

SANCTUARY, SABBATH, SHALOM

First Presbyterian Church of Bakersfield
2026 Sept-Nov Sermon Series Study Guide

John 18:28-40 (NIV)

²⁸ Then the Jewish leaders took Jesus from Caiaphas to the palace of the Roman governor. By now it was early morning, and to avoid ceremonial uncleanness they did not enter the palace, because they wanted to be able to eat the Passover. ²⁹ So Pilate came out to them and asked, "What charges are you bringing against this man?"

³⁰ "If he were not a criminal," they replied, "we would not have handed him over to you."

³¹ Pilate said, "Take him yourselves and judge him by your own law."

"But we have no right to execute anyone," they objected. ³² This took place to fulfill what Jesus had said about the kind of death he was going to die.

³³ Pilate then went back inside the palace, summoned Jesus and asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?"

³⁴ "Is that your own idea," Jesus asked, "or did others talk to you about me?"

³⁵ "Am I a Jew?" Pilate replied. "Your own people and chief priests handed you over to me. What is it you have done?"

³⁶ Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jewish leaders. But now my kingdom is from another place."

³⁷ "You are a king, then!" said Pilate.

Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. In fact, the reason I was born and came into the world is to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me."

³⁸ "What is truth?" retorted Pilate. With this he went out again to the Jews gathered there and said, "I find no basis for a charge against him. ³⁹ But it is your custom for me to release to you one prisoner at the time of the Passover. Do you want me to release 'the king of the Jews'?"

⁴⁰ They shouted back, "No, not him! Give us Barabbas!" Now Barabbas had taken part in an uprising.

Sanctuary: Kindgom Outpost

OPEN

- Using a dictionary, define "sanctuary".
- Which natural or human-constructed sanctuary do you appreciate most?
- In today's passage, we will be looking at a portion of Jesus' trial. Start by asking the Holy Spirit to be our teacher today. Then read John 18:28-40.

STUDY

- Looking at verses 28-32, what do we discover about the Jewish leaders' actions, attitudes, and plans? What do they need from Pilate?
- What are the questions Pilate asks Jesus in verses 33-38 and what do you think he is looking for?
- How does Pilate try to get Jesus off the hook in verses 38-40 and why doesn't it work?
- What do we learn about God's kingdom from Jesus' words in verses 36-37?
- How is the desire for truth fulfilled in Christ?
- How is Jesus' kingdom different from the ideals of a Jewish or Roman kingdom? Or of a kingdom *you* might envision?
- Think back to the definition of sanctuary. How is Jesus himself, and his words, a sanctuary?
- How have you experienced Christ as a sanctuary in your own life?

PRAY

- Think about someone you know who needs "sanctuary" in the midst of chaos right now. (It could be you or someone else.) Pray as a group or in pairs for those you are thinking about — that they could find sanctuary and refuge in the truth & person of Christ Jesus!