

FOR THINE IS THE
Kingdom AND THE
Power AND THE
Glory

Sermon-Based Study Guide
Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church

John 18 | November 11, 2018

Prepared by Rev. Curtis A. Bronzan
curtis@gspc.org | 562/493.2553 x115

I. Introduction to this Study

This week we continue examining how Christian faith inspires our political perspective by engaging the trial of Jesus before Pilate in John 18.

II. Connecting with One Another

The midterm elections were held Tuesday. How are you feeling afterward? Why?

III. Study the Text

a. Read John 18.1-14.

How would you describe the mood and/or the feelings of this scene?

What does Jesus do when he sees Judas and the soldiers coming toward him?

Why is Jesus' answer to the soldiers in verses 5-6 so simple and shocking? How does this connect to other "I am" statements in John's gospel?

What do you think motivated Peter to draw his sword? Why was Jesus so upset by this? How have you reacted in situations where Christ's name and character were attacked? Do you wish you'd responded differently? If so, how?

b. It has been written, "the Story of Adam in the Garden in Genesis 2 and 3 stands behind the garden of betrayal in this chapter, but things are reversed. Instead of sinful people hiding in the garden with God searching for them, now violent men come storming into the garden looking for Jesus who stands in plain sight."

How is this a "new Genesis"?

c. Read John 18.15-27.

What similarities and differences do you see between Jesus and Peter?

What prompts our desire to hide our connection with Jesus from others, while still wanting to be loyal to him?

d. Read John 18.28-40.

What vague accusations do the chief priests bring against Jesus before Pilate?

e. It's been written that Pilate's policy revolved around two aims: On one hand, he wanted to keep things calm amongst the turbulent local population, who deeply resented the occupying Roman forces. On the other hand, he seemed to enjoy snubbing the Jewish people – especially their leaders.

How do you see these two aims play out in this scene?

Why might Pilate have wanted someone else to decide the case the chief priests brought against Jesus?

- f. N.T. Wright concludes, "In the ancient world, people knew what kings did. Kings ruled people according to their own wishes and whims. They could promote one person and demote another. They were all-powerful.

And people knew how kings became kings, too. Often the crown would pass from father to son, or to some other close male relative. But from time to time there would be a revolution. The way to the crown, for anyone not in the direct family line, was through violence. This was so among the Jews as much as among the pagans."

In light of that, why do you think Pilate was so concerned about Jesus being a king? What was he afraid this king would do?

- g. Reread John 18.33-36.

How does Jesus respond when Pilate asks him if he is the "King of the Jews"? (a lofty title then held by Herod the Great, not matched by his pedigree or background) Why?

- h. Reread John 18.37-38.

Jesus and Pilate discuss truth. What do you think they each mean by it?

- i. How could you respond to friends, relatives, and neighbors when they cynically scoff and ask questions similar to Pilate's (in verse 38)?
- j. How does John 18 inspire and/or impact your political perspective?

IV. Pray

- a. Spend some time considering the dark night on which Jesus was betrayed, denied, and handed over to the authorities, giving thanks to God for all that Jesus endured on your behalf,
- b. Ask God for the courage to be loyal to him in moments of despair and fear,
- c. Pray that God will show you how you best to participate in the work of the kingdom of the one true King.

This study guide was curated with help from N.T. Wright's *For Everyone Bible Study Guide* on the Gospel of John

