

Cicero's Unshakable Virtus and the Changeable Masculinity of Jesus and Pontius Pilate  
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Introduction

Cicero's manly ideal, virtus and its implications

Jesus on trial, Ciceronian masculinity analysed in the Gospel of John

Conclusion

*Virtus is the badge of the Roman race and breed. All else is false and doubtful, ephemeral and changeable: only virtus stands firmly fixed, its roots run deep, it can never be shaken by any violence, never moved from its place. With this virtus your ancestors conquered all Italy first, then razed Carthage, overthrew Numantia, brought the most powerful kings and the most warlike peoples under the sway of this empire. (Cicero, Philippic 4)*

John 19

1 Τότε οὖν ἔλαβεν ὁ Πιλάτος τὸν Ἰησοῦν καὶ ἐμαστίγωσεν 2 καὶ οἱ στρατιῶται πλέξαντες στέφανον ἐξ ἀκανθῶν ἐπέθηκαν αὐτοῦ τῇ κεφαλῇ καὶ ἱμάτιον πορφυροῦν περιέβαλον αὐτόν 3 καὶ ἤρχοντο πρὸς αὐτόν καὶ ἔλεγον Χαῖρε ὁ Βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων καὶ ἐδίδοσαν αὐτῷ ῥαπίσματα

Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. <sup>2</sup>And the soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and they dressed him in a purple robe. <sup>3</sup>They kept coming up to him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and striking him on the face. (NRSV)

10 Λέγει οὖν αὐτῷ ὁ Πιλάτος Ἐμοὶ οὐ λαλεῖς οὐ οἶδας ὅτι ἐξουσίαν ἔχω ἀπολύσαι σε καὶ ἐξουσίαν ἔχω σταυρῶσαι σε 11 Ἀπεκρίθη <αὐτῷ> Ἰησοῦς Οὐκ εἶχες ἐξουσίαν κατ' ἐμοῦ οὐδεμίαν εἰμὴ ἦν δεδομένον σοι ἄνωθεν

<sup>10</sup>Pilate therefore said to him, "Do you refuse to speak to me? Do you not know that I have power to release you, and power to crucify you?" <sup>11</sup>Jesus answered him, "You would have no power over me unless it had been given you from above; (NRSV)

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