

Bible Workshop: John 19

Outline

- vv. 1-7 The scourging of Jesus
- vv. 8-15 Pilate seeks to release Jesus
- vv. 16-18 The crucifixion
- vv. 19-24 Pilate and the soldiers
- vv. 25-30 Jesus' sayings on the cross and his death
- vv. 31-37 Jesus taken from the cross
- vv. 38-42 The burial of Jesus

Discussion points

- What was Pilate's motive in scourging Jesus? (See the dialogue in verses 4 and 5.)
- Look at the two 'behold' phrases Pilate uses in verse 5 and verse 14. Are either or both of these unwitting Old Testament quotes by Pilate (or even deliberate ones)? Consider the different tones of voice in which Pilate might have said these words; how can this affect their meaning? An alternative understanding of the phrase "Behold the man" takes these to be the words of Jesus (notice the word 'Pilate' is in italics in the AV and thus not in the original Greek). If this is true, does it change the import of the words?
- Why does Jesus not answer in verse 9? Notice the dialogue about power in verses 10 and 11, and consider the way in which individuals may delude themselves about the extent of their own power, control, and autonomy (and its origin). What power do we really have as individuals—in our careers, our personal lives, and our spiritual lives?
- What is the significance of Jesus being crucified with sinners?
- What was Jesus doing in verses 26 and 27? Where was Joseph, and what were Jesus' responsibilities as eldest son? Is there a lesson?
- What positive and negative lessons are to be learned from Joseph and Nicodemus?

Details

- v. 8. What is it that arouses Pilate's fear in this verse?
- v. 11. Notice the phrase "the greater sin". Identify the nature of the greater and lesser

sins. Does Jesus mean that there are different categories or classes of sins? If so, who makes the classification, and to what extent do we know what it is?

- v. 23. Is there any symbolism underlying the details given about Jesus' garments?
- v. 30. What was finished? Compare Luke 2:49 and John 4:34; 17:4.
- v. 31. What time of year was it? Which sabbath was it (that is, why was it a "high day")? What is the significance of this timing?

Tasks

- Consider the significance of blood and water (v. 34). Find New Testament verses which speak of them as washing and cleansing agents (this is rather paradoxical in the case of blood; how do you explain this?). Compare the great or ultimate sign of Moses that God gave him in Exodus 4:8,9.
- Using a Bible dictionary and concordance, find out what information you can about the two locations mentioned in verses 13 and 17.
- Look at the Old Testament quotation in verse 37 and find out where it comes from. Notice that John only quotes the first part of it. Why? What is the passage about in a fuller sense? How does that future application form a reversal of the mourning of the disciples at the cross?
- What elements of irony can you find in the chapter?

Take-home point

What would you say was Pilate's principal flaw/weakness? Think of some situations in which we might show a similar weakness.

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