

The Passion of Christ

John 19

Pastor Mark John Bennett

Part 1: The Judgment of the Innocent King (John 19:1–16a)

Speaker 1: *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 again and again, saying,*

Speaker 2: *“Hail, king of the Jews!” And they slapped him in the face.*

Speaker 1: *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 against him.”*

Speaker 2: *When Jesus came out wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe, Pilate said to them, “Here is the man!”*

Speaker 1: *As soon as the chief priests and their officials saw him, they shouted, “Crucify! Crucify!”*

Speaker 2: *But Pilate answered, “You take him and crucify him. As for me, I find no basis for a charge against him.”*

Speaker 1: *The Jewish leaders insisted, “We have a law, and according to that law he must die, because he claimed to be the Son of God.”*

Speaker 2: *When Pilate heard this, he was even more afraid, and he went back inside the palace. “Where do you come from?” he asked Jesus, but Jesus gave him no answer.*

Speaker 1: *“Do you refuse to speak to me?” Pilate said. “Don’t you realize I have power either to free you or to crucify you?”*

Speaker 2: *Jesus answered, “You would have no power over me if it were not given to you from above. Therefore the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin.”*

Speaker 1: *From then on, Pilate tried to set Jesus free, but the Jewish leaders kept shouting, “If you let this man go, you are no friend of Caesar.”*

Speaker 2: *Finally, Pilate brought Jesus out and sat down on the judge’s seat. “Here is your king,” Pilate said to the Jews.*

Speaker 1: *But they shouted, “Take him away! Take him away! Crucify him!”*

Speaker 2: *“Shall I crucify your king?” Pilate asked.*

Speaker 1: *“We have no king but Caesar,” the chief priests answered.*

Speaker 2: *Finally, Pilate handed him over to them to be crucified.*

Reflection: The Chosen One betrayed by the chosen people.

Isaiah prophesied this...

“He was despised and rejected—a man of sorrows, acquainted with deepest grief. We turned our backs on him and looked the other way. He was despised, and we did not care. ⁴ Yet it was our weaknesses he carried; it was our sorrows that weighed him down. And we thought his troubles were a punishment from God, a punishment for his own sins! ⁵ But he was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins. He was beaten so we could be whole. He was whipped so we could be healed.” (Isaiah 53:3-5)

Here we see the tragic irony: the only truly innocent man is condemned by religious leaders, worldly powers, your sins and mine! Jesus did not resist, not out of weakness, but out of obedience and love. As we witness His silence and composure before Pilate, we’re reminded that Jesus willingly endured injustice to bring justice to us. In the face of rejection, He chose surrender—for our salvation.

Take a moment to pause and reflect.

Let us stay in the moment. In this time of reflection, looking at Christ, humble ourselves, confess our sins. Take responsibility for our rejection, betrayal, or denial.

How have I betrayed Him? How have you denied Him? How have we abandoned Him?

Part 2: The King on the Cross (John 19:16b–27)

Speaker 1: ***So the soldiers took charge of Jesus. Carrying his own cross, he went out to the place of the Skull (which in Aramaic is called Golgotha). There they crucified him, and with him two others—one on each side and Jesus in the middle.***

Speaker 2: ***Pilate had a notice prepared and fastened to the cross. It read: JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS.***

Speaker 1: ***Many of the Jews read this sign, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city. The chief priests protested to Pilate, “Do not write ‘The King of the Jews,’ but that this man claimed to be king of the Jews.”***

Speaker 2: ***Pilate answered, “What I have written, I have written.”***

Speaker 1: ***When the soldiers crucified Jesus, they divided his clothes into four shares, one for each of them. But the undergarment was seamless. “Let’s not tear it,” they said. “Let’s decide by lot who will get it.”***

Speaker 2: ***This happened that the scripture might be fulfilled: “They divided my clothes among them and cast lots for my garment.”***

Speaker 1: ***Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.***

Speaker 2: ***When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to her, “Woman, here is your son,” and to the disciple, “Here is your mother.”***

Speaker 1: ***From that time on, this disciple took her into his home.***

Reflection: The King on the Cross (His body, the bread...)

The cross, a symbol of shame and suffering, became the symbol of life. Though mocked, stripped, and pierced, Jesus showed **divine power and Holy restraint**. Even in agony, He saw others—His mother, the beloved disciple—and entrusted them to one another. In this, we glimpse the **heart of Christ: personal, present, and compassionate** in every moment of our pain.

LORD'S SUPPER: We remember – His Body the bread... Matthew 26:26: ***“As they were eating, Jesus took some bread and blessed it. Then he broke it in pieces and gave it to the disciples, saying, “Take this and eat it, for this is my body.”***

Part 3: The Death of the King (John 19:28–37)

Speaker 2: ***Later, knowing that everything had now been finished, and so that Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, “I am thirsty.”***

Speaker 1: ***A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus’ lips.***

Speaker 2: ***When he had received the drink, Jesus said, “It is finished.” With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.***

Speaker 1: ***Now it was the day of Preparation, and the next day was to be a special Sabbath. Because the Jewish leaders did not want the bodies left on the crosses during the Sabbath, they asked Pilate to have the legs broken and the bodies taken down.***

Speaker 2: ***The soldiers broke the legs of the first man and then the other who had been crucified with Jesus. But when they came to Jesus and found that he was already dead, they did not break his legs.***

Speaker 1: ***Instead, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus’ side with a spear, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water. These things happened so that the scripture would be fulfilled: “Not one of his bones will be broken,” and “They will look on the one they have pierced.”***

Reflection: It Is Finished (His blood, the wine...)

These words — **“It is finished”** — are not a cry of defeat, but **a declaration of victory**. Jesus completes the mission the Father gave Him. Sin has been confronted, love has been poured out, and the way back to God has been made open. The blood and water flowing from His side speak of cleansing and new birth. Through His death, we find life.

LORD'S SUPPER – HIS BLOOD THE WINE Matthew 26: ***“²⁷And he took a cup of wine and gave thanks to God for it. He gave it to them and said, “Each of you drink from it, ²⁸for this is my blood, which confirms the covenant between God and his people. It is poured out as a sacrifice to forgive the sins of many.”***

Part 4: The King in the Tomb (John 19:38-42)

Speaker 2: ***Later, Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate for the body of Jesus. With Pilate’s permission, he came and took the body away.***

Speaker 1: ***He was accompanied by Nicodemus, the man who earlier had visited Jesus at night. They brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about thirty-two kilograms.***

Speaker 2: ***Taking Jesus’ body, the two of them wrapped it, with the spices, in strips of linen. This was in accordance with Jewish burial customs.***

Speaker 1: ***At the place where Jesus was crucified, there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid.***

Speaker 2: ***Because it was the Jewish day of Preparation and since the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.***

Reflection: The King in the Tomb (All of creation waits)

Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus: 33 kg of ointment. Washing – anointing – wrapping –new tomb. The same is done to our heart... Ezekiel 36:26: ***“And I will give you a new heart, and I will put a new spirit in you. I will take out your stony, stubborn heart and give you a tender, responsive heart.”***

As Jesus is gently laid in the tomb, the world seems to fall silent. This is the moment of waiting, of grief, of apparent loss. But even here, in the stillness of death, God is at work. The seed has been sown, and resurrection is coming. In our own dark nights, we hold to the same hope: that what feels like the end is not the end with Jesus.