



SERIES: John Believe
SPEAKER: DAN COKE
Tuesday, May 9, 2023
Scripture: John 19:16–22
TITLE: The Crime

John 19:16-22:

So they took Jesus, and he went out, bearing his own cross, to the place called The Place of a Skull, which in Aramaic is called Golgotha. There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, and Jesus between them. Pilate also wrote an inscription and put it on the cross. It read, “Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.” Many of the Jews read this inscription, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and it was written in Aramaic, in Latin, and in Greek. So the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, “Do not write, ‘The King of the Jews,’ but rather, ‘This man said, I am King of the Jews.’” Pilate answered, “What I have written I have written.”

It was normal for the Romans to make a public spectacle of criminals. This was to deter and discourage further criminal activity. Additionally, they would nail to the cross the charges the individual was found guilty of.

So, what was Jesus’ crime? The Jews, earlier in John 19:7, said,

“We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die because he has made himself the Son of God.”

Then again in John 19:21 they said,

“Do not write, ‘The King of the Jews,’ but rather, ‘This man said, I am King of the Jews.’”

Guilty of claiming to be the Son of God and the long-expected Messiah. Pilate writes the inscription intending to sarcastically poke the Jews. He also writes it in three different languages. Aramaic was the majority language for the Jews during this time period. Latin was the Roman tongue and Greek was the international language of the empire. The intent of making this statement in all three languages was to flex the might of the Roman Empire.

In your life, would you be found guilty of being a devoted follower of Jesus Christ? Is it obvious to you that His message and ways dominate your being? Are you willing to face being canceled or blacklisted or even death because you refuse to bend the knee to anyone over and above the Lord Jesus Christ?

What happened to Jesus, according to Paul, “Was not done in a corner.” (Acts 26:26). In other words, it was meant for the world to know that its appointed King was wrongly accused and publicly crucified. And He went willingly to this cross in order to save your soul. Are you willing to go publicly in the world and say that Jesus is your king? I’m not asking you to be reckless, but I am asking you to be faithful and to have confidence in Him in your time of testing. Amen.