

Misunderstood Messiah: The Gospel of John

Week of September 6, 2026

Misunderstood Authority

JOHN 18:33 - 19:16A

PRAYER

🕒 Spend about 20 minutes here.

- After having someone read the passage out loud, and sitting in silence for a few minutes to “let it land,” spend some time in prayer together as a group. Remember that the Word of God is living and active, so let the passage inform, shape and inspire your prayers.
- Are you convicted of sin? Confess it and ask for healing or transformation. (And thank him for the cross so you no longer have to fear condemnation!) Are you moved to worship by how God reveals himself? Praise him and thank him. Are you given a vision for your life or the life of your group or West? Pray for it!

HEAD to help us examine what the word shows and let in what’s true.

🕒 Spend about 40 minutes moving through all Head, Heart, Hands questions.

- What do you learn about power in this passage?

HEART to help us wrestle with what we believe and be with each other in it.

- Read Proverbs 29:25. We see Pilate self-betray in this passage because of fear. Where have you experienced this in your own life recently? (Note: think of self-betrayal as knowingly going against what you know to be right)

HANDS to help us bring the truth into our lives and go out into the world with the Holy Spirit.

- Imagine your purpose from God is only this: To bear witness to the truth in every way. What are practical ways this can play out in your everyday life?
- What is one practical way to identify and fight against the fear of man this week?

LOVING THE WORLD TOGETHER

🕒 Spend about 10 minutes here.

- Let’s spend some time dreaming together about how we want to move out to love and serve the world and how we want to invite those who do not know Christ into “gospel hospitality” as a group this year. Do we want to serve with Napier? Do we want to do lawn care for an elderly neighbor? Do we want to invite our non-Christian friends to a happy hour with us? A Christmas party? Pray for creativity, desire and direction!

LEADER RESOURCES

[Weekly Leader Video](#) • [Bible Project John Pt 2](#) • [Why The Gospel of John is Special](#) • [Tim Keller John Podcasts](#)

NEXT WEEK’S PASSAGE

John 19:16–30

GR^oUPS

Misunderstood Messiah: The Gospel of John

Week of September 6, 2026

Misunderstood Authority

JOHN 18:33 - 19:16A

SETTING THE SCENE

John begins the climax of the crucifixion story through Jesus' encounter with Pilate and the Jewish leaders. Even though Pilate finds no fault in Jesus, he gives in to political pressure, prompting Jesus to remind him that all earthly authority is given by God alone. Even in the face of injustice and the cross, John reveals that God remains completely sovereign, accomplishing his redemptive purposes through all things.

SCRIPTURE

33 So Pilate entered his headquarters again and called Jesus and said to him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" 34 Jesus answered, "Do you say this of your own accord, or did others say it to you about me?" 35 Pilate answered, "Am I a Jew? Your own nation and the chief priests have delivered you over to me. What have you done?" 36 Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from the world." 37 Then Pilate said to him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice." 38 Pilate said to him, "What is truth?"

After he had said this, he went back outside to the Jews and told them, "I find no guilt in him. 39 But you have a custom that I should release one man for you at the Passover. So do you want me to release to you the King of the Jews?" 40 They cried out again, "Not this man, but Barabbas!" Now Barabbas was a robber.

1 Then Pilate took Jesus and flogged him. 2 And the soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head and arrayed him in a purple robe. 3

They came up to him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and struck him with their hands. 4 Pilate went out again and said to them, "See, I am bringing him out to you that you may know that I find no guilt in him."

5 So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Behold the man!" 6 When the chief priests and the officers saw him, they cried out, "Crucify him, crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and crucify him, for I find no guilt in him." 7 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." 8 When Pilate heard this statement, he was even more afraid. 9 He entered his headquarters again and said to Jesus, "Where are you from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. 10 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?" 11 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."

12 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." 13 So when Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judgment seat at a place called The Stone Pavement, and in Aramaic Gabbatha. 14 Now it was the day of Preparation of the Passover. It was about the sixth hour. He said to the Jews, "Behold your King!" 15 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." 16 So he delivered him over to them to be crucified.

HEAD

to help us examine what the word shows and let in what's true.

- What do you learn about power in this passage?

HEART

to help us wrestle with what we believe and be with each other in it.

- Read Proverbs 29:25. We see Pilate self-betray in this passage because of fear. Where have you experienced this in your own life recently? (Note: think of self-betrayal as knowingly going against what you know to be right)

HANDS

to help us bring the truth into our lives and go out into the world with the Holy Spirit.

- Imagine your purpose from God is only this: To bear witness to the truth in every way. What are practical ways this can play out in your everyday life?
- What is one practical way to identify and fight against the fear of man this week?

LOVING THE WORLD TOGETHER

- Let's spend some time dreaming together about how we want to move out to love and serve the world and how we want to invite those who do not know Christ into "gospel hospitality" as a group this year. Do we want to serve with Napier? Do we want to do lawn care for an elderly neighbor? Do we want to invite our non-Christian friends to a happy hour with us? A Christmas party? Pray for creativity, desire and direction!
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-

DISCIPLESHIP GROUP GUIDELINES

- **Safe Group:** We strive for an environment where everyone can be open and honest about his or her struggles and victories.
- **Confidentiality:** What is said in the group stays in the group.
- **Listen:** We value one another by really listening to what is being shared. Try to avoid thinking about how you are going to respond while someone is sharing.
- **Pause:** Allowing a pause in the conversation after someone shares gives them a true chance to finish. A Pause also gives the group an opportunity to consider before responding.
- **Silence:** Allowing silence in the group provides an opportunity for people to think deeply, gather their thoughts in order to share, and genuinely consider what others have shared.
- **One Conversation at a Time:** Be considerate of others as they are sharing. No side conversations.
- **No Fixing:** We are not here to fix each other; Jesus does that part. Give encouragement and ask questions, but try not to solve or fix one another.
- **No Rescuing:** When people are sharing something deeply personal, please resist the tendency to try to make them feel better about themselves or their situation by providing immediate condolences. This will often cause people to stop sharing.
- **Be Curious:** By asking the next question, we communicate genuine interest. We keep the conversation moving forward while building relationships and intimacy.
- **Be Self-Aware:** Be mindful of how you are personally affecting the small group environment through your words, actions, and non-verbal communication. Be sensitive about the amount of time you share, whether too much (dominating) or not enough (hiding).
- **Use "I" Statements:** It is very easy to talk about other people's issues, but, for our purposes, we want to put ourselves on the table. Use "I" statements rather than "them", "the church", "people", "you", "us", "we", etc.
- **Resolve Conflict Biblically:** As a group we commit to extend grace to one another. Conflict is not bad, it's an opportunity for growth. We are all being transformed to be more like Jesus. Conflict and change are a part of that journey. (Matthew 18)
- **Manage Technology:** Let's respect one another by silencing alerts on our devices.

If you need childcare reimbursement please scan the QR code and follow the prompts. You must submit within 30 days of attending group.

