

THE GOSPEL OF

JOHN

STUDENT LESSON

**CROWNED
THE KING**

Open it

1. What is the first thing you would do as king/queen of your own kingdom?

Daily Devotions

Day 1 — Today's Theme: Explore It

Read John 19:1–16.

2. What did Pilate do to try to please the Jews?
3. What made Pilate afraid?
4. What does Jesus say to Pilate and how does Pilate respond?
5. What accusation do the Jews lobby against Pilate?
6. What title is ironically given to Jesus throughout this whole “trial”?

Day 2 — Today's Theme: The Illusion of Freedom

Read John 19:1–8.

What does it mean to be free? At the core, we know that the essence of freedom is to not be held captive by anyone or anything. When you think of freedom, your mind probably goes quickly to the contrast between slavery and freedom or to the exercise of individual freedom—to do, be, and go where you wish as a person. Maybe freedom is just the opportunity to exercise individual will—simply that you *can* do, be, or go wherever you wish.

Are you free? Living in the United States, we pride ourselves on freedom—freedoms like the freedom of speech and religion, freedom to move and travel without governmental restraint. We aren't "slaves" to another nation or people. Are you free?

Because we often think of freedom as something tangible, most assume they are free because they aren't imprisoned or restricted. Yet, there is a type of "slavery" or captivity that cannot be seen, a type of captivity that leaves many with the illusion of freedom.

There are three "people" in this scene in John's gospel: Pilate, Jesus, and the Jews. One of these people has been arrested; the other two are free. Yet, as you look closely at this passage, it becomes evident that only one of these people is truly free and two are captive to an unseen slavery that has a tighter grasp on them than chains and ropes. They are living in the illusion of freedom, all the while being prisoners.

7. **Read the passage over again. Of the three "people" in this passage, consider who is prisoner to this unseen slavery and consider who is free. Explain why you think so.**

Pilate:

Jews:

Jesus:

8. **What unseen things enslave people today? Consider your own life. Are you a prisoner to any of these things?**

9. **How does a person find true freedom?**

Day 3 — Today's Theme: Who's the Boss?

Read John 19:9–11.

Where does authority come from?

Each day, every one of us rubs shoulders with those who hold some level of authority over us. Have you ever taken time to consider who is in authority over those people? For example, think of a teacher at school. In the classroom you are subject to their authority, like it or not. But even those teachers are subject to authority—ultimately the principal. But the principal is also subject to an authority over them who is subject to an authority as well. The “hierarchy” keeps on going up. Who has the highest authority?

In your family, you are subject to your parents' authority. But even your parents are subject to authorities over them. Again, who has the highest authority?

As Jesus stands before Pilate during His trial, Jesus tells Pilate some humbling words: “You would have no authority over me at all unless it had been given you from above.” Interestingly, Jesus doesn't say that Pilate wouldn't have authority if Rome or Caesar hadn't given it to him. He wouldn't have any authority unless God had given it to him. Who has the highest authority? Jesus' answer is simple: God.

The Bible is very clear about this through and through. Paul talks about it in Romans 13. Proverbs also assures us that God is in control over all authority. Therefore, as Paul tells Timothy in 1 Timothy 2:1–2, we ought to pray for those who are in authority because at the end of the day, they are only servants under God's authority, whether they realize that or not. And one day, they, like all people, will answer to God and give an account for their lives.

10. Read Romans 13:1–7. What kind of attitudes and behaviors does Paul call Christians to have toward those who are in authority? What reasons does he give for these things?

11. Read Proverbs 21:1. How does this proverb influence how you think about those in authority over you?

12. How might this reality of God's sovereign authority change how you respect and honor those placed in authority over you today?

Day 4 — Today's Theme: Greater Sin?

Read John 19:11.

“Jesus also referred to one sin being a ‘greater’ sin (although not the ‘greatest’) in John 19:11. Speaking to Pontius Pilate, He said that the one who had handed Him over to Pilate was guilty of the ‘greater sin.’ He meant that the guilt of the person who delivered Him to Pilate, whether Judas or Caiaphas, was greater than Pilate’s because of the deliberate and cold act of handing Jesus over after seeing the overwhelming evidence of His miracles and teaching, all pointing unmistakably to Him as the Messiah and the Son of God. That sin was greater than that of those who were ignorant of Him. This could indicate that those who have been given knowledge of Jesus as the Son of God and still reject Him would be subject to a greater punishment than those who remain ignorant of Him: ‘If you were blind, you would not be guilty of sin; but now that you claim you can see, your guilt remains’ (John 9:41).”¹

What Jesus does not mean when He talks to Pilate is that Pilate is innocent and freed from all guilt. He just simply means that in a sense, Pilate is ignorant (unaware) of who Jesus truly is. But the Jews have seen over and over the miracles and heard the teachings of Jesus. They should have seen and understood who He was, and yet they rejected Him and turned Him over to Pilate to be killed.

So what is the “greater sin”? The greater sin is hearing and knowing who Jesus is and still rejecting Him.

13. How do you know if you are rejecting Jesus?

14. Why do you think that this is the “greater sin”?

¹ <https://www.gotquestions.org/greatest-sin.html> © Copyright 2002-2022 Got Questions Ministries. All rights reserved.

Day 5 — Today's Theme: Compromising Integrity

Read John 19:12–16.

The irony in Jesus' trial is so rich. The whole time the Jews think that Jesus is the one on trial but in reality, they are! On one hand, even Pilate can't find anything in Jesus to convict Him. Meanwhile the Jews miss the mark all over the place. They manipulate Pilate. They suck up to Rome. They lie. And ultimately, they reject their own King.

In order to get Jesus killed, the Jewish leaders schmooze and suck up to Rome by pretending to be more loyal subjects to Caesar than even Pilate. By doing this, they show that not only are they actually slaves to sin, but also to their occupying political authorities that they so intensely hate!²

In order to do this, they passionately insist that they have no king but Caesar. By rejecting Jesus, they reject His Messianic claims and also abandon Israel's hope in the Messiah and reject the kingship of God altogether. Their rejection of Jesus in pretended loyalty to Rome meant their rejection of the promise of the kingdom of God which is bound up in their promised Messiah.³

In other words, in their attempts to stomp out Jesus, they forfeit everything. In their attempt to stomp out Jesus, they forfeit their hope in the promises of God. Compromising your integrity and your faith is never worth it in the end.

15. What are different ways people compromise their faith and integrity today?

16. For what have you been tempted to compromise your faith and integrity?

17. Is it wrong to be tempted to compromise? What things can help you stand firm and not compromise?

Note: This study was written by Pastor Jeremy Anderson. www.villagebible.church/students.

² Sermon by Steven Cole found at <https://bible.org/seriespage/lesson-97-friend-caesar-or-christ-john-1912-16>

³ Carson, D. A.. The Gospel according to John (The Pillar New Testament Commentary (PNTC)) (p. 605). Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.. Kindle Edition.