JOHN 18

The Cup, the Fire and the King

the arrest in the garden, the denials by the fire, and the King of truth before Pilate

> *"Therefore Pilate said to Him, "So You are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say correctly that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.""*
> JOHN 18:37

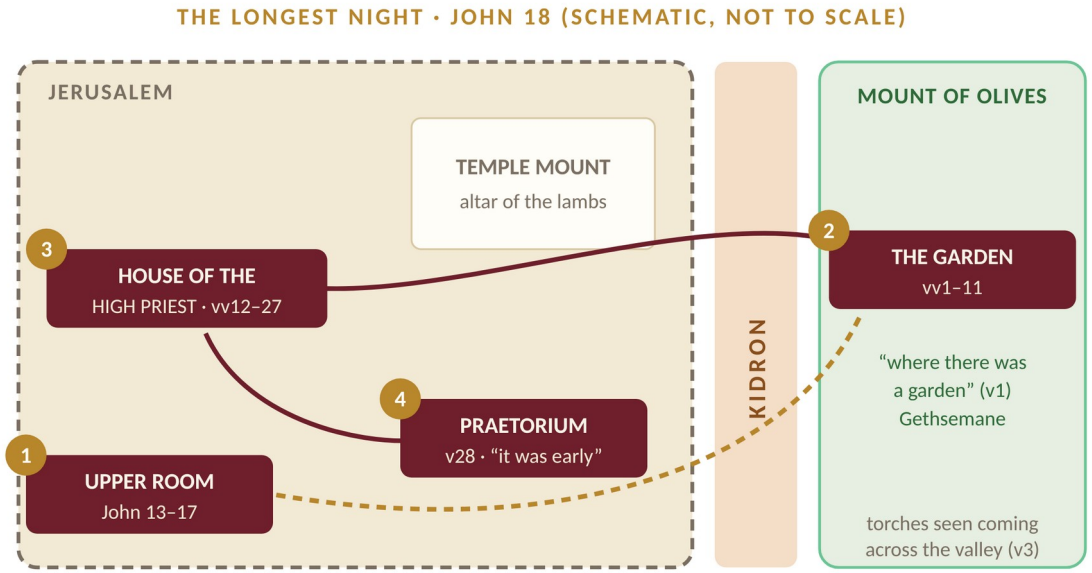
A SMITH FOR CHRIST STUDY · FOUR VOICES: GUZIK · SPROUL · SPURGEON · HENRY

Where we are in John

1. John 17 ended with Jesus' prayer: "I in them" (17:26).

2. The Kidron is the valley east of Jerusalem between the temple mount and the Mount of Olives.

3. The cast is large. Judas comes with "the Roman cohort" (speira, up to six hundred men at full strength, though a detachment may be meant) and the temple "officers" sent by the chief priests and…



“I Am He”

The garden across the Kidron — the soldiers fall, the disciples go free, and Jesus takes the cup

JOHN 18:11

So Jesus said to Peter, “Put the sword into the sheath; the cup which the Father has given Me, shall I not drink it?”

DAVID GUZIK

Ready for the hour; two words of divine power; Peter chose a non-soldier.

C.H. SPURGEON

A word felled them, another would have entombed them; let these go — for whom I stood.

MATTHEW HENRY

A bold champion takes the field; Eden’s garden undone; fought against Him while fighting for Him.

ἐγώ εἰμι

EGŌ EIMI · “I AM HE”

The Greek is just two words, “I am”; the NASB adds “He” in italics.

One Stood, One Fell

Jesus bound before Annas — and Peter warming himself by the enemy's fire

JOHN 18:14

Now Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jews that it was expedient for one man to die on behalf of the people.

DAVID GUZIK

Annas the power behind the office; not Peter's faith but his courage failed.

R.C. SPROUL

Darkness preferred by the wicked; an illegal night trial; where are your witnesses?

C.H. SPURGEON

Our Advocate will not accuse His disciples; truth is never shamefaced.

MATTHEW HENRY

Ill warming ourselves where we may burn; a sad story.

ἀνθρακιά

ANTHRAKIA · "A CHARCOAL FIRE"

A heap of glowing coals (our "anthracite").

“I am He” and “I am not”

JESUS: “I AM HE” in the garden, before armed men	PETER: “I AM NOT” in the courtyard, before slaves
v5 “Whom do you seek?” … “I am He.”	**v17** To the slave-girl at the door: “I am not.”
v6 They drew back and fell to the ground.	**v25** By the charcoal fire: “I am not.”
v8 “I told you that I am He; … let these go.”	**v27** To Malchus’ relative: denied again.
He gives Himself up so that “I lost not one” (v9) and drinks the Father’s cup (v11)	**“immediately a rooster crowed” (v27)** just as foretold (13:38) — but restored at another charcoal fire (21:9, 15–17)

Read across each row: the same night, two men, three answers each — the Shepherd gives Himself for His sheep while His sheep denies Him.

A King Not of This World

Clean hands, dirty hearts — the King of truth before Pilate, and a robber set free

JOHN 18:28

Then they led Jesus from Caiaphas into the Praetorium, and it was early; and they themselves did not enter into the Praetorium so that they would not be defiled, but might eat the Passover.

DAVID GUZIK

Strict on defilement, easy on murder; the cross meant for Barabbas.

R.C. SPROUL

Not a spiritual Neverland — His dominion includes this world.

C.H. SPURGEON

No ambition for the gewgaws of sovereignty; Barabbas or Christ must die.

MATTHEW HENRY

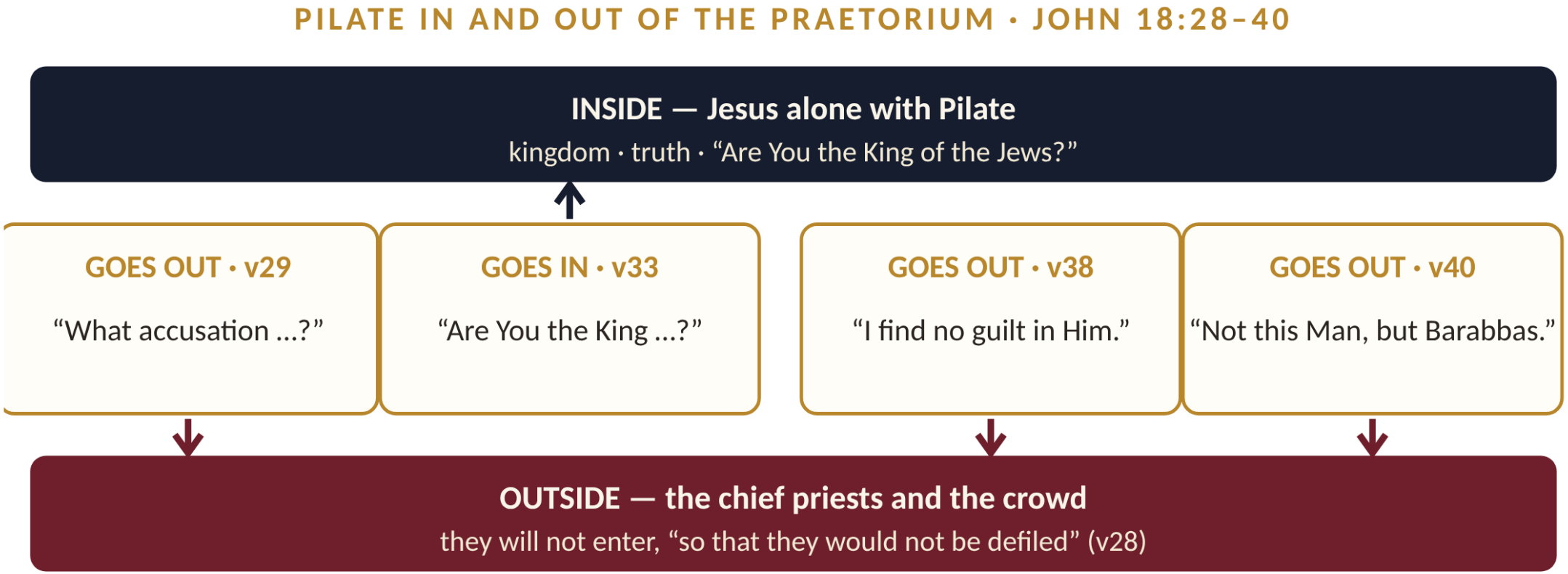
Strained at a gnat; a kingdom within men; preferring sin before Christ.

πραιτώριον · ἡ βασιλεία ἡ ἐμὴ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου τούτου

PRAITŌRION · "MY KINGDOM IS NOT OF THIS WORLD"

Praitōrion is a Latin loanword, the governor's headquarters — in Jerusalem probably Herod's palace or the Antonia fortress.

Pilate between two worlds



The accusers stay outside to stay clean; Pilate shuttles between them and the prisoner inside — and the scene keeps moving into chapter 19.

What to carry from this chapter

1

The prisoner is in charge.

Jesus knows “all the things that were coming upon Him,” goes out to meet the soldiers, asks the questions, sets the terms for His men’s release, and chooses the cup.

2

“I am” knocks armed men down.

Egō eimi — the words of 8:58 and Isaiah 43:10.

3

He is taken so they can go.

“If you seek Me, let these go their way” (v. 8) — and John says it fulfilled “I lost not one” (v. 9).

4

The cup came from the Father.

Not from Judas, Caiaphas or Pilate.

More to carry

5

“I am He” against “I am not.”

Jesus’ egō eimi (vv. 5, 6, 8) and Peter’s ouk eimi (vv. 17, 25) are set side by side on purpose.

6

Watch where you warm yourself.

Henry: “It is ill warming ourselves with those with whom we are in danger of burning ourselves.”

7

The fire returns.

Anthrakia appears only here and at 21:9.

8

A night trial in the dark.

Sproul: “It was inappropriate, improper, and illegal for a capital trial to be carried out at night.”

Talk it through

1. Jesus walked toward the torches knowing everything that was coming (v. 4). What am I avoiding this week that I need to walk toward, trusting the Father?

2. Peter grabbed a sword when Jesus wanted him to trust. Where am I fighting in my own strength — with my temper, my mouth, my hands — instead of trusting God's plan?

3. Jesus was arrested so His men could go free (vv. 8–9). How does it change me to see myself as one of "these" who walked away free?

4. Peter's denial started with standing by the wrong fire with the wrong crowd. What "fire" am I warming myself by that puts me in danger?

5. Peter failed three times and was restored at another charcoal fire. What failure do I need to bring back to Jesus instead of hiding?

CLOSING

John 18 shows the Son of God bound, slapped and bargained away — and never once out of control. He gave Himself up so His men could go free, He drank the Father's cup, and He told the truth to men who did not want it. The robber walked out of prison that morning, and if you are in Christ, so did you.

Teaching the Word. Watching the Times. — Smith For Christ

Full Deep Dive, O·I·A study and reflection journal: see the John study page.