

# Series: Great Questions – week 10

CDOBC – beginning on 10/18/09

Title: “Is Jesus King?”

*John 18:33 ~ January 17, 2010*

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**OBJECTIVE:** To help us understand that Jesus is a king who came to save us – and He deserves our total devotion and allegiance.

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## Announcements

- Welcome / guests – communication cards
- Offering envelopes for 2010
- Walk Thru the N.T. – Jan. 30<sup>th</sup>
- New / Updated CDOBC Picture Directory
- Thanks to all who have helped with the work around the church campus!
- Quarterly Business meeting – Jan. 31<sup>st</sup> after 2<sup>nd</sup> service – 2009 financial report – new Deacons
- Haiti Relief – clearly mark any gifts and place in the offering plate later in the service

## Opening Prayer

**Read John 18:28-37** (Highlight various details as you read – see below)

“*Jews*” – John uses this term not in reference to the Jewish people – but to the religious/political leaders that were Jesus enemies.

By 30 A.D. – the Romans had taken the practice of capital punishment away from the Jewish people. Vs. 31 – “Take Him yourselves and judge Him by your own law.” was Pilate’s permission for them to apply capital punishment if they so desired – but they refused – Jesus was in control!

**Jesus was not a political revolutionary.** vs. 33-35

In verse 29, the Jews have brought Jesus to Pilate after various illegal trials they have held throughout the night – and at the first light of dawn, they bring Jesus to Pilate – the Roman governor in Judea. They are eager to get Jesus convicted and crucified before the people get wind of what is happening and may rally to Jesus’ side. Pilate asks them (vs. 29-30) “What charges are you bringing against this man?” “If he were not a criminal,” they replied, “we would not have handed him over to you.”

**Luke 23:1-2** – the Jews making Jesus look like a revolutionary – to make Pilate think that He was leading a rebellion against Rome.

“Then the whole assembly rose and led him off to Pilate. And they began to accuse him, saying, “We have found this man subverting our nation. He opposes payment of taxes to Caesar and claims to be Christ, a king.”

The Jews make all kinds of false accusations against Jesus. They make Him out to be some sort of ‘monster’ that wants to set up a kingdom and revolt against Rome and against Caesar. This was a false accusation – Jesus had taught “...give unto Caesar that which is Caesar’s” (Matt. 22:21).

In **John 6** the people tried to make Jesus a king – and the text tells us that He went out of their midst – He got away and they couldn’t find Him. Jesus was already a king – He didn’t need the people to make Him one – and the kind of king they wanted Jesus to be was not the kind of king He was.

Paul tells us in **Romans 13** to be subject to the earthly authorities God has placed and ordained over us. Peter tells us to honor the king (President) and the governors (**1 Peter 2:13-14**). When you are a subject in the kingdom of Jesus, we are not called to an insurrection against earthly authorities – but our citizenship is eternally in the Heavenly kingdom – the eternal kingdom of Christ, and this does not negate the earthly authorities over us.

Pilate asks Jesus (vs. 33), “Are *you* the king of the Jews?” All four Gospels record this as Pilate’s first question to Jesus – and in all four Gospels, the “you” is emphatic. Pilate is astounded to

think that this man standing in front of him whose hands are tied, peasant looking and commonplace – could be a king!

We humans like our kings to look a certain way. We put such emphasis on the exterior and the presentation of our leaders, that we often ignore the true inner person. Pomp and circumstance is what we enjoy. Think of all the royalty or political leaders in the world throughout history. Wherever they go, they require an entourage that makes their appearance an elaborate event.

Jesus did not match Pilate's idea of what a king – or even what a wanna-be king would look like!

Pilate's question to Jesus was one of astonishment. The Jews had a lineage of great kings. They had a history that was regal. Rome was no slouch in this arena. They lifted their emperor to new human heights of adoration. The idea of the nation's ruler being a god was not invented by the Romans, but they probably learned from the Egyptians how to build entire cities with the praise of the Emperor as the primary theme. This was the culture in which Pilate was invested in. Making sure you are a public spectacle, a public display of power and authority, his public persona was of utmost importance to him – and here before him stands the dirty, chained, beaten, peasant-looking Jesus – one that his accusers have labeled as a self-proclaimed 'king of the Jews'.

Pilate's initial question to Jesus is an illegal one. Just like our own 5<sup>th</sup> Amendment which says we cannot be forced to testify against ourselves - both the Jewish and the Roman system of justice had similar protections. So, when Pilate asks Jesus if He was the king of the Jews, in this context, this

was a self-incriminating question. Jesus does not answer his question – He knew it was illegal – instead, Jesus questions Pilate.

JN 18:34 “Is that your own idea,” Jesus asked, “or did others talk to you about me?”

Jesus is trying to get Pilate to clarify if Rome is concerned about Him or if his questions about His kingship are simply due to the questions of others. Pilate’s answer, “Am I a Jew” make it clear that Rome has no problem with Jesus – Rome is not concerned about Jesus being some sort of king – but the issue brought to him is a Jewish issue. The people upset with Jesus are the Jews – not the Romans!

And then, Pilate asks Jesus another illegal question – “What have you done?” i.e. What have you done to get your own people so upset at you that they want me to kill you?

In another sense, I believe Jesus’ questions to Pilate are intended to uncover Pilate’s personal opinion about Jesus. He wanted Pilate to say what he believed – not just what others had told him. The issue is the same for us today as it was for Pilate 2,000 years ago. There are many who articulate their thoughts about Jesus. As Pastor Scott taught about last Sunday – the first question that Jesus asked his disciples was important. He asked them “Who do people say the Son of Man is?” They gave Jesus the answers that they had no doubt heard others express in discussions and debates about Jesus. But, the second question Jesus asks was the most important one – and it still is. “Who do you say I am?” Nobody can answer this question for you. Your parents can’t. The Sunday School teacher you had growing up can’t. The preacher can’t. Your good friend can’t. You...only you can answer this question. Jesus is pressing Pilate not to

simply repeat what he has heard, but based on what he knows, what does he think! *“Pilate, do you think I’m a king because of what others have said, or because of something God is revealing in your own heart and mind?”*

However, Pilate wanted nothing to do with that – he wasn’t interested in spiritual things – he was a soldier and a powerful politician – and he was only interested in his job and his position.

**Jesus was / is a spiritual king.** vs. 36-37

To be sure, one day Jesus will return with an entourage. But Jesus’ first advent was not a public spectacle meant to dazzle the eyes. He came to capture the heart. He came to capture your soul. He came to reveal the truth. He came to serve – which is the opposite of what kings and political leaders do.

Many people, when they come to Jesus, they come because they hear that Jesus can / will give them new life. They hear that Jesus will heal them, that He will give them a purpose in life, that He will give them prosperity and everything that this world fails to deliver. They expect Jesus to be a king on the level of other human kings. Then they hear that Jesus says He came not to be served, but to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many. He taught that in His kingdom, the least will be the greatest, if you lose your life you’ll find it, the meek will rule, the poor are the rich, the weak are the strong, the unlearned are the wise.

Vs. 36 – “My kingdom is not of (*‘ek’* – out) this world”. The origin of Jesus’ kingdom is not from this world but is sourced in another place. He is not king because He has been made

king by His subjects – He is king because of His nature – because He is God and He is a ‘Sovereign’ because He is sovereign!

**People want Jesus on their own terms.**

Pilate was only interested in a political Jesus.

Was Jesus a threat to him or to Rome? His question to Jesus about being a king was designed to see if Jesus was a zealot trying to lead a revolt against Rome’s occupation of Israel. Pilate was trying to assess whether or not Jesus was a political threat and if he and his followers would present a military problem. Jesus told him that His kingdom was not of this world, and as proof of that, was the fact that his followers did not fight to prevent his arrest.

The Jewish leaders were only interested in Jesus if He affirmed their lifestyle.

They not only didn’t want anything to do with Jesus, they became His greatest opponents and called for His death. Twice they tried to kill Him but He escaped their intentions (Luke 4:29; John 8:59). This is not unlike many people today. They want to pick and choose which part of Jesus they will accept. They deny the validity of his difficult sayings about the permanence of marriage, about self-sacrifice, about the sanctity of life, His command for us to witness to others, His claims about His own deity – and they choose to embrace the love of Jesus and other teachings that don’t interfere or challenge their own choices and attitudes in life.

To the Jewish leaders, they expected the Messiah to be like them – and to have military and political goals. They were interested in their own power and position, and since Jesus was a threat to their religious system, they not only rejected Him, they actively worked toward His death.

But, Jesus doesn't operate on our terms...He is God!  
He is King. He calls us now to follow Him.

### **Jesus rules His kingdom with truth. vs. 37**

The kingdom of Jesus is a spiritual kingdom – not an earthly kingdom yet.

Jesus is the truth – **John 14:6** “I am the way, the truth and the life”  
**John 8:31-32** “If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”

He came as a spiritual king, but He will one day apply His kingly rule over all creation!

#### **Rev. 11:15**

“The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will reign for ever and ever.”

#### **Rev. 17:14**

“They will make war against the Lamb, but the Lamb will overcome them because he is Lord of lords and King of kings--and with him will be his called, chosen and faithful followers.”

#### **Rev. 19:13-16**

“...His name is the Word of God...On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.”

## **Application**

Vs. 37 – “Everyone on the side of truth listens to me.”

Do you hear the voice of Jesus – calling to you? Inviting you to trust Him with your soul – to put your faith in Him and His love for you – His sacrifice for your sins?

Since Jesus is king – will you follow Him? Will you devote yourself to Him and His Kingdom?