

Vote For “The Man”

John 18:28-19:16

September 20, 2026

Peter Hiett

Video and audio versions available online:

<https://relentless-love.org/sermons/vote-for-the-man/>

Transcript document prepared by: Heather Eades.

This document was prepared by Heather Eades using Peter’s notes and the video version of this sermon. If you encounter any significant discrepancies or errors in this document, please email us at transcripts@thesanctuarydowntown.org. Thank you!

Message

As you may know this is our 51st sermon from the Gospel of John. And we preached the 50th sermon in mid-August. I took a few weeks of Study Leave to prepare for and then lead a conference in Denmark on the topic of Hell and it turned into a conference on Heaven. I spoke at a precious church, The Omega Christian Center—pastored by some marvelous people—Henrik and Gitte Csizmadia. But now I’m so glad to be back with you and preaching through John.

In our last sermon titled What is Truth? I told you a story about a stormy night many years ago. The captain of a ship looked into the dark night and saw a faint light in the distance—distant but approaching fast. Immediately he told his signalman to send a message: “Alter your course ten degrees south.” Promptly a return message was received: “Alter your course ten degrees north.” The captain was angered that his command had been ignored. So, he sent a second message: “Alter your course ten degrees south – I am the captain.” Soon another message was received: “Alter your course ten degrees north – I am seaman third class Jones.” Immediately the captain sent a third message, knowing the fear that it would evoke: “Alter your course ten degrees south – I am a battleship.” Then the reply: “Alter your course ten degrees north – I am a lighthouse.

We then read John 18:11-38, which includes the first part of our text for this morning. Pontus Pilate is the Battleship and Jesus is the Lighthouse. Jesus is the Light and Jesus is the Rock: Jesus is “the Truth.”

John 18:28:

Then they led Jesus from the house of Caiaphas to the governor’s headquarters.

It was early morning. They themselves did not enter the governor’s

headquarters, so that they would not be defiled, but could eat the Passover.

That’s ironic on so many levels.

Scripture tells us that Jesus is “The Passover”.¹ They want to eat the Passover, and the night before at supper the Passover took bread and wine saying “This is my body. Take and eat” and “This is the covenant in my blood. Take and drink.” They themselves did not enter the governor’s headquarters, so that they would not be defiled, but could eat the Passover.

John 18:29-32:

So Pilate went outside to them and said, "What accusation do you bring against this man?" ³⁰ They answered him, "If this man were not doing evil, we would not have delivered him over to you." ³¹ Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and judge him by your own law." The Jews said to him, "It is not lawful for us to put anyone to death." ³² This was to fulfill the word that Jesus had spoken to show by what kind of death he was going to die.

Five days earlier in John 12, Jesus says, "When I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw (or romance) all people to myself." Then John adds, "he said this to show by what kind of death he would die." He dies lifted up on a cross, also called a tree, in a garden, at a place called Golgotha which means "place of the skull." For it was there that many believed the skull of Adam was buried.

John 18:33-35:

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?

Jesus doesn't say "no." If you take Scripture seriously, as I do, don't you have to say "yes, Pilate" or at least "Pilate, you will be." Or did you not know: Your husband is the King of the Jews and that makes you pretty Jewish. If you've been to this table, his blood flows in your veins and you are his body. He commanded you to pray "Our Father;" we have the same father. He has broken down the dividing wall of hostility in his flesh... that he might create one new man in place of the two.ⁱⁱ He fills "all in all," which makes all of reality pretty Jewish.ⁱⁱⁱ For just as his Father promised to Abraham, "In you will all the nations of the world be blessed."^{iv} It's an Unconditional Covenant. And I could go on.

John 18:35-36:

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.

"The Jews" So is Jesus anti-semitic? Is John anti-semitic? NO, NO, NO! Both of them are Semites, that is semitic, and Jews. Jesus is "the King of the Jews," about to be crucified by the political entity that called itself "the Jews," much like the modern nation state of Israel. A Semite refers to the descendants of Shem, one of the three sons of Noah. Arabs, descendants of Ishmael (son of Abraham and brother of Isaac), are also Semites, that means Iraqis and Palestinians are just as semitic as Jews.

So, who has killed the most Semites in the last twenty-five years? Eighty years ago, that would've been some Germans. But that's not the case anymore. Well, Jesus is not an anti-Semite, neither was John, and neither am I.

John 18:36-38:

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?”

And how is Jesus to answer? He just told us “I am... the Truth.” Not simply I am true, or there are things about me that are true, but “I am (ego eimi)... the Truth” Last time we said, “Betraying the Truth in the garden of your own soul is called dishonesty.” “The Way is the Truth, and the Truth is the Life.” And so dishonesty is death, insanity, and the desecration of creation. And so, in the words of John in the Revelation, “Outside [the New Jerusalem] is everyone who loves and practices falsehood.” (Revelation 22:15) We ended that message with these words...Pilate put the Truth to the test, but the entire time the Truth was putting Pilate to the test — NOT to see what Pilate would do, BUT that Pilate would see what the Truth would do, then call him “King.”

The Jews put the Truth to the test, but the entire time the Truth was putting the Jews to the test — not to see what they would do, BUT that they would see what Love does do, call him “King,” rise from their graves at the sound of his voice (John 5:25-29), and enter the Land (Ezekiel 37).

Adam and Eve put the Truth to the test on the tree in the garden, but the entire time the Truth was putting all of us to the test — NOT to see what we would do, BUT that we would see who He is, surrender to Love, and become His Lighthouse, “the image and likeness of God.”

That was the last sermon and now this sermon:

John 18:39-40:

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 [*lestes* from a root word meaning “to take”].

The two thieves crucified with Jesus were *lestes*. The thieves that attack the man on the road from Jerusalem to Jericho, before the good Samaritan comes along are *lestes*. When Jesus cleanses the temple, he says “You have made this a den of *lestes*.” From Mark we learn that Barabbas was also “a murderer” and “an insurrectionist,” that is a terrorist or a freedom fighter depending on which side you happen to favor. From some ancient versions of Matthew, we learn that his first name was likely “Jesus”—which was a common name in that day. From all the Gospels it appears that Pilate asked the crowd several times, “Whom would you have me release for you? Which Jesus? which Savior? Jesus Barjoseph (son of Joseph) or Jesus Barabbas (son of *rabbas* or *rabbi*).

He called for a vote, as you know, we did not invent democracy. Democracy is as old as the first lynch mob. Pilate calls for a vote. . . and they vote for Barrabas. Matthew even states that all the people answered Pilate saying, and I quote, “His blood be on us and on our children.”^v So, is that a good thing or a bad thing? It must be the blood of the Lamb that’s in those seven bowls in the Revelation and I know it’s that blood that we’ll drink at communion this morning. Whatever the case, they all voted for Barabbas (Son of *rabbi*, Son of law)

John 19:1:

Then Pilate took Jesus and flogged him [*mastigoo*: to whip].

If we harmonize the gospels, this was an initial flogging and later, after he was sentenced, he was also scourged.

John 19:2-14:

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!”...“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.”** [That’s ironic: The Roman governor has inspected the Passover and declared him to be a spotless lamb]. 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.”** [That’s ironic: He is NOT making himself the Son of God; He is the Son of God making all of us himself. “Son of God” to these Jews meant blasphemy. But “Son of God” to a Roman, meant something like “Hercules” or “Apollo”] ⁸ **When Pilate heard this statement, he was even more afraid.** [From Matthew we learn that Pilate’s wife had already sent word to him saying “I had a dream. Have nothing to do with this righteous man”^{vi}] ⁹ **He entered his headquarters again and said to Jesus, “Where are you from?” But Jesus gave him no answer.** [How could he answer? He is the Word, who is with God and is God, He comes from nowhere for he made everywhere]. ¹⁰ **So Pilate said to him, “You will not speak to me? Do you not know that I have authority [*exousia*: power] to release you and authority [power] to crucify you?”** ¹¹ **Jesus answered him, “You would have no authority [power] over me at all unless it had been given you from above. Therefore he who delivered me [*paradidomai*: betrayed me] over to you has the greater sin.”**^{vii} 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** [or “sat him down on the judgment seat” (the verb can be translated either way)] **at a place called The Stone Pavement, and in Aramaic Gabbatha.** ¹⁴ **Now it was the day of Preparation of the Passover.**

That may mean “Friday of Passover week” or it may be John’s way of connecting Jesus with the slaughter of all the Passover Lambs at noon the day before Passover^{viii} It was about the sixth hour [It was the 6th hour, of the 6th day of the week, on the 6th day of creation, 666]. 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.” In the words of King Arther in Monte Python and the Holy Grail. You don’t vote for King, but they fire Jesus and hire Caesar as their King. The chief priests answered, “We have no king but Caesar.” ¹⁶ So [Pilate] delivered [Jesus] over [19.16] to them [to “the Jews”] to be crucified.

There are three obvious questions and a 4th:

1. Why would they all vote for Barabbas, the Robber?

2. Why would the chief priests—who were literally the pastors of Jesus Church, the ecclesia of Israel—why would they vote for Caesar? AND
3. Why would God let them, that is, why would God let all of us have a vote?

And these questions become even more poignant when we notice what John records Pilate as saying in the middle of our text. Pilate brings Jesus out and stands him up, perhaps even on the Judgment Seat, and cries out "Behold the man." So...

4. What is it that John wants us to behold?

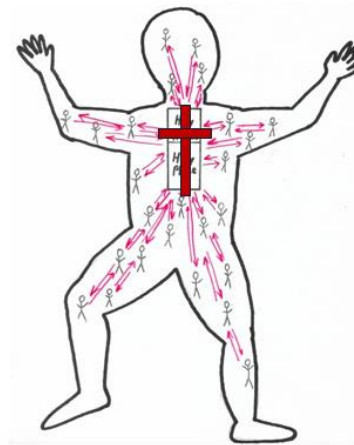
Notice that Pilate doesn't say, behold this man is not a terrorist, like Barrabas.

- Or Behold this man is a capitalist or a socialist... a fascist or a communist...
- Or Behold this man is from the radical right or the far left...
- Or Behold this man's policy statements and economic strategy...

He says, "Behold the Man."

1. Now on one level, I suspect he's saying, "Just look at him; he's harmless. For God's sake he looks just like a slaughtered lamb."
2. But on another level, I'm sure he's saying, "Behold the man; he's scaring the shit out of me; I've never met a man like this; He has the confidence of a Lion. I think he might be a son of God."
3. 3 And on another level, I'm convinced that John is saying, "Behold the man," which in his native tongue would be "Behold the Adam."

This is the sixth hour, on the sixth day of the week, 6th day of creation—the day that God makes Adam. They are standing on the Holy Mountain next to the foundation stone where the Jews believed that God made Adam. He will be crucified on a tree in a garden called "Golgotha," the place of the skull, the place of Adam's skull. When He rises from the dead Mary thinks he's "the gardener" and he is. And she's his garden—the harlot that becomes his bride.

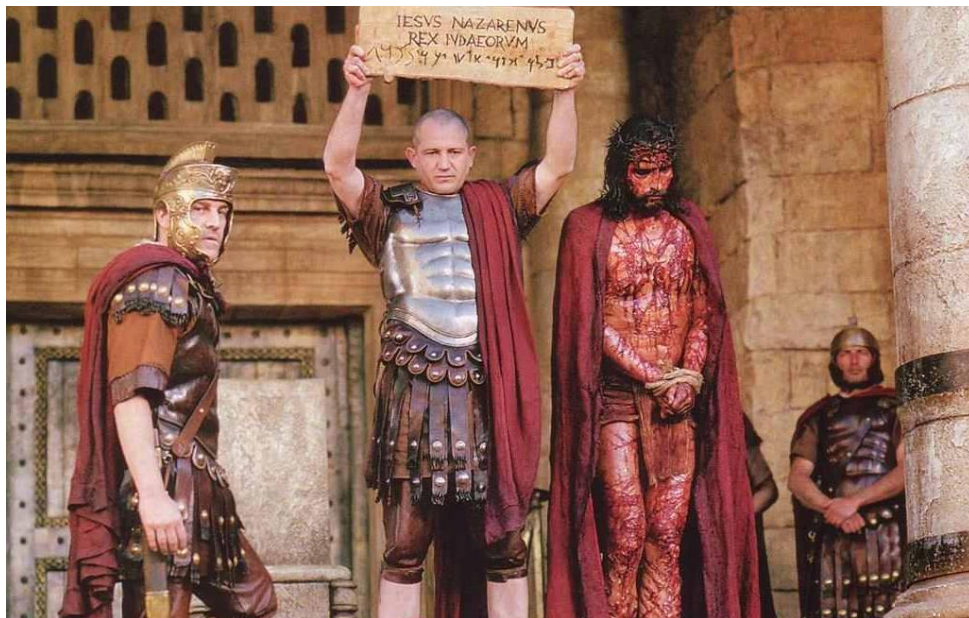


The Last (eschatos) Thing
The 7th Sign that is the Substance
"Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up."

This is the 7th sign that is the substance, "Destroy this temple and I will raise it up in three days' and he was speaking of the temple of his body." We are that temple. We are that body. We are that harlot that becomes His bride—we are the body of the eschatos Adam. "As in Adam all die so in Christ will all be made alive." "The first Adam became a living soul. The last adam became a life-giving spirit." So, Behold the Man, the eschatos Adam, the Super Man. And you don't have to be a theologian to see it; Pilate sees it.



Can you imagine the fear that Pilate could instill in a man. Can you imagine how many men Pilate had questioned, tortured, and sentenced to death—the absolute worst death, death on a cross. And yet Pilate is terrified of Jesus, somethings different about this man Jesus. What do you suppose it is? Here's my guess:



1. He is "the Truth."

- He's not divided and Pilate can't break him; but he's breaking Pilate.
- He is the Word, God's Covenant Word...The Lighthouse.

2. He is Love, unconditional Love.

- He loves the Lord his God with all his heart, mind, soul, and strength.
- He loves his neighbor as himself, as if his neighbor is himself

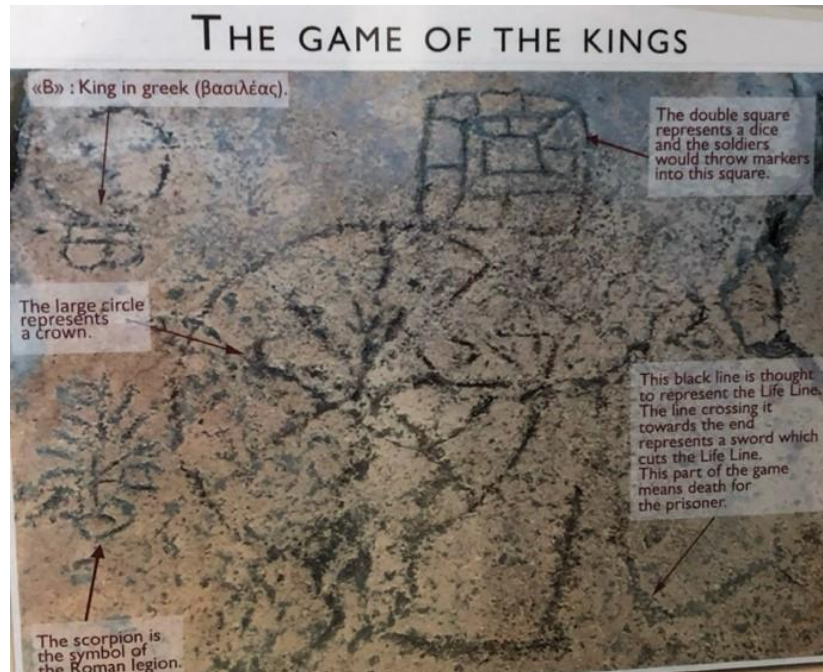
And, in this moment, Pilate is his neighbor... So he looks into the eyes of Pilate and asks, "Pilate what do you say about me; I don't care what others tell you about me, what do you Pilate, not the governor, the little boy, what do you say about me... You call me your king, don't you?" He loves because He has and is faith in Love, the very thing that the first Adam lacked in the garden: Faith in Love—Love, who is our Father, our God. "You would have no power over me except what is given to you from above," says Jesus to Pilate and to us, the crowd.

3. He's utterly free for he's entirely humble.

- Pilate was utterly unable to humiliate, intimidate, or indoctrinate Jesus



I took this picture 20 years ago while leading a tour of Israel with some of you. Archaeologists believe this to be the Stone Pavement, called Gabatha, which we just read about in John 19:13. On it, you'll see lines etched in the stone--lines which form a game board known as "The Kings Game." It's believed to have originated as worship of the Roman god, Saturn. And it was used by Roman Soldiers, as a cruel means of torture, before they would sacrifice a victim.



According to our Israeli guide, that torture could include rape and beatings, all while dressings victims as kings and worshipping them in mockery. We don't know, but Jesus could've very well been one of those victims. It's clear that they did all that they could to humiliate Jesus. But if you're truly humble, you are impossible to humiliate, for you have no ego to protect... and have no false self that desires to be exalted. You have no need to be first, and you rejoice at being last, which means that you are entirely free of shame and have absolutely nothing to hide. You shine.

In other words, #4: Jesus is Beautiful. Jesus is Good. Jesus is the Glory of God. The Light is not buried in "Me-sus," it's all "Jesus." Jesus knew that everything is Grace. He is the perfect image of the invisible God, He exudes Grace.

As John has taught us Jesus is the judge who judges by not judging... for he is himself the Judgment. He is who it is that we all must be, and will be, and most truly are. He is not a man making himself the Son of God, He is the Son of God redeeming every man and making all men himself—his bride, his body, and his home. This is the plan for the fulness of time to unite all things in him. This is the Judgment.

- John 1:29 "Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the World"
- John 19: 5 "Behold the Man."
- John 19:14 "Behold your King."
- Revelation 5: 5 "Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David has conquered... And [in the mist of the throne] I saw a Lamb standing as if it had just been slain."
- Revelation 21:4 "Behold the dwelling place of God is with man, with Adam."
- Revelation 21:5 "Behold I make all things new." said the voice upon the throne.

And so, Pilate called for a vote, "Which would you have me release for you, Jesus Barjoseph or Jesus Barabbas?" And they all chose Barabbas, the robber. So back to our question: "Why did they all choose Barabbas cause maybe we choose Barabbas too?" I told my wife about this question. She prayed and then she said to me, this is what I heard, "They chose Barabbas because they were more

afraid of me than they were of Barabbas. They thought they could control Barabbas, but they could not control me." We're afraid of things that we do not know because we believe that knowledge gives us control and, with control, we can save ourselves. And maybe we do know robbers, because each, and every one of us, is one.

John 10:1,7 & 8, Jesus said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter by the sheepfold by the door but climbs in another way, that man is a thief [*kleptes*] and a robber [*lestes*]. I am the door of the sheep. All who came before me are thieves and robbers (all are takers)." Well, Holy Crap. What does that mean? It means that King David was a robber, Moses was a Robber, Joseph was a robber just like his great grandfather Abraham... the thief and the robber. All people are *kleptos* and *lestes*, thieves and robbers, before Jesus. So maybe we project ourselves onto Jesus, which is projecting ourselves onto God. And so—under all this talk of love—we believe that God is actually a thief and a robber—a taker...reaping where he does not sow.^{ix} How else could we postulate such unbiblical ideas as penal substitutes satiating the blood lust of an unmerciful, unforgiving, and retributive deity... And endless conscious torment for those who don't agree with the notion that this is the character of OUR FATHER?

Maybe we project ourselves on to God, assuming that God is like us, and yet infinitely more powerful than us—That He is a thief that we can't control. But Barabbas is a thief we can control, a thief we can use to make us more like himself, which is to make us more like our selves... better takers. Matthew points out that Barabbas was "notorious," that is "of note." He was a famous *kleptos* and *lestes*, a very successful and noteworthy taker. Just five days earlier, the crowd had all chanted for Jesus, for they assumed that he would help them take Jerusalem from Caesar. But now it was obvious, Caesar was the winner; Jesus was the loser. And so, they put their hope in Barabbas, and they all began to blame Jesus. They made him their Scapegoat. And He let them, He let them. WHY? Mystified by Jesus, strangely attracted to Jesus, yet utterly terrified of Jesus and still in bondage to Caesar. As the crowd begins to chant "crucify, crucify, crucify," Pilate appeals to the pastors and the priests, the leaders of Israel, the leaders of the ecclesia, the leaders of the church, saying "Would you have me crucify your king?" And they respond, "We have no King but Caesar!" They vote for Caesar. Why?

Well, maybe because all people are robbers and human religion is just organized crime... It's just more "knowledge of Good and evil," to save you from the Savior and help you become a better taker than you already are. James 1:27 "Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to [look after] orphans and widows in their affliction and to keep oneself unstained from the world." I'm grateful for the 501C3 non-profit organization that we call the Sanctuary, but you don't need an institution or a government to look after orphans and widows. You just need the desire to do it. You need Faith in Love.

And now some of you may be getting a wee bit nervous because some of this sounds vaguely familiar, and because we're having an election in a few weeks, and because you're wondering, "Peter, are you trying to shut us down?" No, I think the Sanctuary is here, at least for now, to be a witness to Jesus. And I would remind you that in this election in a few weeks, neither Joe Biden and Kamala Harris, nor Donald Trump and JD Vance are on the ballot. And so, I hope you will not concern yourself much with who it was that you voted for last time because it's over now and maybe they were all takers.

Last time the Democrats told me all sorts of stories to the effect that all the Republican candidates claimed to be givers but were all takers. And the Republicans told me stories to the effect that all the Democratic candidates pretended to be givers but were all takers. Well, none of those names

are on the ballot now, and you may not even know the names of those that are. So, Now, seems to be a fitting time to offer this advice from the Gospel of John: Vote for "the Man." Behold "the Man." Then, vote for "the Man." And now, I'm sure that you're frustrated with me, cause your thinking: "Check your ballot, Peter, and you won't find the name 'Jesus' on the ballot. In fact, the crowd once tried to make Jesus King and he ran away; He refused to be that kind of King for his kingdom is not of this world. And, Peter, in the words of King Arthur in Monte Python and the Holy Grail, you don't vote for king. He already is King—the King of Kings and Lord of Lords." And YES, that is all absolutely correct.

In fact, some Christian groups (like old order Amish, Mennonites and Jehovah Witnesses) forbid voting and running for political office because "the Kingdom of God is not of this world." Ironically, they often set up their own little kingdom to distinguish themselves from all the other kingdoms of this world, and in that way create one more kingdom of this world, but I respect their position.

Traditionally, Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and most Protestant traditions, have all taught that their members should vote and run for office, if, they understand that the kings of this world are ordained by God in a provisional capacity, like a babysitter hired by a parent is hired to watch the children until that parent returns. The babysitter can enforce laws, but the babysitter can't shape a child in the image of the parent—that takes more than laws, it takes Grace.

In the United States, you are the employer and government officials are your employees. And if you're a Christian, Jesus is your King and the Word of our Father. He is your King who has already commanded you to love as he has loved you. So, elected officials cannot save you, and yet they can assist you in looking after orphans and widows, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, even protecting the unborn and the sojourner—that is the immigrant living in your midst (As God, our king, commands in Exodus 22). So elected officials can assist you, but how do you know that they will?

In the United States, every candidate on a major party ticket running for President for the last 213 years has claimed to be a Christian, even if they owned slaves, despised the unborn, rejected the sojourners, committed genocide against native Americans, or dropped bombs on innocent people for their own advantage. They've all claimed to be following Jesus. And that's why I would suggest that you "Behold the man" and then vote for the man. NOT the party, NOT the policy, NOT the one that you think will make you rich, NOT the one that exalts himself, but the Man.

Jesus refused to be King for he already is King, AND YET he would have each of us vote for him, that he might be King in each one of us. That he might be King NOT because we have to obey, but because we long to obey in the perfect freedom of absolute Love because we trust him. So, Jesus is not on the ballot, yet Jesus may be living his life in some of those that are on the ballot and maybe you can recognize him in them. In the New Testament there are no Government Officials who are also followers of Jesus because Caesar keeps killing them. But in the Old Testament there are. We just read it in Revelation 5:5

"The Lion of Judah" is "the root of David." Read the Psalms and then read the New Testament and you'll realize that Jesus was living his life in David and speaking through David. And God chose David, least of all his brothers, for he was a man after God's own heart... for "The Lord looks on the heart," 1st Samuel 16:7. David had some absolutely immense failures; he himself was a *lestes* and yet, you can see Jesus in David.

And you can see Jesus in Joseph, can't you? Joseph was kind of an arrogant little twerp, but the Jesus shows up in Joseph. Joseph was the 2nd most powerful man in the world, 2nd only to Pharaoh, along about 1700 BC. We often forget, but our Lord's full name was Jesus Barjoseph (Jesus son of Joseph). I think that was for a reason. "The birthright belonged to Joseph."^x So "Behold the Man" and then vote for the man, the one that Pilate saw that day, Good Friday, standing on the stone pavement, that is Gabatha.

1. Vote for the candidate that's honest.

Don't simply believe what they tell you on CNN or Fox News. Listen to the candidate and not in sound bites. Ask yourself, "Are they being honest?" Do they contradict themselves? Do they gas-light? Do they say, "Everybody knows this or that," but you don't know this or that? That's dishonest. Do they honor their covenants: marriage covenants, business covenants, The United States Constitution is a covenant, not a sacred one but a covenant.

2. Vote for the candidate that Loves God by Loving People.

Behold the man or the woman and ask, "Do they love people? You can't judge them in any sort of final way, but just as with deacons and elders nominated in church you can ask, do they love like Jesus loved? I can't judge persons, but I think we're commanded to judge actions and statement—Jesus said, "with just judgment judge."

Behold the man or the woman and not their labels, slogans, and T-shirts. Anyone who always goes left or always goes right never gets anywhere; they're always moving in circles. That label is basically useless. If anyone claims to be a "capitalist" or a "socialist," ask them what they mean. I've studied those words and concluded that everyone I know is a socialist and everyone I know is also a capitalist. Medicare, Social Security, public roads, standing armies, all police, border patrols, ICE, public schools, Government itself, and all legislation and infra-structure regarding a free-market system are socialist endeavors. And all our socialism is funded by our capitalism, which is your capital invested in producing more capital along with others, which is socialism.

Of course, you can argue all the fine points, and you can come up with terrifying examples like Stalin on one side and Hitler on the other. But if a leader doesn't love, they're just a noisy Gong and a clanging cymbal, whether they call themselves a capitalist or a socialist. And if a leader does love it's not just them that's leading, it's Love in their flesh; it's THE MAN who is OUR KING. And "Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things. Love doesn't fail..." no matter where or in whom it's planted.

3. Vote for the candidate that's humble.

You know David lied, broke his covenants, abused Bathsheba, and murdered her faithful husband—her immigrant husband, Uriah. But when he was confronted by the Word of God through the Prophet Nathan, he repented in the most astounding fashion. He basically died with the son of David, the baby that was born out of David's sin. AND he rose with the son of David, the baby that was born out of David's repentance... AND of course, as you know, both babies were Jesus. Then David wrote the Psalms...Or I should say, "Jesus wrote the Psalms in and through David." "A broken spirit and a contrite heart, Oh God, you will not despise."^{xi}

4. Vote for the candidate that's Good; that's the one that Forgives; that's the one that's full of Grace.

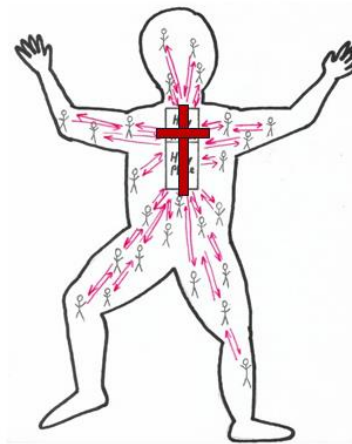
Remember Joseph? He was thrown into a pit and utterly humbled. And then he was exalted by God into the position of the 2nd most powerful man in the world, 2nd only to Pharaoh. And, in that position, he saved the world from famine. And that included his brothers, his abusers, that is the sons of Israel. And when they realized what had happened, and cowered at his feet in terror, he did not kill them, he did not incarcerate them, he did not prosecute them. He wept and cried out "You intended it for evil, but God intended it for Good." That's forgiveness. That's Grace. That's the Beautiful One. That's the Good. That's THE MAN that all of us are predestined to become.

So, Pilate asked them, and now John is asking you: Whom would you have:

- Jesus Barabbas or Jesus Bar Joseph?
- The Taker, or The Giver and Forgiver of all?

The Taker who will help you take and take until you're utterly alone. Or the Giver who will help you give until you've lost yourself and found yourself dancing with all creation in the kingdom of God? And now, in case you're worried, and thinking to yourself, "I may have voted for the wrong man or the wrong woman." Well... DON'T worry about it. You may have intended it for evil, but God intended it for good. And, of course, you voted for the wrong man or the wrong woman. Every time we sin, we vote for the wrong man, the false man, the Taker. And every time we speak the truth in love, the True Man is voting in us, with us, for us, and even as us.

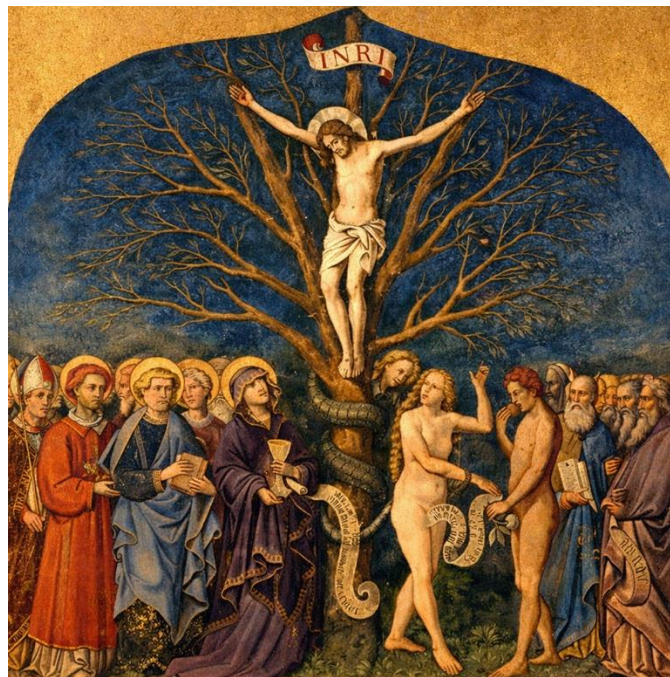
So, the next time you vote, forgive everyone, humble yourself, love your neighbors because you know that you're loved by God, and be honest. AND THEN your vote will be the right vote. And if I forgive everyone, humble myself, love my neighbors because I know I'm loved by God, and I'm honest, THEN my vote will be the right vote. And I believe that to be true even if you and I vote for different candidates, for Jesus—the man—may very well be in both candidates. AND, In the End, it doesn't matter who we vote for, at least not in the way we think it matters, for as God reveals to Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel 4:17, "The Most High rules over the kingdom of men and gives it to whomever he will, whomever he chooses, and sets over it the lowliest of men." In the End, it doesn't matter who we vote for, at least not in the way we think it matters. But nothing matters more than how we vote, for if we're gracious, humble, bleeding love for all, and thoroughly honest, we are THE MAN.



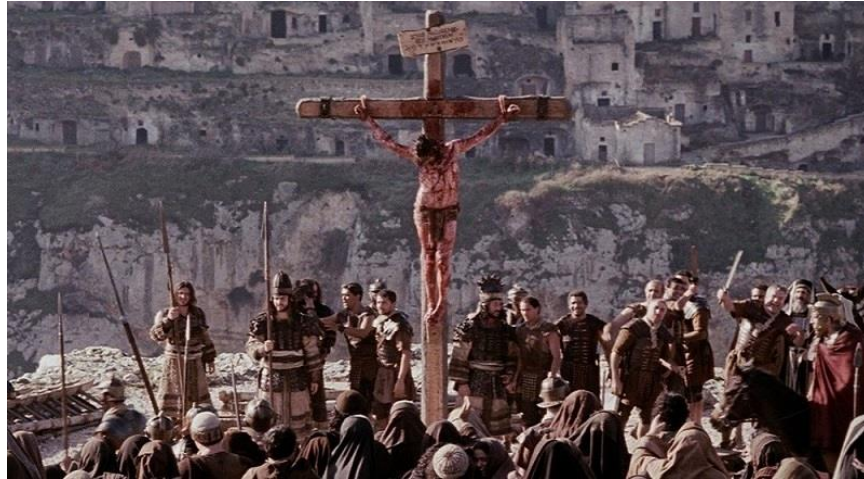
The Last (*eschatos*) Thing
The 7th Sign that is the Substance
"Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up."

And that's the 7th sign that is the substance, "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up... and he was speaking of his body." SO...

1. Why would we all vote for Barabbas the Robber? We're all robbers.^{xii}
2. Why would the Pastors and Priests vote for Caesar? Because they're just organized robbers, that is organized crime.^{xiii}
3. And why would God let us? Well, so that all of us takers could see that He is the Giver and So Behold the Man.



And "beholding him," the man, the glory of the Lord, writes Paul, "We are being transformed into the same image from one degree of Glory to another."



Gibson, Mel (Director). (2004). The Passion of the Christ [Motion picture]. USA: Icon Productions.

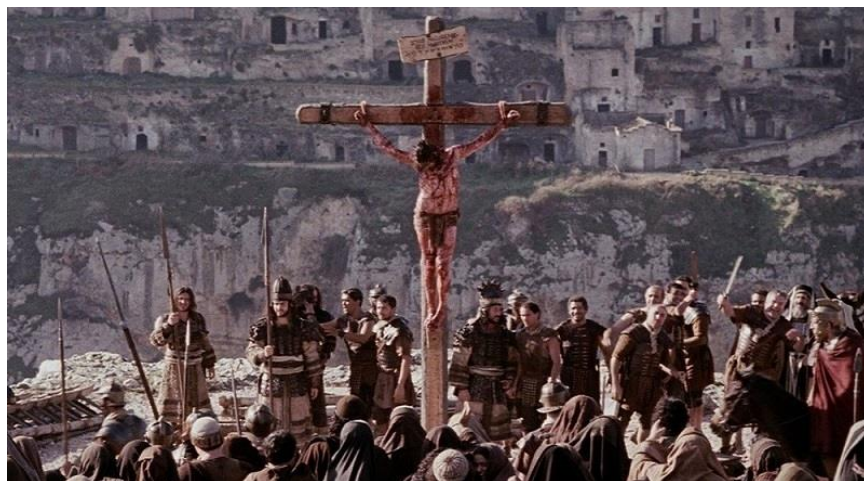
Communion

So, Pilate handed him over to the Jews for crucifixion. And we all took his Life on the tree in the Garden. And yet, the night before He gave his life at dinner saying, "This is my body given to you take and eat and do it in remembrance of me." And he took the cup saying this is the covenant in my blood poured out for the forgiveness of sins. Drink of it all of you and do it in remembrance of me.

We re-member him, we put his body back together, when empowered by his Spirit we love as he loved us because we want to. And when that happens, we will need no elections and no kings, for we will be the Body of The King and an entirely different form of Government. You did NOT vote for Him. But, from the foundation of the world, He voted for you.

That's the point of election; YOU did not elect him, but HE elected you, AND when you see him as he is YOU will elect him, constantly, in perfect freedom. You will always vote for the man, the incarnation of Love. For you are his lighthouse, his temple, his body, and his bride.

Benediction



Gibson, Mel (Director). (2004). The Passion of the Christ [Motion picture]. USA: Icon Productions.

They all looked at him that day and thought "That is the ultimate example of a weak leader, a failure." That was the scene on Earth, but this was the scene in heaven:

Revelation 5:5-13:

And one of the elders said to me, "Weep no more; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals." ⁶ And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, with seven horns and with seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth. ⁷ And he went and took the scroll from the right hand of him who was seated on the throne. ⁸ And when he had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each holding a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. ⁹ And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, ¹⁰ and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth." ¹¹ Then I looked, and I heard around the throne and the living creatures and the elders the voice of many angels, numbering myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, ¹² saying with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!" ¹³ And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, saying, "To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!"

Endnotes

ⁱ 1 Corinthians 5:7 "Christ, the Passover of us, was sacrificed"

ⁱⁱ Ephesians 2:14-15

ⁱⁱⁱ Ephesians 1:23

^{iv} Genesis 12:3

^v Matthew 27:25

^{vi} Matthew 27:19

^{vii} Pilate is a tool; God gave him authority and he doesn't know what he's doing. "The Jews" have the greater sin; it seems that they do have some knowledge of what they're doing. And yet, they still don't know as they ought to know. And so Jesus cries "Father forgive. They know not what they do."

^{viii} This is a long and complicated scholarly discussion but it's clear that John wants us to see that Jesus is the slaughtered lamb standing on the throne, our Passover.

^{ix} Matthew 25:24

^x 1 Chronicles 5:2

^{xi} Psalm 51:17

You know God can and will use anyone, Emperor Cyrus of Persia, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, and every Pharaoh in Egypt. But that doesn't mean that you should vote for them, at least not until after they've been humbled.

^{xii} Stop voting for yourself and vote for the one who will save you from yourself.

^{xiii} Sometimes people will say, "So and So was prophetically chosen." Well, we are commanded to test all prophetic words. And if you really want a challenging read, read 1 Kings 22 (especially v 22) and 2 Chronicles 18 (especially vs.21 and 22). The Lord puts a "lying spirit" in the mouth of all the prophets regarding King Ahab in order to destroy Ahab and, apparently, mislead the people. Perhaps God is saying, "*Behold the man: He is worshipping demons and sacrificing infants to idols. But if you won't behold the man and speak against what you know is evil, I will send a lying spirit and lead you all into destruction.*" (And of course, destruction is not the end; Jesus is the End, even for Ahab. His bones also rise in the valley of dry bones and then enter the land).