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## Steps to the Cross #5: Jesus Is Sentenced

March 21 & 22 2026

John 19:1-16a

### Opener:

When was the last time you stayed quiet because speaking up felt too costly? What made silence the easier choice?

### Go Deeper: *(Exploring the Bible)*

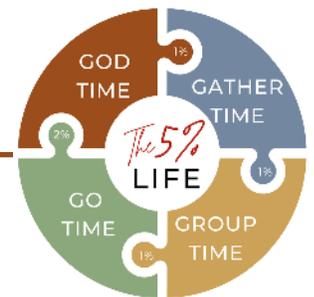
1. Pilate declares Jesus innocent three times yet hands Him over anyway. What does Pilate's calculation reveal about how the fear of man competes with the fear of God?
  2. The soldiers mock Jesus with a robe and crown — yet they are accidentally crowning a real King. What does it tell us about God that the truth about Jesus kept slipping out even through His enemies?
  3. The chief priests declared, "We have no king but Caesar" (v. 15). What were they really surrendering in that moment? What does that warn us about the compromises we make under pressure?
  4. Barabbas was guilty of the very crime Jesus was falsely accused of — yet the crowd freed him and sentenced Jesus. What does that exchange reveal about substitution and grace?
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**Live It:** *(Applying to Daily Life)*

1. Where in your life are you most tempted to run "Pilate's calculation" — weighing the cost of standing with Jesus against the cost of going with the crowd?
2. Are there teachings of Jesus you have been softening or avoiding because they are unpopular right now? What makes those feel risky to hold?
3. Psalm 146 warns us not to put our trust in "princes." Who or what are the princes in your world that compete most with your trust in Jesus?
4. What would it look like this week to live as someone whose sentence has already been served — fully forgiven, fully free?



**GOD TIME:**



**Daily Bible Readings (March 22-28)**

Sun:	John 19:1-16a	The King is Sentenced
Mon:	Psalm 146	Trust the King
Tues:	Isaiah 50:4-9a	Servant's Posture
Wed:	Colossians 1:15-20	Cosmic King
Thurs:	Romans 5:5-11	Died for Us
Fri:	Philippians 2:5-11	Throne to Cross
Sat:	Hebrews 12:1-3	Fix Your Eyes