



Jesus before Pilate

Unit 8: God's Kingdom Revealed

LAST WEEK

After Jesus is arrested, Peter denies him three times (John 18:12-27).

THIS WEEK

Jesus is taken to the court of Pontius Pilate for more questioning (John 18:28-40).

The Point

Unlike the powers of oppression in the world, Jesus' kingdom proclaims the truth.

Bible Nuts & Bolts:

The Roman Empire

The Romans conquered Judea and occupied Jerusalem beginning in 63 BCE. The Roman occupation led to tensions with the Jewish people who lived in Judea. Divisions occurred between rich elite and the peasants who worked primarily as farmers. People also faced oppression through high tax rates, the inability to self-govern, and even in their own religious practices.

Story Summary

Jesus was taken to Pilate's headquarters for trial. The religious leaders assured Pilate that he was a traitor, claiming to be the king. When Pilate questioned Jesus, Jesus responded by telling Pilate that his kingdom was not from this world. When Pilate asked him again if he was king, Jesus responded by saying that he came into the world to testify the truth. Pilate told the gathered crowd that there was no reason to prosecute Jesus. However, when asked whom he should release, the leaders told Pilate to release the prisoner Barabbas and sentence Jesus to death.

Practice: Worship

As Christians, we worship a God whose kingdom has been revealed to us through the example, teaching, and good news shared by Jesus. We proclaim the truth of this kingdom through many of our worship practices. This week, share the good news with each other by singing some hymns or songs that reveal the good news of Christ.

NEXT WEEK

God's kingdom is revealed and Jesus is sentenced to death (John 19:1-16a).

Going Deeper

As you hear and study these stories each week, consider what God has to say to you and your family. What is God's message to us? Consider the following basic pattern as a way of forming family devotions:

- ✦ Light a candle to help you focus this time as "God time." Pray a simple prayer together.
- ✦ Take a moment to check in with each other; what are each person's "highs" and "lows" today?
- ✦ Read aloud from the Daily Bible Readings from below. Discuss the questions following each.
- ✦ End with a blessing, by simply tracing a cross on each other's forehead. The Lord's Prayer is a good way to end your devotion time. If you used a candle, extinguish it as a sign of the end of the devotions.

Note: This is only a suggested pattern. It will vary with your household's context and patterns. What works best for you? First thing in the morning? Over breakfast? Bed time? Be creative and flexible with how you practice and keep your devotions!

Daily Bible Readings

Sunday – Read John 18:28-40

Pilate questioned Jesus about the kingdom and the truth.

- Why would Pilate question Jesus about the truth?
- How do you think Jesus felt while on trial?

Monday – Read John 15:8-11

Jesus told his disciples they would bear fruit.

- What are the commandments Jesus wants us to keep?
- How can we abide in Jesus' love?

Tuesday – Read John 15:12-17

Jesus gave the disciples a commandment.

- When has someone laid down their life for you?
- What is the difference between a servant and a friend?

Wednesday – Read John 15:18-21

Jesus warned the disciples about persecution and hatred.

- Why would Jesus warn his disciples about hatred?
- What makes you nervous about this passage?

Thursday – Read John 15:22-27

Jesus gave the promise of the Spirit to help the disciples.

- How does the promise of the Holy Spirit bring comfort?
- What do you think Jesus wants us to testify?

Friday – Read John 16:1-4a

Jesus warned the disciples that they would be challenged, threatened, and opposed.

- Why do you think Jesus gives the disciples this warning?
- Why did Jesus wait until now to tell the disciples these things?

Saturday – Read John 16:4b-7

Jesus is going away, but the Spirit is coming.

- How might the disciples have felt about Jesus leaving?
- How does the Spirit help us follow Jesus' commandments?