

The background is a dark, textured brown with a mottled appearance. In the foreground, there are silhouettes of a crowd of people. Two prominent, ornate symbols are visible: one on the left and one on the right. Each symbol consists of a central vertical axis with a crossbar, a circular element, and a pair of wings extending outwards. The symbol on the right is larger and more detailed, featuring a crown-like top and a crescent moon at the bottom. The overall mood is somber and historical.

RISKING IT ALL

**FOR YOUR KING**

# A GOD-FEARING PAGAN

- Cornelius is described in Acts 10:1-2 as a devout man, and one who feared God. According to F.F. Bruce, this was a class of people loosely attached to the synagogue – interested in Jewish matters, devoted to Jewish ethics and religious customs, and generous to Jewish causes, but, nevertheless, content to remain technically pagan (*New Testament History*, p. 147).
- This all changed, however, when he was presented with the gospel. His conversion marked the beginning of a massive movement among Gentiles that would eventually bring the gospel to the very doorstep of the emperor.
- But what was the fundamental concept that made the difference? And what was Cornelius risking by accepting it?

The image features a dark, textured brown background. In the foreground, there are silhouettes of a crowd of people. Two prominent, ornate symbols are visible: one on the left and one on the right. Both symbols consist of a central vertical stem with a crossbar, topped with a pointed finial. Below the crossbar is a circular element, followed by a pair of wings or a similar decorative shape. The overall aesthetic is that of a historical or religious scene.

ARE YOU  
**A KING?**

# A SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

- Luke 22:66-71 – The high priest and his companions knew that Pilate wouldn't destroy Jesus over a religious dispute, so they needed a plain confession that He was the Messiah – seen mostly as a religious figure to Jews but as a political one to the Romans.
- Luke 23:1-5 – This is exactly how they present the charges.
- John 18:33-39 – Pilate doesn't necessarily see Jesus as a threat. In fact, his sarcasm betrays a rather intense curiosity.
- John 19:12-16 – With the flogging failing to satisfy the mob, Pilate is finally convinced to give in when he is threatened with Caesar's displeasure.
- John 19:19-22 – The sign might be Pilate's defiant confession that he is not totally dismissive of Jesus' claims to kingship.



**JESUS THE  
NAZARENE**  
THE KING OF THE JEWS

# WHAT THE PROPHETS PREDICTED

- 2 Samuel 7:12ff
- Psalm 2
- Psalm 45
- Psalm 110
- Isaiah 9:6-7
- Daniel 7:13-14

# WHAT THE CHRISTIANS BELIEVED

- Acts 2:29-36
- 5:30-31
- 17:6-7
- Ephesians 1:20-21
- Philippians 2:9ff
- 1 Timothy 1:17



BUT ROME ALREADY

**HAD ITS KING**



# SACRAMENTUM MILITARE

- Caligula believed himself to be a god, as did the emperors who came after him (to various degrees). As such, he was held as the highest deity in the empire, worshiped by all his subjects in a state religion. Other religions were tolerated as long as they did not interfere with the cult of the emperor.
- After a severe illness, Caligula became increasingly violent, unpredictable, and suspicious. Family members, political opponents, and even military personnel lived in fear.
- Unfortunately, soldiers, like other servants of the empire, were required to take an oath of loyalty to the emperor. This sacramentum was to be kept under threat of torture and death. It was under these conditions that Cornelius came to know about Jesus of Nazareth. He was an oath-bound servant of a madman now facing the most important choice of his life...

# APPOINTED AS JUDGE

- Acts 10:34-43
- It was time for Cornelius to count the cost of becoming a Christian. Like all tender-hearted people who fear God, he knew he needed forgiveness of sins. But at what cost? His career? His standing in the community? His family's well-being? His life (if his maniacal emperor ever found out about sedition in the ranks)?
- We might not be able to fully appreciate life under a tyrant, but we also have to ask the same questions of our discipleship. The scriptures cannot be any clearer: Jesus is King of kings and Lord of lords, and He is inviting us to forsake all earthly kingdoms and become citizens of His heavenly kingdom! What will it cost you? Is it worth it?