"Behold Your King!"

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[0:00] You may be seated, kiddos. You're excused to your King's Kids class. And as they're going, would you open up your Bibles to John chapter 19.

! I'll be preaching 1 through 16 this morning. I'll read it in just a second. It's on page 1075 of your pew Bible.
Hear God's Word. Then Pilate took Jesus and flogged Him. And the soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on His head and arrayed Him in a purple robe.
They came up to Him saying, Hail, King of the Jews! And struck Him with their hands. Pilate went out again and said to them, the Jews, See, I am bringing Him out to you that you may know that I find no guilt in Him.
So Jesus came out wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, Behold the man! When the chief priests and the officers saw Him, they cried out, Crucify Him! Crucify Him!
[1:18] Pilate said to them, Take Him yourselves and crucify Him, for I find no guilt in Him. 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.

When Pilate heard this statement, He was even more afraid. He entered His headquarters again and said to Jesus, Where are you from? But Jesus gave Him no answer.
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? 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. 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. So when Pilate heard these words, He brought Jesus out and sat Him on the judgment seat at the place called the stone pavement in Aramaic, Gabbatha.
[2:30] Now it was the day of preparation, the Sabbath, the Passover. The day of preparation is before the Sabbath. It's the Passover. It was about the sixth hour. He said to the Jews, Behold your king!

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.
So He delivered Him over to them to be crucified. God saved the king! Long live the king!
Maybe you've watched the crowning of a British king in real life, or maybe on TV, a movie. There is this moment of public acknowledgement.
The crown is placed upon the king's head. Long live the king! Long live the king! It's a serious moment.
[3:44] It's filled with pomp and circumstance. It's the recognition of a rightful rule. In this morning, we are beholding the crowning of Jesus.

Some behold Him as a joke. Some behold Him as an offense.
The question for you this morning is, how do you behold this one wearing a crown of thorns? In John 19, 1-16, this takes place on the day that Jesus is crucified.
It's now the morning of the Friday that He's crucified. His coronation day takes place on the same day as His crucifixion. Next week, we'll see the crucifixion as His enthronement day.
And the Jews have found Jesus guilty of blasphemy. But because they don't have the authority to put Jesus to death, because remember, they're under Roman rule, they seek to persuade Pilate, the Roman governor in Jerusalem, to put Jesus to death by crucifixion.

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[5:15] And after some questioning, we see this in chapter 18, Pilate does not find Jesus guilty of sedition. Yeah, he claims to be a king, but he's really no threat.

There's really nothing to this that Rome has to fear. So Pilate offers Jesus to be released. Shall I release to you the king of the Jews?
But the Jews reject this offer and choose an insurrectionist, a known murderer in the place of Jesus, a guy named Barabbas.
And so when we get to chapter 19, 1 through 16, Pilate again tries to release Jesus, but ends up condemning Him to death.
It all unfolds according to God's sovereign plan. And what I want you to see are three scenes. And I'm going to summarize these three scenes with three words. Crowned, questioned, condemned.
[6:27] Crowned, questioned, condemned. And as you will see, Jesus has been crowned with no ordinary crown. How will you respond?

In verses 1 through 6, Jesus is crowned. When King Charles was crowned as the British monarch on May 2023, in May 2023, it was accompanied by trumpets blaring, parades of horses, pomp and circumstance, a historic moment for which the whole country paused, witnessed and celebrated. When the crown was placed on His head, God save the king! Long live the king! The crowning of Jesus was anything but that.
In verses 1 through 6, you can see that His crowning took place not in a cathedral, not in a castle, in a Roman headquarters, the praetorium.
And what happened before He was flogged. Now, the Romans had three types of whippings. This flogging is the first type of whipping and it is the least hurtful.
[8:05] It was like for misdemeanors. But Jesus will be flogged again with the worst kind of flogging after He's condemned. You know, looking back to the coronation of King Charles, I just can't remember a flogging.

Can you? Can you? Can you? He was crowned by Roman soldiers. He wasn't crowned by clergymen.
He wasn't crowned by knights. He wasn't crowned by anybody who pledged allegiance to Him. He was crowned by Roman soldiers whose allegiance was to Caesar.
But Pilate had sent Jesus to these soldiers to get tuned up, to get beaten, to make Him less appealing, to demonstrate to these Jews that this Jew named Jesus is no consequence, no threat. He hasn't beat Him up to expose that He's weak. They put a purple robe on Him. It's the color of royalty.
[9:40] They don't actually think that He's a royal. royal. We know that He's the Son of David. We know that He is the second person of the Trinity who has eternally existed and became a human.

The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. They don't. They don't see Him as the Messiah. They don't see Him as the long anticipated King.
They don't see Him as the Son of God. And so they put a royal purple robe on Him to mock Him. In verse 3, the soldiers form a royal receiving line that to pay homage to this King.
You can imagine it. Hail, King of the Jews. One after the other. Slap.
Slap. They don't kiss His hand. They slap Him with their own. And in verse 2, there's this crown.
[11:01] The crown that's put on His head is a crown of twisted thorns. And there are most likely the twisted thorns from the date plant which has thorns that are like 6 to 10 inches long.

Twisted together and placed on His head. It would have punctured His scalp. And He's going to wear this crown until He breathes His last.
from the cross. It's the moment of His coronation, so to speak. Instead of a crown of gold and of silver inlaid with precious jewels and stones, there's this crown of thorns, puncture, painful, bloody, cruel.
it's designed to belittle Him. Just playing off of this King of the Jews. You know, crowns are symbols. A crown represents the particular reign of a person over a particular people, over a particular land.
end. And these soldiers have put this crown on Jesus to demonstrate He's a nobody. He's to be mocked.
[12:28] But we know who this is. There's more significant to these thorns than these soldiers realize.

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Do you remember when Adam and Eve sinned back in the garden? Genesis 1 and 2, they were created in the image of God, both in God's image. And then Genesis 3 rolls around and Adam and Eve, they disobey God's word.
And then they hide from God. God gives them opportunity to repent, they do not. And then God speaks curses to them. Do you remember what He cursed Adam with?
Cursed is the ground. It shall bear thorns, thistles. It's not a coincidence that He's bearing a crown of cursing.
a crown that is very representative of God's curse on all of humanity for their transgression.
[13:46] You see, Jesus is going to go to the cross wearing a crown of curse. It's a different way to think about that cross, isn't it?

in verses 4 and 5, Pilate presents Jesus in mocking fashion, behold the man!
And what he's saying there is, this guy is absolutely no threat. He's got nothing to fear. He's a joke. We've put him in his place. We've tuned him up.
You see, we can send him on his way. He's not guilty. He's not a threat. Everything's okay. You know, I'm going to have Amy present a picture by Antonio Caesarea, I think, Caesarea, something like that.
Eche homo, behold the man. Pilate's in the gown. Jesus is in to his left. Let me ask you a question.
[14:59] Let's say that you're a Roman soldier or that you're a Jew in a crowd. Would you be overwhelmed in fear by that man? No. You can turn it off.

That's not impressive. Surprisingly, the Jews, they don't say, okay, we're cool.
They say crucify him. Crucify him. And Pilate kind of puts up his hands and he gets sarcastic with them.
And Pilate is trying to be decisive here. And he says to them, when he hears this, he says to them, take him yourselves and crucify him for I find no guilt in him in verse 6.
That's not him actually saying, here he is, you crucify him. That's Pilate doing a power play. That's him saying, you can't crucify him. You have no authority to crucify him.
[16:16] And so, he's not guilty. Deal with it. And I think at this point, Pilate is like, okay, we've made our point, let's move on.

What we have here in verses 1-6 is the coronation of Jesus and it's not your typical coronation, it's not your typical crown.
So now we go to verses 7-11 where things take a turn. Pilate thinks he has kind of established the fact that he's not guilty and this is going to end up in Jesus being questioned by Pilate.
But look at verse 7. The Jews answered him, hold on, we're not done.
we have a law and according to that law, he ought to die, they don't even name him. He ought to die because he has made himself the son of God.
[17:25] It's a reference to Leviticus chapter 24 16. Whoever blasphemes the name of the Lord shall surely be put to death. All the congregation shall stone him.

They couldn't stone him. The only option was to crucify him. And so what they're saying here is hold on, we're going to move from trying to use kind of Roman tactics and make Jesus appear to be a challenge to Caesar now to saying here's what's really going on.
He's blasphemed. He is claimed to be the son of God. God. In John 5, 16 through 18, this is the first time in the gospel of John this gets uttered.
This was why the Jews were seeking all the more to kill Jesus because not only was he breaking the Sabbath but he was even calling God his own father making himself equal with God.
Or maybe remember John chapter 10 verse 30 I in the father are one. Or maybe do you remember John 8 58 before Abraham was I am.
[18:53] Or maybe the last chapter, chapter 18 verse 5 where Jesus when asked when says whom do you seek? They answered him, Jesus, the Nazareth, Jesus said to them, I am he and knocked them all down.

Jesus has in fact claimed to be equal with God. He has claimed to be God but the Jews couldn't fathom that being a possibility.
they didn't give a second thought that this claim may be truthful that Jesus is the word of God incarnate come to dwell among mankind.
That's why they want him dead. They're offended by him. nobody makes that claim. It's blasphemous.

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In verse 8 when Pilate hears this he's freaked out. He's afraid. The language is he's even more afraid.
[20:11] Now this is the same Pilate who we saw last week in chapter 18 in verse 34. Jesus says to Pilate do you say this of your own accord that I'm a king or did others say it to you about me?

And Pilate answered what am I a Jew? Like I care. Why does he all of a sudden care?
Why is he afraid? Well there can be a couple reasons for this in my reading this week.
I came across two that were particularly compelling. Here's the first possible reason. Romans were known to be superstitious.
Jesus. And so when Pilate hears son of God he's like uh oh I don't want to mess with the gods.
[21:15] We learn from Matthew 27 that Pilate's wife had a dream about Jesus that was very unsettling to her.

And so you can see how this could generate some fear and some superstition like oh no. What's going on here?
But I think even more compelling is this. When these Jews say we have a law and according to that law this someone must be put to death because they've claimed to be the son of God.
What he realizes at that moment is that the Jews are not letting this go. He's tuned up Jesus he's presented him to them in mocking fashion but they don't buy it.
This is serious and I think at this point Pilate is starting to realize he may have a riot on his hands.
Verse 9 Pilate pulls Jesus back into the paternity!
[22:29] The Roman headquarters and Pilate says to Jesus in the sidebar where are you from?

What's going on? Where are you from? Jesus doesn't answer. This is John's version of the fulfillment of Isaiah 53 7 where we read this speaking of the suffering servants 750 years before Jesus walked the earth Isaiah writes 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 it shears is silent so he opened not his mouth.
Do you remember John the Baptist when he beholds Jesus in John 1? He says behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. Jesus remained silent so Pilate doesn't know where Jesus is from but we know where Jesus is from we know that he has spent eternity past with God his father and the holy spirit in heaven and he's left the right hand of God the father to come down to earth that's where he's from verse 10 Pilate takes offense to Jesus to silence and he says this he says you will not speak to me you're not going to say anything to me and then he says something like this do you not realize that your life is in my hands
I have the authority to release you or to crucify you I've got your life in my hands that's what he's saying and then Jesus does something in which he pulls back the curtain on this it's remarkable and remember he's wearing the crown of thorns Jesus says to Pilate in verse 11 you would have no authority over me at all unless it had been given you from above the from above is a reference to God the father he's like hey Pilate I know you're freaking out but just to be clear you're not in charge let me just pull back the curtain anything you do to me has been granted from on high now we've seen these kinds of lessons in the
Bible before where there's a ruler and then there's a lesson to be learned do you remember Nebuchadnezzar from Daniel chapter 4 and 5 he's been warned Nebuchadnezzar not to pridefully take credit for what God has done the reason why he is then punished is because he didn't know that the most high rules listen to this until you know that the most high rules the kingdom of men and gives it to whom he will it's the same God God reigns over all and the reason why Jesus is in this situation is because it was the will of God to crush him for our salvation
[26:34] Jesus pulls back the curtain and he says therefore he who delivered me over to you likely referring to Caiaphas the high priest who sent him to Pilate to get him killed for blasphemy he has the greater sin he's not exonerating Pilate he's just recognizing Pilate didn't initiate what is presently happening Caiaphas did so if I were to ask you at this moment who's freaking out in the Roman headquarters Jesus or Pilate it's Pilate he's afraid he's scared things are heating up for him but Jesus is amazingly cool and he's answering

Pilate with this crown of thorns God orchestrates all these events and yet human beings remain responsible for their actions we're in deep waters Pilate questioned Jesus and didn't get the answer he wanted he's been crowned he's been questioned and then condemned verses 12 through 16 what will Pilate do what is Pilate going to do will he stand his ground against the Jews insist that

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Jesus is not guilty and release him or will he give in condemn Jesus and deliver him to be executed by crucifixion we know he folded like a cheap suit in verses 12 through 16
Pilate begins by seeking to release Jesus but by the end he's handed Jesus over to be delivered to be crucified what happened why would he make such a turnaround like that well there's something going on here that is been around for an long time it's political threat it's political leverage it's verging on political blackmail in verse 12 Pilate seeks to release Jesus and the Jews threatened if you release this man they don't name him if you release him you are no friend of Caesar's you're not Caesar's friend Caesar was the emperor of Rome he was also known as Tiberius
Caesar he was also known as Caesar Augustus he was particularly known for being brutal with anybody that has been disloyal with him and so this no friend of Caesar well that's carrying political freight a friend of Caesar would be like someone if you're in DC like you have like special sticker on your back glass that gets you into cool places whenever kind of the big wigs in town having dinners you get special seating to be a friend of Caesar means you're in good standing with Caesar you've got privilege you've got status did you see what the Jews are doing if you release him you're no friend of Caesar's what they're saying is they they give the reason for it when they say you know what you can't have a king opposed to
Caesar you can't you can't have it it doesn't work that way everyone who makes himself a king opposes Caesar I hope you really see the irony of what's going on here you have Jewish leaders trying to convince a Roman governor to obey Caesar and they're threatening what they're saying is hey if you don't release him you are harboring an insurrectionist and Caesar no like that you will incur the wrath of Caesar what they're saying what what they're implying is we will tell Caesar we'll rat you out it's leverage it's blackmail ish if you don't do what we are requiring you to do your job will be in jeopardy and immediately there's a change so when
[32:13] Pilate heard these words in verse 13 he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judgment seat the judgment seat also known as the bema seat would have been the place in the Romans headquarters where judgments were made it was on this specially paved area Gabbatha it's what's being done here is this is a special place where judgment is made and it becomes official Pilate hears these words and he takes his seat on the judgment seat has Jesus brought out and Jesus with crown of thorns is standing before Pilate as he sits on the judgment seat and very interestingly it's like John interjects something in verse 14 he says now it was the day of preparation it's the day before the

Sabbath of the Passover maybe better understood as the Passover it was the sixth hour which in this timing is around noonish late morning do you know what he's doing he's helping the reader to make a connection the moment that Jesus is about to be condemned to be crucified is the starting of the killing of the Passover lambs in Jerusalem it's happening simultaneously here is the lamb of God crowned with the crown of thorns about to be condemned by Pilate at the same time these Passover lambs are about to be slaughtered remembering their deliverance it's very purposefully put John is a sophisticated writer and at this point he says to the
Jews watching behold your king he is the lamb of God wearing a crown of thorns and he says to the Jewish people behold your king and what do they say away with him get him out of our sight he's so offensive just kill him kill him crucify him kill him in the worst way possible kill him Pilate says shall I crucify your king the prospect of a crucified messiah was reprehensible to a Jew at this moment it was an impossibility the messiah crucified that's utterly ridiculous why would he ever let himself be crucified at this moment we have something said by these
Jewish leaders that is incredibly ironic in verse 15 shall I crucify your king the chief priest answered we have no king but Caesar what they're saying is he definitely is not our king but they go beyond that they don't say only God is our king they don't say that they say only Caesar is our king if they were heard by themselves like if they heard themselves a year earlier do you know what they would have charged themselves with blasphemy it's blasphemous it's deeply ironic so in their blasphemy Jesus who is God in the flesh the son of God the descendant of
David rightful heir to the throne the actual king of Israel they say we have no king but Caesar and he's delivered over to be crucified now this moment it may seem that the Jews have won that that they get what they want but remember the most high rules the kingdoms of men that that curtain has already been pulled back this is God at work and in according to Isaiah 53 10 it's his will to crush his son yet it was the will of the Lord to crush him he has put him to grief when his soul makes an offering for guilt he shall see his offspring he shall prolong his days the will of the Lord shall

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prosper in his hands at this moment when
[37:49] Jesus is delivered over to be crucified if you had a mic over kind of the crowds you would hear none of this you wouldn't hear God save the king none of that long live the king none of that it's crucify him it's away with him he's a joke he's an abomination the Romans thought that Jesus was a joke and today many make Jesus out to be a joke they they think many people think that Jesus is just some kind of crutch for the weak not to be taken seriously it's in the world of myth kind of writing him off the

Jews thought that that this Jew who had a crown of thorns is blasphemous it's offensive many today find in Jesus an offense that for many they're offended that God would crush his son they are offended by the violence of the cross they think that's distasteful and it is distasteful they find it too much to handle some people have called it cosmic child abuse because they're offended other people are offended by the exclusivity of the claim Jesus makes no one comes to the father but through me sounds incredibly intolerant it's offensive in our time these things verge on cultural blasphemy it's offensive to many he's a joke he's offensive how about you you've beheld this morning the coronation of
Jesus what do you think about that crown of thorns that he's wearing are you beholding a joke are you beholding an offense or are you beholding your savior and king the son of God who bore God's curse for you to think of this Jesus with this crown of thorns as a joke or as an offense is to refuse him is to not receive him it's to not believe in him but to believe Jesus is the son of God who bore God's curse for you do know what that is that's to have eternal life that's to be saved so I have two questions for two groups of people question number one if you're a non
Christian in the room what is keeping you from believing in this one with the crown of thorns to be your savior and king you can do that today just confess him call out to him and what you're going to realize is this is no joke it's no offense before your eyes is the king of glory and if you are a Christian have you forgotten have you forgotten what he did for you not even this is before the cross he wore a crown of thorns to reverse the curse through his death in order to give you life in abundance this morning we witnessed the coronation of Jesus the Messiah the son of God the nature of his reign is pictured in his crown of thorns!
He came to reverse the curse that you would live some say he's a joke some say he is an offense we say he's the king of glory long live the king Lord Jesus our risen and reigning king thank you for bearing the crown of thorns for us and we look forward to when you return with diadems too many to count because you're the king of kings and lord of lords to whom every knee shall bow amen

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