

Good Friday

WE DRINK TO LIFE

John 18:1-19:42

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Analysis by Timothy J. Hoyer

John 18-19 (excerpts only)

11Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword back into its sheath. Am I not to drink the cup that the Father has given me?"

33Then Pilate entered the headquarters again, summoned Jesus, and asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" 34Jesus answered, "Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?" 35Pilate replied, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?" 36Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not from this world."

John 19

6When the chief priests and the police saw him, they shouted, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and crucify him; I find no case against him." 7The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die because he has claimed to be the Son of God."

He said to the Jews, "Here is your King!" 15They cried out, "Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him!" Pilate asked them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but the emperor."

16Then he handed him over to them to be crucified. So they took Jesus; 17and carrying the cross by himself, he went out to what is called The Place of the Skull, which in Hebrew is called Golgotha. 18There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, with Jesus between them.

19 Pilate also had an inscription written and put on the cross. It read, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." 20 Many of the Jews read this inscription, because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, in Latin, and in Greek. 21 Then the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, "Do not write, 'The King of the Jews,' but, 'This man said, I am King of the Jews.'" 22 Pilate answered, "What I have written I have written."

30 When Jesus had received the wine, he said, "It is finished." Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

38 After these things, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, though a secret one because of his fear of the Jews, asked Pilate to let him take away the body of Jesus. Pilate gave him permission; so he came and removed his body. 39 Nicodemus, who had at first come to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hundred pounds. 40 They took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with the spices in linen cloths, according to the burial custom of the Jews. 41 Now there was a garden in the place where he was crucified, and in the garden there was a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid. 42 And so, because it was the Jewish day of Preparation, and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

DIAGNOSIS: We Have No King But Ourselves

Step 1: Initial Diagnosis (External Problem) : *You're Not Old Enough to Drink*

You have to be mature enough, big enough, to drink alcohol. (At least that's what the law of our land says.) Peter did not think Jesus was mature enough or big enough to drink the cup Jesus' Father had given him. People so often think Jesus is not very big enough or strong enough or important enough. He's a teacher of love and morals, sure. He's a healer and a miracle worker,

sure. Those are things Jesus can do. But he's not big enough or strong enough to do anything else. He has to be protected from those who would hurt such a jolly good fellow.

Step 2: Advanced Diagnosis (Internal Problem) : *You Are Not the King*

But Peter's desire to protect Jesus from drinking the cup his Father has given him is to be opposed to the Father. Like Peter, our good intentions to protect Jesus and keep him nice, expose the state of our constant opposition—our enmity—to God. We do not want God to give us a savior, especially one who is arrested and, no doubt, will be killed. Jesus is not so important that he should threaten anyone. But to say that Jesus is not that important is to not trust him or trust that his being killed will do us any good. He is not our king.

Step 3: Final Diagnosis (Eternal Problem) : *Death Is the Only Solution for False Kings*

So is Jesus a king or not? Is he important enough, big enough, so that he is worth trusting to benefit us? He certainly is not a king whose power comes from wealth or armies. His power is not from this world. But to claim such power—power from God—is not anyone's right to claim. God's power belongs only to God, to one who is great and powerful and mature and big. Jesus is not big enough to be God. To claim to have the power of God makes him very dangerous. For the safety of all, he must be disposed of. The only solution to false kings is death. Crucify him. But by pronouncing sentence on Jesus, we have made ourselves the ones with power from an army of people. We have made ourselves kings, ruling against God and the Son of God. We have made ourselves into false kings. The only solution to false kings is death. And death is God's verdict, it is the cup we all must drink.

PROGNOSIS: Jesus Lives

Step 4: Initial Prognosis (Eternal Solution) : *Life Is the Solution for the Son of God*

Jesus drank the cup his Father gave him—death. But when Jesus drank of it, he said God's work was finished. He said death was finished. He said that all judgment was finished. And he said that the very standard by which we identify a king, the standard by which we judge what makes a king a king, is done in. That standard is mistaken because it called Jesus a false king; it declared Jesus not to be God. But Jesus is God. Using this standard went against God, making itself a false king. And the only solution for a false king is death. So that standard—that is, the law—reached its end in Jesus. But Jesus is not finished. For God raised him from the dead, exalting him above all other princes, kings, powers, and dominions. Jesus rules over death—God's verdict against us. Jesus is now the king of life, forgiveness, and eternal life for us.

Step 5: Advanced Prognosis (External Solution) : *Jesus Is Our King*

We can trust Jesus to rule as king over our death. We can trust Jesus to rule with forgiveness. Under him and his kingdom we are freed to live. With Jesus as king we can serve him and his way of mercy, love, forgiveness, death and resurrection.

Step 6: Final Prognosis (External Solution) : *We're Old Enough in Christ to Drink*

In Jesus, filled with his Spirit, we are old enough to drink his cup of death and resurrection. His cup is a daily drink. Each day we die in Christ to our enmity to his Father. Each day we die in Christ, and surrender the illusion that we can raise up ourselves as kings. Each day we are given life as children, not enemies, of God. Each day we are given life as servants of Jesus, a life in which we serve others with the cup Jesus served

us—the cup of mercy, the cup of love, the cup of forgiveness. We deal with enmity and arguments and competition by dying and rising. We deal with our and others' desires to be first, to rule over others, by dying and then rising to life in Christ, a life of serving his wine to others.