

# Mocking God To His Face

## John 19:1-16

**Introduction:** Perhaps this has happened to you; You are driving down the road when someone runs a stop sign or cuts you off. What really surprises you though, is when they roll down the window and begin gesturing and cursing at you. People who are totally in the wrong often resort to mocking their opponents in order to deflect attention from what they did or believe. If your behavior or opinion cannot withstand the scrutiny of the truth and you are committed to suppressing the truth then mockery is a handy and useful tactic. Webster defines mockery this way: *contemptuous language directed at a particular person [ridicule, derision, contempt]; an absurd misrepresentation of something*

The trial before Annas, Caiaphas was clearly unjust. The Jews broke every one of their own criminal justice laws in an effort to condemn Christ before the city awoke on the day of the high Passover feast. It was a mock trial. They pretended to have a trial, but because they had no power to kill Jesus [which was all they ever wanted in the first place] they took Him to Pilate without so much as an accusation. In so doing they mocked both Pilate and the Roman system of justice.

Pilate now has custody of a man that he knows is innocent of any crime, but Pilate is a coward and is self serving. He has an obligation to Roman justice, but he is afraid of the Jews. So Pilate offers to release a prisoner for Passover hoping to put the responsibility back on the Jews. They of course chose Barabbas.....

**John 18:40** .....saying, "Not this Man, but Barabbas." Now Barabbas was a robber.

In the next few hours, God will use the Satan, religion and a secular government bureaucrat to exalt His Son and draw men to Himself. Jesus said His crucifixion would be the means to attract men to Him...

**John 12:31-34** <sup>31</sup> "Now judgment is upon this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out. <sup>32</sup> "And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself." <sup>33</sup> But He was saying this to indicate the kind of death by which He was to die. <sup>34</sup> The crowd then answered Him, "We have heard out of the Law that the Christ is to remain forever; and how can You say, 'The Son of Man must be lifted up'? Who is this Son of Man?"

Pilate will join in the mockery of God in the vain hope that this alone will satisfy the Jews. Perhaps if he shows them he has equal contempt for this man Jesus they will be satisfied. This is where we pick up the narrative today....

**John 19:1-16** Pilate..... took Jesus and scourged Him. <sup>2</sup> And the soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on His head, and put a purple robe on Him; <sup>3</sup> and they *began* to come up to Him and say, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and to give Him slaps *in the face*. <sup>4</sup> Pilate came out again and said to them, "Behold, I am bringing Him out to you so that you may know that I find no guilt in Him." <sup>5</sup> Jesus then came out, wearing

the crown of thorns and the purple robe. *Pilate* said to them, "Behold, the Man!" <sup>6</sup> So when the chief priests and the officers saw Him, they cried out saying, "Crucify, crucify!" *Pilate* said to them, "Take Him yourselves and crucify Him, for I find no guilt in Him." <sup>7</sup> The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and by that law He ought to die because He made Himself out *to be* the Son of God." <sup>8</sup> Therefore when *Pilate* heard this statement, he was *even* more afraid; <sup>9</sup> and he entered into the Praetorium again and said to Jesus, "Where are You from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. <sup>10</sup> So *Pilate* said to Him, "You do not speak to me? Do You not know that I have authority to release You, and I have authority to crucify You?" <sup>11</sup> Jesus answered, "You would have no authority over Me, unless it had been given you from above; for this reason he who delivered Me to you has *the greater sin*." <sup>12</sup> As a result of this *Pilate* made efforts to release Him, but the Jews cried out saying, "If you release this Man, you are no friend of Caesar; everyone who makes himself out *to be* a king opposes Caesar." <sup>13</sup> Therefore when *Pilate* heard these words, he brought Jesus out, and sat down on the judgment seat at a place called The Pavement, but in Hebrew, Gabbatha. <sup>14</sup> Now it was the day of preparation for the Passover; it was about the sixth hour. And he said to the Jews, "Behold, your King!" <sup>15</sup> So 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." <sup>16</sup> So he then handed Him over to them to be crucified.

Jesus was the visible revealer of the Invisible God. He never wavered about who He claimed to be. John alone records dozens of assertions that He is God the Son.

**John 1:2-3** <sup>2</sup> He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup> All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.

The creator of all things left the Joy and Comfort of heaven to be rejected, mocked and murdered by "his own." People to whom He had given life and breath and everything else.

**John 1:11** <sup>11</sup> He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him.

Why did He come? Two reasons for sure! He came to reveal to mankind their unknown creator. Sin and Satan had separated from, and blinded them to, their creator.

**John 1:18** <sup>18</sup> No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained *Him*.

He came to reconcile us by taking the punishment and judgment that should have been ours...paying for our sins and opening the way for us back to God that was barred in Eden.

**1 Peter 2:21-25** Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps, <sup>22</sup> WHO COMMITTED NO SIN, NOR WAS ANY DECEIT FOUND IN HIS MOUTH; <sup>23</sup> and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting *Himself* to Him who judges righteously; <sup>24</sup> and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed. <sup>25</sup> For you were continually straying like sheep, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls.

We need understanding of what Christ willingly endured for us. Scripture also shows us the reaction of mankind when they see God revealed in Christ. This is why Christ is seldom preached. Men do not like God as He truly is and Christ revealed Him perfectly.

**Colossians 1:15-18** <sup>15</sup> He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. <sup>16</sup> For by Him all things were created, *both* in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities-- all things have been created through Him and for Him. <sup>17</sup> He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. <sup>18</sup> He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything.

The hatred for Christ is revealed in the world's hatred for Christians and to some extent for Jews. God chose to send His Son into the world through Jacob's sons. But...even they rejected the Son... as we so clearly see here.

**Pilate then took Jesus and scourged Him. [1]:** The scourge was a wooden stick with several leather thongs on it. Each thong had jagged bone or pieces of metal attached along its length that were able to tear the muscles from the bones and even expose internal organs. Roman citizens could not be scourged because it was too brutal.

**And the soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on His head, and put a purple robe on Him; [2]:** The thorns cut into the scalp and temple. More importantly they were a sign of derision and mockery. Men mocking the giver and sustainer of their lives!!!

**They began to come up to Him and say, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and to give Him slaps in the face. [3]:** Humanity will still have this attitude toward Christ when He returns. Only then there will be no humility connected with it whatsoever.

**Revelation 19:11-16** <sup>11</sup> And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it *is* called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and wages war. <sup>12</sup> His eyes *are* a flame of fire, and on His head *are* many diadems; and He has a name written *on Him* which no one knows except Himself. <sup>13</sup> *He is* clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. <sup>14</sup> And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white *and* clean, were following Him on white horses. <sup>15</sup> From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike down the nations, and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty. <sup>16</sup> And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS."

**Pilate came out again and said to them, "Behold, I am bringing Him out to you so that you may know that I find no guilt in Him." [4]:** What a ridiculous statement! It reminds me of some of the stuff I hear our own politicians say. It has no connection to the observable facts. Pilate shows them a man he has scourged and made a mockery of and then tells them that he believes He is an innocent man. Pilate, like post modernist in our day, say one thing and do another. Pilate believes the man is innocent, but treats Him as if He is a vile criminal.

**Jesus then came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Behold, the Man!" [5]:** Not "Behold, The King!" "He is just a mere man, Pilate declares. I have beaten Him to within an inch of His life and we have thoroughly mocked Him and humiliated Him. Surely this is enough of a punishment for and innocent man." BUT...it was not.

**So when the chief priests and the officers saw Him, they cried out saying, "Crucify, crucify!" Pilate said to them, "Take Him yourselves and crucify Him, for I find no guilt in Him." [6]:** They still want Him dead. It is the only thing they will accept. The self righteous religionists are bent on murder and the godless pagan is bent on mercy. What a glaring contrast. Pilate does not want to kill Him.

**The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and by that law He ought to die..." [7a]:** What is driving this hatred? Several things come to mind from our encounters with these Jews throughout this gospel.

Christ told them that external righteousness is meaningless to God. It is the heart that God judges. We all have sinful hearts, but they hid theirs from others.

**Matthew 5:20-22** <sup>20</sup> "For I say to you that unless your righteousness surpasses *that* of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven. <sup>21</sup> "You have heard that the ancients were told, 'YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT MURDER ' and 'Whoever commits murder shall be liable to the court.' <sup>22</sup> "But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court; and whoever says to his brother, 'You good-for-nothing,' shall be guilty before the supreme court; and whoever says, 'You fool,' shall be guilty *enough to go* into the fiery hell.

He exposed their religious greed as lawless and immoral.

**Matthew 21:13** He said to them, "It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer,' but you make it a den of robbers."

He exposed their hypocrisy. Saying one thing while being another altogether.

**Matthew 15:8** "This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me;

**Matthew 23:27-28** <sup>27</sup> "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which on the outside appear beautiful, but inside they are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. <sup>28</sup> "So you, too, outwardly appear righteous to men, but inwardly you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.

**Because He made Himself out to be the Son of God." [7b]:** Their stated reason is that he "made Himself out to be the Son of God." And did He ever! He did things only God could do. He healed every sickness in Israel while he was there. A few healings you could chalk up to luck, but every sickness

**Matthew 4:24** <sup>24</sup> The news about Him spread throughout all Syria; and they brought to Him all who were ill, those suffering with various diseases and pains, demoniacs, epileptics, paralytics; and He healed them.

**Matthew 12:15-16** <sup>15</sup> Many followed Him, and He healed them all, <sup>16</sup> and warned them not to tell who He was.

**Luke 7:22-23** <sup>22</sup> And He answered and said to them, "Go and report to John what you have seen and heard: *the BLIND RECEIVE SIGHT, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the POOR HAVE THE GOSPEL PREACHED TO THEM.* <sup>23</sup> "Blessed is he who does not take offense at Me."

But they DID take offense at Him. Because they did not want to give God honor. They had the honor and they wanted to keep it. They had standing and human glory and religious power. But it was all eclipsed by this itinerate preacher who said He was the Son of God and then did things that everyone knew only God could do. As long as Christ lived they would be seen in His light and their righteousness would be evaluated by His. This is why Christ must not be preached today. You can push ritual, religion and righteous behavior, but not Christ Alone as the only hope of men. The Corinthians were so worldly wise. They had education, culture, pleasure and wealth. God's solution to their spiritual quagmire.....

**1 Corinthians 2:1-5** And when I came to you, brethren, I did not come with superiority of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God. <sup>2</sup> For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. <sup>3</sup> I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling, <sup>4</sup> and my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, <sup>5</sup> so that your faith would not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God.

And why only Christ? Because....

**1 Corinthians 1:21-25** <sup>1</sup> ..... in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not *come to* know God, God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. <sup>22</sup> For indeed Jews ask for signs and Greeks search for wisdom; <sup>23</sup> but we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block and to Gentiles foolishness, <sup>24</sup> but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. <sup>25</sup> Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

**Therefore when Pilate heard this statement, he was *even* more afraid [8]:** Pilate was okay with murder and treason, but now the Jews are telling Him that Jesus says He is the Son of God. What if He is and Pilate kills Him? What indeed! So....Pilate ....

**...Entered into the Praetorium again and said to Jesus, "Where are You from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. [9]:** Pilate does not seem to dismiss this charge lightly. Pilate knew Jesus was from Galilee. What he wanted to know was if he was also from the heavens...a god. If he was, Pilate had just scourged a god who could easily destroy him.

Jesus let him stew in the thought for a bit and did not answer. Romans believed in the possibility of gods in human form.

**Acts 14:8-13** <sup>8</sup> At Lystra a man was sitting who had no strength in his feet, lame from his mother's womb, who had never walked. <sup>9</sup> This man was listening to Paul as he spoke, who, when he had fixed his gaze on him and had seen that he had faith to be made well, <sup>10</sup> said with a loud voice, "Stand upright on your feet." And he leaped up and *began* to walk. <sup>11</sup> When the crowds saw what Paul had done, they raised their voice, saying in the Lycaonian language, "The gods have become like men and have come down to us." <sup>12</sup> And they *began* calling Barnabas, Zeus, and Paul, Hermes, because he was the chief speaker. <sup>13</sup> The priest of Zeus, whose *temple* was just outside the city, brought oxen and garlands to the gates, and wanted to offer sacrifice with the crowds.

**So Pilate said to Him, "You do not speak to me? Do You not know that I have authority to release You, and I have authority to crucify You?" [10]:** Pilate wants an answer. He is now acting out of fear rather than indifferent power like a moment before. The smug "what is truth" comment has given way to "tell me the truth." "Don't you realize that I have power over you" .....Pilate says.

**Jesus answered, "You would have no authority over Me, unless it had been given you from above; for this reason he who delivered Me to you has *the* greater sin." [11]:** Now this is a partial answer to Pilate's question. Jesus claims that Pilate only has Him in custody and His life in his hands because God has given Pilate that power. What can be given can be taken back and Pilate knew this perfectly well. He had risen, fallen and risen again during his career.

**As a result of this Pilate made efforts to release Him [12a]:** Pilate believes that Jesus is more than a mere man. He is freaked out over the prospect of this man being a god and Jesus' words seem true to Pilate....and they of course....were true!

**But the Jews cried out saying, "If you release this Man, you are no friend of Caesar; everyone who makes himself out *to be* a king opposes Caesar." [12b]:** Having failed when they revealed their true reason for wanting Jesus murdered, they now return to the original ruse. "Jesus is a political threat. If you act favorably toward an enemy of Caesar that makes you an enemy of Caesar.

**Therefore when Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus out, and sat down on the judgment seat at a place called The Pavement, but in Hebrew, Gabbatha. [13]:** This is the place where judgment is pronounced.

**Now it was the day of preparation for the Passover; it was about the sixth hour. And he said to the Jews, "Behold, your King!" [14]:** One final mockery or one final attempt to get them to realize that Jesus was no King. "Look at Him!" "He is beaten and mocked and shamed." "Is this your King? Surly I should just let Him go right?"

**So they cried out, "Away with *Him*, away with *Him*, crucify Him!" [15a]:** Either way the Jews smelled blood. They were so close now and there was no turning back. They want what they came for and that is all that will satisfy them.

**Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar." [15b]:** Here the chief priests commit the very blasphemy that they had accused Jesus of. Their hypocrisy truly knew no bounds. This has been their problem since the days of Samuel

**1 Samuel 8:7-8** <sup>7</sup> The LORD said to Samuel, "Listen to the voice of the people in regard to all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me from being king over them. <sup>8</sup> "Like all the deeds which they have done since the day that I brought them up from Egypt even to this day-- in that they have forsaken Me and served other gods-- so they are doing to you also.

**So he then handed Him over to them to be crucified. [16]:** The most powerful man in Jerusalem that day has just done something that he knows is totally wrong. He does, it turns out, believe are truth and lies, right and wrong. He sells his soul and conscience for a way out of the present problem.

**CONCLUSION:** What have we just observed today? We have seen that Jesus went willingly, knowingly and predeterminedly to the Roman Cross. The Jews killed Him, through the means of a Roman governor who did not want to. But The Father and the Son had determined it to happen that way. Peter summed up this eternal strategy in the first ever Christian sermon.

**Acts 2:22-23** <sup>22</sup> "Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know-- <sup>23</sup> this *Man*, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put *Him* to death.

There was nothing random about this Passover. Christ's birth was chosen by God and announced to Micah. [5:2] The nature of His conception to Isaiah. [7:2] The exact year and day were chosen and announced in Daniel and the manner of His coming into Jerusalem as King to Zechariah, The type of death was chosen by God and announce to Isaiah. The Passover was established by God in Egypt so that His people would be covered by the blood of an innocent lamb. John the Baptist stood and said to the Jews...

**John 1:29** ..... "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!

Satan has incited the Jews and they have manipulated Pilate BUT every single detail has been known and predetermined by God before the foundation of the world.

I want you to be at peace in this messed up and evil world. God plays its rulers like a fine instrument. The power they have is given by God and can be taken away at any moment. And although we cannot see clearly in this world because as God says...

**Isaiah 55:8** ....my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the LORD.

God also assures you that ....

**Proverbs 16:4** The LORD has made everything for its purpose, even the wicked for the day of trouble.

And this predetermined redemption extends to you personally. God has known every hidden detail of your life and still loved you. God does not love you because you are worthy. He loves you because He is merciful. He set His affection on you and determined to make you His child before the world began. His love is not won by you it is enjoyed by you. It cannot be lost by your weakness and sin because it was never won by your strength and righteousness. It is the blessing of a merciful God poured out in your life. Jesus volunteered to bring this all to you...at the cross....by the hands of evil men.

All the lying, conniving malicious deceit could not deter Christ from dying for your sins on that Cross. Trust me when I say....Your name and face were on His mind when He died. This is how Paul....under inspiration... can say....

**Ephesians 1:3-8** <sup>3</sup> Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ, <sup>4</sup> just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love <sup>5</sup> He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, <sup>6</sup> to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. <sup>7</sup> In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace <sup>8</sup> which He lavished on us.