



WORKTALK WEEKLY

31 JANUARY 2011

Welcome to WORKTALKweekly

In Between Times 26: Power Struggle

An analysis of power dynamics

It's never far away from the news headlines and it's probably something you have experienced. In random polls of audiences at events at least 80% usually have.

I am referring to the prevalent activity of bullying. This is not just a personal phenomenon but operates on numerous levels. Nations bully other nations in an attempt to gain international supremacy. Governments attempt to bully their own citizens to establish dictatorships, and sects, tribes or fractions attempt to achieve dominance within their countries. Men bully women, women bully men, adults bully children and children bully each other.

Managers bully employees and companies bully contractors. In fact almost every human relationship carries within it the potential for bullying.

Paradoxically it is not always the big that bully the small. The strategy to gain manipulative power over another is a complex one and the power does not always reside in the obvious size or positional advantage.

This series has been focusing on 'in between times'. There is an 'in between' aspect of bullying which is worth noting.

Move your mind to the setting of the Jerusalem power nexus around 33 AD. The actual power in town is Roman, represented by Pilate. Pilate does not have a great track record on human rights and has, through force, perpetrated some bullying tactics. It is worth noting, however, that Pilate himself is related, through his wife, to the Caesars in Rome - themselves not averse to the odd bullying behaviour.

Enter stage left a character named Caiaphas. He is high priest in a relatively obscure religion in a tiny nation on an eastern wing of the Roman empire. He attempts and succeeds in bullying Pilate into condemning Jesus, the carpenter's son. Caiaphas has been attempting to bully Jesus for some time.

Remember, however, that behind Caiaphas is the shadowy figure of his wife's father, Annas, who takes bullying to a new depth. It was Annas who was running the financial racket in the temple and was behind an eighteen year despotic and nepotistic reign in the Jerusalem corridors of power.

So in each case the bully is also the one who is bullied. The victim is often caught in between the two. Caiaphas, the bully is himself bullied by Annas and Pilate is caught in a crossfire. Pilate the bully is himself bullied both by Rome and Caiaphas and Jesus is caught in a crossfire.

Only Jesus is made of different material and operates in a different nexus. Jesus does not bully anyone, nor will he be bullied by anyone. To Pilate he explains that Pilate would have no power at all if it would not be given to him from above. To Caiaphas he stands his ground even when slapped on the face. Jesus is operating within a trinity of love. His father loves him and he is willingly laying down his life. The Spirit will freely serve the Son's purposes. This way of working demonstrated here invites you to join with Father, Son and Spirit where power operates within freedom, service and love. No one can bully you out of that, even if

you get caught in the crossfire.

In between now and the next WORKTALKweekly, do feel free to email us your thoughts to wtw@worktalk.gs or leave a comment on our [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#) profile. You can also visit our [YouTube](#) channel - get inspired and share Worktalk's vision with others.

Work well
Geoff Shattock

© Geoff Shattock January 2011

BIBLE SECTION

John 18: 19-24

19 Meanwhile, the high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and his teaching. 20 "I have spoken openly to the world," Jesus replied. "I always taught in synagogues or at the temple, where all the Jews come together. I said nothing in secret. 21 Why question me? Ask those who heard me. Surely they know what I said." 22 When Jesus said this, one of the officials nearby slapped him in the face. "Is this the way you answer the high priest?" he demanded. 23 "If I said something wrong," Jesus replied, "testify as to what is wrong. But if I spoke the truth, why did you strike me?" 24 Then Annas sent him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.

John 19:8-12

8 When Pilate heard this, he was even more afraid, 9 and he went back inside the palace. "Where do you come from?" he asked Jesus, but Jesus gave him no answer. 10 "Do you refuse to speak to me?" Pilate said. "Don't you realize I have power either to free you or to crucify you?" 11 Jesus answered, "You would have no power over me if it were not given to you from above. Therefore the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin." 12 From then on, Pilate tried to set Jesus free, but the Jewish leaders kept shouting, "If you let this man go, you are no friend of Caesar. Anyone who claims to be a king opposes Caesar."

All WORKTALKweekly archives are for personal use only. For permission to use for any other purposes please email using the address below thank you.

WORKTALK, 56 Baldry Gardens, London SW16 3DJ
T:+44 (0)20 8764 8080
<http://www.worktalk.gs>
comms@worktalk.gs