

# ***Encounters with Jesus, Week 5***

## **Small Group Discussion Guide, week of Nov. 27<sup>th</sup>**

### **NOVEMBER 27<sup>TH</sup> SERMON SUMMARY**

#### **ENCOUNTERS WITH JESUS: PONTIUS PILATE (MATTHEW 27:11-24)**

Pilate knew the truth that Jesus was innocent of the false accusations brought by the Sanhedrin, but did not want to make the choice about whether he should live or die.

1. **It's natural to be amazed when we encounter Jesus (v. 14).** Pilate had no personal interest in the Messiah, but he was amazed at His silence and lack of defensiveness.
2. **It's easy to ignore who Jesus is because of where we are (v. 24).** Just as Pilate wanted job security and political expediency, our choices are often based not on the truth about Jesus, but on our own desire for comfort, security, and the status quo.
3. **Jesus invites us to consider who He is and where we could be (John 18:36, 19:10-11).** Jesus is powerful, sovereign, and in control, and we can live as though He is king, with His resources of power and love. We can choose to trust, follow, and serve Him.

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. How do you feel about making decisions?

#### **READ JOHN 18:33-38, 19:10-12 (a parallel account of the trial before Pilate).**

**33** Pilate then went back inside the palace, summoned Jesus and asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?"

**34** "Is that your own idea," Jesus asked, "or did others talk to you about me?"

**35** "Am I a Jew?" Pilate replied. "Your own people and chief priests handed you over to me. What is it you have done?"

**36** Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jewish leaders. But now my kingdom is from another place."

**37** “You are a king, then!” said Pilate.

Jesus answered, “You say that I am a king. In fact, the reason I was born and came into the world is to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me.”

**38** “What is truth?” retorted Pilate. With this he went out again to the Jews gathered there and said, “I find no basis for a charge against him...”

... **10** Pilate said. “Don’t you realize I have power either to free you or to crucify you?”

**11** Jesus answered, “You would have no power over me if it were not given to you from above. Therefore the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin.”

**12** From then on, Pilate tried to set Jesus free, but the Jewish leaders kept shouting, “If you let this man go, you are no friend of Caesar. Anyone who claims to be a king opposes Caesar.”

2. Contrast the demeanor of Pilate and Jesus.

- a. How are they different in the way they act and talk?
- b. What do you think Pilate is most concerned about?
- c. What do you think Jesus is most concerned about?

3. Think about the accusation of being “king of the Jews”.

- a. What do you think Pilate means when he uses this title as he is questioning Jesus (v. 33,37)?
- b. Why did the Jewish leaders bring up King Caesar in their accusation (Jn. 19:12)?
- c. Why does Pilate care more about Jesus’ kingship than about the truth?

4a. What does Jesus mean when he talks about being king (Jn. 18:36)?

- b. What do you think Jesus means when he says his kingdom is “not of this world” and that it is “from another place”?
- c. How is Jesus unlike our normal idea of a king?
- d. In what ways is Jesus a King?

## APPLICATION QUESTIONS

5. How do you see Jesus as King of your life? OR how do you want Him to be more of a King?
  
6. How do your desire for comfort, security, and the status quo get in the way of choosing to trust, follow, and serve Jesus?
  
7. Share about a decision, choice, conviction, or step of faith you are considering (if any). How do you need help, support or prayer?