

The Gospel of John

John 19:1-16a

9.3.2023



THE JOURNEY
CHURCH

SCRIPTURE:

John 19:1-16a

SERMON NOTES:

The Romanov dynasty in Russian lasted from 1613 to 1917 (just over 300 years). This family is also related to the Windsors (Queen Elisabeth, King Charles). Tsar Nicholas II had led Russia in a costly war with Japan in 1905 that lost him much favor with the people of Russia. Then he led them into another devastating war in 1914 (World War I). The result of this led to more and more outcry from the people of Russia for reforms in society. Food was scarce, young men were being sent to the battle lines to die. This gave rise to a revolution in Russia that would have devastating consequences that still exists today. That revolution was the Communist Revolution, led by Vladimir Lenin, and a young Joseph Stalin. Nicholas II resigned the throne in 1917 as pressure mounted and the communist revolution gained populace support. This decision to subjugate himself to those who wanted him out of power eventually led to him and his entire family (wife and children) being murdered by the communists. The king willingly subjugated himself and the result was his murder.

But Nicholas Romanov II is not the first king to willingly subjugate himself to those wanting to see him toppled. Jesus did the same. Jesus is the sovereign king who subjugated Himself to those seeking His death. He didn't fight. He didn't resist. But unlike Nicholas II, who subjugated himself in hopes of sparing his life against the insurgent communists, Jesus willingly subjugated Himself in order to give His life.

Why did He do that? To atone for the sins of His people. Jesus Himself testifies to this purpose in His death.

Matthew 20:28 -- even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

There's a lot happening even in Matthew 20:28. Jesus refers to Himself as the Son of Man here. This phrase is used 107 times in the Old Testament and the predominant

usage refers to one who is a man (a human). But twice the title is used to refer to an individual who is both man and a divine ruler. The most significant is found in Daniel 7.

Daniel 7:13-14 -- 13 *"I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. 14 And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.*

Jewish readers understood Daniel 7 to be about a Messianic figure coming. His reign would be one of power and dominion over all nations and languages. They would all serve Him, and His kingdom would have no end. That's the description in Daniel 7. But now you see why the disciples struggled to understand how Jesus was the long-awaited Messiah and one who suffered humiliation at the hands of the Roman Empire. A Son of Man who came not to be served, but to serve, and to do that ultimately by laying down His life in death.

So Jesus is the Sovereign King who subjugates Himself willingly in order to die a death to ransom His people. Keep this in mind today as you read and hear Jesus endure suffering and humiliation at the hands of others.

Exegesis of John 19:1-16a:

We are at the place in the Gospel where Jesus has been arrested in Jerusalem. He is in Pilate's (the Roman Governor over Israel) possession. Pilate tried to release Jesus by giving the crowd a choice between setting free Jesus or Barabbas. They chose Barabbas. We pick up in chapter 19 today.

VS 1 -- *Then Pilate took Jesus and flogged him.*

Pilate has Jesus flogged or scourged. This entailed tying the victim to a pole or frame as someone executed the punishment. Pilate repeatedly told the religious leaders and crowd that he found no guilt in Jesus (this is why he tried to force them to choose between Jesus and Barabbas, a known murderer). But it didn't work. So Pilate has Jesus flogged thinking it will satisfy their bloodlust. In Pilate's mind, it may lead them to relent since they hated their Roman captors, and resented their rule over them. Maybe their angst against Jesus would be satisfied. It wouldn't be.

VS 2-3 -- 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.

Pilate's soldiers took thorns, likely from a date tree, and twisted together a crown to place on Jesus' head. They also placed on Him in a purple robe (the color of royalty), and approached Him in mockery crying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" while hitting Him. Pilate may believe Jesus is innocent, but they are having plenty of fun at Jesus' expense. These individuals feel completely in control and powerful over Jesus. If they only knew who they were dealing with, and the mercy and restraint being shown to them. This is the One who parted the Red Seas, commanded a fish to swallow Jonah, struck fear in Canaanite armies, and appeared in the fiery furnace with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. This is the Living God in the flesh. This is the Holy One of Israel before their eyes. This is the Alpha and Omega, Creator of Heaven and Earth. Jesus could have dropped them like Uzza steadying the ark or rained fire and brimstone like Sodom and Gomorrah. But He doesn't. He lets them proceed.

VS 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!"

Pilate tells the crowd again that he has found no guilt in Jesus. The soldiers lead Jesus out before the crowd (humiliated and beaten). Pilate's goal is for them to see Jesus and relent in their pursuits. He even implores them to "Behold the man!" "Look at him!" "Are you satisfied?"

VS 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." 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."

It doesn't work. The chief priest and officers see Jesus and continue demanding His death. They want Him crucified. Pilate scoffs at them to do it themselves because he finds no guilt in Jesus. The Jews then appeal to their own law that Jesus ought to die because He made Himself the Son of God. He equated Himself equal to God.

Here's the irony: they are not wrong. According to their law, Jesus should die for making such a claim. Unless...it's true. That's the issue. Jesus did make Himself equal with God. That's why they are so angry. They have their law correct, but they have their assessment of Jesus wrong. They are blind to reality.

VS 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.

Pilate is startled by their statement about Jesus making Himself equal to God. He was more afraid. This implies He has previously been afraid, but his fear has increased. What was his initial fear? It could have been the ruckus happening in Jerusalem over Jesus, and the fear of not handling this before it got back to Caesar. That's one possibility. Another possibility is that Pilate already had a sense that something was different about Jesus. Pilate discussed Jesus with his wife, and she had a dream about Jesus.

Matthew 27:19 -- Besides, 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."

So at some point in these proceedings, Pilate's wife sends word to her husband to not get himself entangled with Jesus because He is a righteous man, and she had suffered much because of Him in a dream. Many have speculated about the nature of the dream. People believe it is a warning of divine judgment for condemning an innocent man. Some speculate it is from an evil spirit seeking to hinder Jesus' atoning work to come.

This may be why Pilate has some level of fear about Jesus and continues declaring Him innocent. But now that he has heard that Jesus makes Himself equal to God, Pilate's fear is multiplied. Pilate takes Jesus back into his headquarters and begins questioning Him. He asks Him where He's from. Why? He wants to know if Jesus is of human origin or divine origin. He wants to get a grasp on who is standing in front of him. But Jesus doesn't answer Pilate.

So he fulfills the words of Isaiah about the Suffering Servant, the Messiah slain for sinners:

Isaiah 53:7 -- He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth.

VS 10-11 -- 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 is incredulous that Jesus won't speak. Is Jesus not grasping the situation? These people want Him dead, and Pilate holds the keys, yet Jesus won't answer his questions. Pilate asks Him, "Don't you know I have authority to release you and authority to crucify you?" I can almost imagine Jesus smirking. What a statement. I mean, Pilate isn't wrong. He does have authority to release or sentence to death. But Jesus quickly reminds Pilate that the authority he has is given to him from a greater authority. He does not have inherent authority. He has assigned authority. The One who assigned it to him is none other than Almighty God. Jesus says the one who delivered him over has the greater sin (not the only sin).

VS 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."

From that point on, Pilate tried to release Jesus. He was not only convinced of His innocence, but he sensed Jesus was not some ordinary guy. But the Jews were unrelenting. They cried out that Pilate was no friend of Caesar if he released someone claiming to be a rival king. This is significant because they recognize Jesus' claim to being king. Make no mistake friends, the responses of the Jewish leaders tells you everything you need to understand about Jesus' claims and self-understanding. Don't listen to people today who try to tell you that Jesus never claimed to be God or that Jesus never put Himself forward as a king. It's not true. These are the very things that have the Jews wanting His crucifixion. And Jesus never denies them. If He would have, He would have lived.

vs 13-16a -- 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[b] Gabbatha. 14 Now it was the day of Preparation of the Passover. It was about the sixth hour.[c] 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.

Pilate knows at this point that their thirst for Jesus' blood will not be quenched. He goes out and sits in the judgment seat. It was the day of Preparation for Passover (Friday) at noon. The irony in this moment is the Passover Lamb, Jesus, is being prepared for the slaughter. Pilate once more antagonizes the Jews by saying "Here is your king." They want blood. Pilate asks them if they want him to crucify their king. They reply back, "We have no king but Caesar." This is a sad reply because it shows how blind by rage they've become. The problem with Israel going back to the days of Samuel the prophet is that

Israel had rejected God as their king. Here they are doing so again. They have no king except the one who rules over them and oppresses them. Yet they'd rather have him than the Lord as their King.

Pilate delivers Jesus over to be crucified. The events that have unfolded are happening according to the plan and purposes of God. Nothing unexpected has happened. Human agents have acted willfully to sin against God (Judas, Pilate, the Jewish leaders, the crowds, the soldiers), yet God is decisively acting in each and every second. What they mean for evil, God means for good. God's purposes are prevailing through this entanglement of human wickedness. And above all, the King of Glory is choosing to subjugate Himself to it all for the sake of rescuing sinners. Behold your King!

J. Oswald Sanders says, *"Both by His silence and His words, Jesus made clear that it was Pilate and the Jews who were on trial before Him, and not He before them."*

The willingness of Jesus to stand before this puppet governor, bruising soldiers, and bloodthirsty crowd shows His deep and abiding love for His people. He has no reason to suffer this abuse but to secure for His bride a great salvation. Jesus' hour has come. What shall He say? "Father save me from this hour?" No, this is why He has come. What you see on display is God the Son, laying down His life for the glory of God the Father and for the salvation of His people.

Robert E. Speer:

"He said but little, but He said enough, and no word of His ever bore testimony to the truth, or revealed more fully the majesty of His divine life than the uncomplaining patience and self-possession and composure of His conduct under the hideous treatment to which He was subjected, when after His condemnation before Caiaphas, the men who held Him, in pretense that He was a dangerous character spit in His face and mocked Him, and beat Him, and blindfolding Him, struck and reviled Him. "Prophecy unto us, Thou Christ: who is he that struck thee?" When Herod with his soldiers set Him at nought and made sport of Him and sent Him back through the streets of the city arrayed in mock royal attire, and became the friend of Pilate again through this sport-cursed be such friendships. When in the hope, doubtless, of showing the people how harmless and inoffensive He was, Pilate had Him before the people with the jeering remark, 'Behold the Man!' When, after the surrender of Pilate, the whole band of the governor's soldiers took Him, stripped, put on Him a scarlet robe, with a crown of acanthus thorns still piercing His brow and staining His face crimson like His robe, and giving Him a reed for a scepter, played with Him as a mock king, spitting on Him and seizing His scepter from His

hand and smiting Him on the head with it, driving the thorn's cruel spikes deeper into His brow; when at last they led Him away to Calvary, stripped of His robe, but still wearing His crown.

'Behold the man!' was Pilate's jeer. That is what all the ages have been doing since, and the vision has grown more and more glorious. As they have looked, the crown of thorns has become a crown of golden radiance, and the cast-off robe has glistened like the garments He wore on the night of the Transfiguration. Martyrs have smiled in the flames at that vision, sinners have turned at it to a new life. ... and towards it the souls of men yearn forever."

Behold the man! The Sovereign King who subjugated Himself to save His people.

REVIEW:

- ❖ Read John 19:1-16a
- ❖ Why did Pilate have Jesus flogged (V1)?
- ❖ What is the irony of the soldiers placing a crown of thorns on Jesus' head and making him wear a purple robe (V2-3)?
- ❖ Why is Pilate more afraid of who Jesus is (V8-9)?
- ❖ What does Jesus mean that the only authority Pilate has is what has been given to him (V10-11)?

REFLECT:

- ❖ Pilate may have been very interested in Jesus and even afraid of Him but why do you think it wasn't enough to make him do the right thing? What did it take for you to come to faith in Jesus?
- ❖ What does it mean to you that Jesus endured flogging and humiliation for you? How do we humiliate Jesus when we seek to please others over Him?
- ❖ Why did the Jewish leaders fail to recognize the Messiah that was right in front of them? Why did they want to kill Jesus? How does the world keep us from recognizing who Jesus is?

RESPOND:

- ❖ What are some things you can do this week to "Behold the man" more?

MEDITATE:

- ❖ John 19:11 - *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."*

MEMORIZE:

- ❖ Matthew 20:28 - *even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.*"

PRAYER FOCUS:

- ❖ Director of Community - **Laura DiLeonardi**
- ❖ Ministries - **Life Groups, TJC Women, and Agape Moms**
- ❖ **Pray for our long-term families:**
 - The Wilsons
 - The Grays
 - The Starks (departing in October)
- ❖ **Pray for our mid-term sent ones:**
 - Kaesi
- ❖ **Pray for our short-term teams:**
 - Indonesia Team departed 8/31
 - Central Asia Team departs in September
- ❖ **Pray for the lost - Unreached People Group (UPG): West Coast Bajau in Malaysia**
 - **Population in country:** 258,000
 - **Global population:** 269,000
 - **Christian Adherent:** 0.00%
 - **Evangelical:** 0.00%
 - **Primary Religion:** Islam
 - **Primary Language:** Bajau, West Coast
 - **Summary:** The West Coast Bajau of Sabah, Malaysia have traditionally been known as sea nomads, dwelling in boats and engaging in maritime trading. While some Bajau continue to derive their livelihood primarily from the sea, others have adopted an agrarian way of life.
 - **Prayer Focus:** Pray that followers of Christ in surrounding communities would share the gospel with the Bajau. Pray that the love of Jesus Christ would touch these masters of the sea in such a way that there would be a spontaneous church planting movement.
 - Want to keep up with other Unreached People Groups? Download the Unreached of the Day App
<https://joshuaproject.net/pray/unreachedoftheday/app>