



## Where Loving Wealth Can Lead John 19:8-16

*But they cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar (John 19:15—KJV).*

*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” (John 19:15—NASB).*

*They 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” (John 19:15—NRSV).*

Though Pilate did not know the full meaning of what he said when he presented Jesus to the chief priests, he announced, “Here is your King!” Jesus was their true King, the Messiah that in the Bible God promised to send. In reply, the chief priests demanded Jesus’ crucifixion, and declared they had no king but the Roman Emperor. They spoke a partial truth. Long before Jesus began teaching the truth about God, the chief priests had turned from serving God to serving money; so, to increase their wealth, they helped the Romans. Money had become their king. Their actions proved the truth of Jesus’ words: “No one can serve two masters; for a slave will either

hate the one and love the other, or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth” (Matthew 6:24). Because Pilate and the chief priests did not love and serve God, they served what they loved — money. They lived in fear of losing what they loved and served. They feared losing the powerful positions that led to their wealth. Pilate feared losing his position as a Roman governor if he did not do what the chief priests demanded, for they would report him to the emperor. The chief priests feared losing their powerful positions and increasing wealth if Jesus took their place as Messiah and King. Because they loved and served money, they came to hate and fear God and Jesus. They served whoever promised them wealth, and they feared whoever threatened to take it from them.

### **Thinking Further**

1. Why do you think Pilate was “more afraid than ever”?
2. Why do you think Jesus refused to answer Pilate?
3. Why do you think Jesus finally chose to answer Pilate?
4. What did the Jews (the chief priests and the police) cry out when Pilate tried to release Jesus?
5. When Pilate asked them, “Shall I crucify your King?” what did the chief priests say and what did that reveal about their relationship with God?