we need to know this detail about what Jesus suffered for us? Because Jesus is the <u>C</u> of hundreds of years prophecies about the suffering Savior.
Isaiah 52:12 – 15 and 53:1 – 6 NKJV

#### **Discussion Starter Questions for Home Groups**

- 1. John gives the reader lots of information about the last hours of Jesus' life. What touches your heart about Jesus' character as He faced death?
- 2. Why do you think John wrote this Gospel? Can you share with your group several of the key truths, unique to John's Gospel, which we have learned?
- 3. The religious leaders abandoned their own internal, moral compass in order to get the death sentence from Pilate. Why do you think they did so?
- 4. As Pilate sat in the judgment seat between the religious leaders and Jesus what did he know for certain about Jesus and these leaders? Why would his wife's dream about Jesus' innocence shake up Pilate?
- 5. In the message we studied a truth that hatred growing and bearing fruit in our hearts blinds us. Do you agree or disagree? Why or why not?
- 6. If Pilate knew Jesus was innocent, their charges were baseless, and it was out of envy the leaders brought Jesus to him, why did he consent to His death on the Cross?
- 7. Why is it important for us to know what the Roman "Scourge" was and what it did to the people who were beaten with it?
- 8. Read together aloud the prophecy of Isaiah recorded in Isaiah 53 and discuss insights that you have from the prophecy.
- 9. Read together aloud the crucifixion story in Matthew 27:32 56 and discuss insights you have from this text.
- 10. When we read prayerfully and think about the prophetic words about the Christ as "Suffering Savior" in Isaiah 53, as well as the predictions about the effects of the Cross in Psalm 22, hundreds of years before it was invented, what message to the heart should we receive? How does hearing and receiving that message impact the way we choose to live following Jesus in life?