

WEEK 3

UPSIDE NMOD

ADULT DISCUSSION GUIDE

*"This is the crucial point. While human politics is based on the premise that society must be changed in order to change people, in the politics of the Kingdom it is people who must be changed in order to change society."
(Charles Colson - Kingdoms In Conflict)*

1. In verse 28 John tells us that the Jewish leaders won't enter Pilate's palace, so they won't be unclean for Passover. How ironic. As usual, the Jewish leaders try to "follow the law" and miss the point. Explain this hypocrisy to one another. How are we hypocrites in a similar way today?

2. Pilate is hesitant to take the case. Almost like when someone calls the police about a petty crime and they respond by saying, "this is a civil matter" as a means of letting the person know they won't get involved. Ordinarily, the Jewish leaders resented being under Roman rule and how the Roman empire's laws were contrary to their own. Here, however, the Jewish leaders embrace and take advantage of the Roman laws to achieve their goals. Are we still tempted to trade in God's laws for our government's laws today? How so? Is this temptation stronger when we know we can "gain" or achieve something under man's law that we can't under God's law?

3. Pilate's questions to Jesus reveal Pilate's line of thinking. He is trying to discover whether Jesus is a threat or political rival. Pilate was there to keep order and Emperor Tiberius had zero tolerance for disloyalty.

How did Jesus flip Pilate's earthly view of kingdom-hood and flip it upside down? Jesus' message to Pilate is also a message to us. Consider the quote at the beginning of top of the Discussion Guide. If the politics of Christ's Kingdom are upside down what does that mean for us as Christ followers?

4. What are some reasons the crowd might have chosen Barabbas' freedom over Jesus' freedom? If you had expected Jesus to overthrow the Roman rule and establish himself as King, what are some actions of Jesus during Holy Week that would have angered you?

5. If Pilate had previously declared there was "no fault" in Jesus why would he order Jesus to be flogged/scourged anyway? Do Pilate's final attempts to release Jesus in John 19:4-6 help explain his actions?

6. Are the claims of the Jewish leaders in John 19:7 true? If that is their law, why did they bring Jesus to Pilate?

7. In John 19:8 John describes Pilate as being afraid. If Pilate really has the power the claims in verse 10. Why is Pilate's reaction fear (as opposed to anger, frustration, sadness, or even amusement?) Though it's not recorded in John's gospel, Pilate's wife shares a dream with Pilate. Read Matthew 27:19-20. Does this help explain Pilate's fear? In what sense was it actually Pilate who was on trial before Jesus?

8. The Jewish crowd's invocation of Caesar (you are not friend of Caesar) to pressure Pilate is chilling. What are the implications of the Jewish people claiming Caesar as king? What is the cost of rebelling against Christ as Savior?

STUDENTS DISCUSSION GUIDE

1. In the video Stef talks about the heavenly and worldly kingdoms. We often times can create our own worldly kingdoms by desiring to be in ultimate control of our lives instead of being at peace knowing God is in control. In what specific areas of your life do you need to let go of control and, instead, be at peace trusting God's guidance?
2. You've heard it said that "Jesus took your place on the cross." We see a physical representation of this when Barabbas is released and Jesus is put in his place. What do you think Barabbas could have been thinking/feeling in this situation? How does this make you think about your sin in a different way?
3. How can you better recognize the authority of God in your own life and follow his instruction?
4. In what ways have you tried to make God who you want him to be instead of who he tells you he is?
5. At the end of this passage, when Jesus was on the judgment seat, Pilate asked the Jewish people, "You want me to crucify your king?" In response the crowd said, "Caesar is our king!" The crowd put their hope in a different king other than Jesus. In your life, what things do you put your hope in other than Jesus?

Here's Your Challenge:

- Write down:
 1. The ways you have trusted God in your life
 2. The ways you haven't trusted God in your life
- Pick one way you haven't trusted God, pray about it each day this week (longer if needed) and ask God to show you how to trust him fully with it.

KIDS DISCUSSION GUIDE

1. Jesus was arrested even though He didn't do anything wrong. Have someone ever blamed you for doing something wrong and you didn't actually do the wrong thing? How did that feel? Have you ever blamed someone else for something YOU did?
2. Pilate was the leader of lots of the people. Who are some leaders that you listen to and follow? What makes you want to follow them? God wants to be the NUMBER ONE ruler in our lives. How do we listen to and follow the one TRUE God?
3. Barabbas was a man who did a lot of bad things. The people chose to let Barabbas go free instead of Jesus. How do you think Barabbas felt about getting to be released? Jesus literally took His place!
4. This whole part of the story seems so unfair to us. There are many things in our lives that are unfair. Right now you might feel like its not fair that you don't get to go to school, play with your friends, go to church, etc. Even though Jesus being sentenced to the cross wasn't fair, it was part of God's plan and will for the world that He LOVES! Do you feel God's love right now in the middle of things that seem unfair?
5. Do you know what it means to mock someone? When we mock people we are mean to them with our words. We make fun of them, we do or say what they say in a mean way. The people at Jesus trial made fun of the the things He said. Have you ever done this to someone?

Family Activities:

- Preschool and Elementary: Jesus talks about the Heavenly Kingdom and how it is different from the earth. Pretend your family is in charge of ruling a kingdom and you get to decide what your kingdom looks like. What rules would you have? What would you eat? What would your land be like? How would you handle people who did things that were wrong?
- Preschool and Elementary: Make crowns out of things in your home to remember the KING OF KINGS throughout this Holy Week.