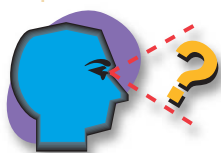


# John



## Responses to the Questions

NOTE: BE SURE TO ANSWER ALL THE QUESTIONS YOURSELF BEFORE READING THE ANSWERS IN ORDER TO MAKE THE MOST OF THIS STUDY.

### Read John 19:1-16

1. Pilate did not want to crucify Jesus because he thought he was innocent. He thought that by having Jesus scourged not only would Jesus learn his lesson, but that the Jews would be satisfied with the punishment.
2. Because the Jews wanted the Romans to carry out the death sentence on Jesus, and they knew that the Romans wouldn't try Jesus for what they considered blasphemy, they had made it sound as if he were trying to overthrow Caesar by claiming to be a king. Now, in verse 7, the *real* reason comes out. When Pilate says he doesn't find Jesus guilty, the Jews stated that Jesus was breaking their law by claiming to be the Son of God which called for death (Leviticus 24:16). Instead of using this opportunity to tell the Jews that he couldn't try Jesus based on their religious laws, Pilate gets frightened. St. John doesn't tell us why Pilate is unnerved but we do know that paganism had many tales of gods taking human form and enacting terrifying judgments when mistreated by mortals. In addition, Pilate did not want any negative attention from Caesar.
3. No, Pilate even "washed his hands in the sight of the crowd, saying, 'I am innocent of this man's blood. Look to it yourselves'" (cf Mt. 27:24).
4. Pilate's wife had dreamed about Jesus and her dream haunted her so much that she sent word to Pilate, pleading with him not to have anything to do with "that righteous man". Being a superstitious man, this apparently unnerved Pilate so that he tried once more to appeal to the crowd by announcing that he felt Jesus was innocent, but the crowd would not listen.
5. Pilate thought he was in control but he couldn't even control the Jews over which he had authority and he was speaking to the supreme Authority, Jesus. Jesus was in control of the entire situation. While Pilate couldn't decide what to do, Jesus remained calm. Jesus knew exactly why he was here and what his purpose was. He knew the truth and God's plan. The irony is that Pilate thought he was judging Jesus, but Pilate and the Jewish leaders were the ones that were truly on trial. They were on trial before God.
6. Jesus was referring to Judas and the religious leaders who had tried him and turned him over to Pilate. They were guilty of the greater sin because they had known Jesus and witnessed his miracles and heard all that he had said. And they had the law of Moses given to them. Yet they chose to turn away from the truth for their own selfish purposes and embrace sin; making up charges against an innocent man. "Every one to whom much is given, of him will much be required (cf. Luke 12:48). Pilate did not possess the revelation given to Israel. However, this did not exonerate him from his sin. He made his choice and he chose to let an innocent man die because of his fear and pride.



## Responses to the Questions (cont.)

7. He feared losing his position of power by offending Caesar.
8. The implication is that Pilate was contemplating passing judgment on *the* King of Kings, and *the* Just Judge. Another Johannine irony.
9. They prepared for the Passover by slaughtering a lamb and, according to Exodus 12:5, it had to be a "lamb without blemish". Jesus, the sinless Lamb of God, was being led to the slaughter at the sixth hour – the same time the Passover lambs were being slaughtered. We hear these words every time we go to Mass – when the host and chalice are held up by the priest.
10. In the Old Testament Yahweh was the only true King. God was to always be over and above all earthly kings and these priests knew this better than anyone. The New Testament also speaks to this as seen in the Scripture verses cited. These religious men were turning their back on God for their own selfish purposes and in order to sin – to murder the true King of Kings.
11. The Passover prefigures the Eucharist, also known as the Marriage Supper of the Lamb.
12. Two of the Sorrowful Mysteries are depicted in today's lesson: The Scourging at the Pillar and the Crowning of Thorns.