

Our Undercover King
John 19:1-11
September 20, 2026

What characterizes a king in your mind?

What is an undercover boss? Jesus is an undercover King.

The Disguised King Is Mocked and Humiliated vv. 1-3

What did Roman flogging involve? Was this justice? Why did Pilate have Jesus flogged?

Could Roman citizens be flogged? Crucified?

How did Pilate pursue the sympathy vote?

How did the soldiers treat the undercover King?

Does this mocking of Jesus - your Savior, Lord, and King - bother you?

At some deep level, does it disturb you that Jesus was treated this way?

The Disguised King Is Condemned vv. 4-7

“Behold the man!!” Pilate’s implied message may have been, “He is no king, he is no threat.”

How did the Old Testament predict the coming Messiah?

- 1) He would be the King.
- 2) He would be the suffering Servant. (Isaiah 53)

What charge did the Jewish leaders bring against Jesus? (Leviticus 24:16; see also John 5:18; 10:33)

Why was Pilate afraid after hearing that Jesus might be the Son of God?

“Behold the man!” What do you see?

The Disguised King Issues a Ruling vv. 8-11

Pilate asks, “Where are you from?”

Why did Jesus not answer Pilate? (Isaiah 53:7)

Pilate breaks the silence with an indignant claim to authority. Then the undercover King answers.

All true authority comes from God.

Who had the greater sin?

What is Jesus actively doing in this passage?

Do you recognize the undercover King?

Meditation

The Apostles Creed reminds us that He was crucified: “suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified.” And in so doing, the Creed is reminding us, it’s pointing us to the agonizing and humiliatingly embarrassing means of the death of Christ. You see, the cross was the instrument of punishment for the worst of criminals. It was for outcasts, and it represented the worst punishment that the greatest judicial system in the world could mete out. And to the Jewish people especially, it was a uniquely horrendous thing, the ultimate sign of being cast out and cut off. And that’s precisely why God chose it. He chose it, because on the cross, Jesus had to become an outcast so that you could be gathered in. On the cross, Jesus had to bear God’s ban, His curse, His anathema, the fullness of His wrath. He had to be treated as a sinner. You remember how Paul puts it: “He Who knew no sin, became sin, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” Jesus on the cross had to be looked upon by His Father as one who was in rebellion, as one who was deserving of judgment, because Jesus was there on the cross in our place. And the cross is the instrument of that punishment, and the horror of the cross is not just in the physical pain. You can feel that pain even as you read this passage. All the things that went with it, even when the garments are placed on Him and removed, you can feel the garments tearing His already wounded flesh from Him. You feel it when that crown of thorns is described being pressed down on His head and then you imagine the soldiers taking that reed and beating Him over the head. The physical pain is obvious to you, but deeper than that, is that He is the object of His Father’s wrath. He’s crucified. And through this means, we are redeemed. The Creed presses you to meditate on that, to realize what the cross was, to realize what the cross cost Him, to realize what the cross accomplished.

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