

## Blame the Victim

### Scripture Reading — John 18:28-31

*If he were not a criminal,” they replied, “we would not have handed him over to you.” — John 18:30*

In one of the congregations I served, a young woman faced the terrible ordeal of being stalked over a long period of time. The stalker would even show up at church events in his pattern of harassing her. Looking back, I feel grateful that she did not have to face what too many in her situation have encountered: a “blame the victim” attitude. Instead, she received support from family, church, police, and the court system in her quest to make the stalking stop and to have the offender face the consequences of his actions.

If we had the Roman governor Pilate’s report of what he saw when he first met Jesus, it might have said this: “Subject’s outer garment ripped. Portions of hair and beard pulled out. One black eye. Lower lip bloody and swollen. Bruises and scratch marks over entire facial area.” Pilate might well have identified Jesus as the crime victim, until someone clarified that Jesus was the accused.

Indeed, Pilate asked the obvious question that any magistrate would ask: “What charges are you bringing against this man?”

Initially, the Israelite religious leaders had no answer to this question, except to blame the victim.

### Prayer

*Father God, we pray for those who suffer from harassment and abuse, and then face the additional burden of being blamed for what has been done to them. Teach us how to help. In your name we pray. Amen.*

**Devotion topics:** [Bible](#), [Life of Jesus](#), [Life](#), [Trials & Challenges](#), [Persecution](#), [Personal Growth](#), [Justice](#)

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