

Mark 14: 53-65

And they led Jesus away to the high priest; and with him were assembled all the chief priests, the elders, and the scribes. ⁵⁴ But Peter followed Him at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest. And he sat with the servants and warmed himself at the fire.

⁵⁵ Now the chief priests and all the council sought testimony against Jesus to put Him to death, but found none. ⁵⁶ For many bore false witness against Him, but their testimonies did not agree.

⁵⁷ Then some rose up and bore false witness against Him, saying, ⁵⁸ "We heard Him say, 'I will destroy this temple made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands.'" ⁵⁹ But not even then did their testimony agree.

⁶⁰ And the high priest stood up in the midst and asked Jesus, saying, "Do You answer nothing? What *is it* these men testify against You?" ⁶¹ But He kept silent and answered nothing.

Again the high priest asked Him, saying to Him, "Are You the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?"

⁶² Jesus said, "I am. And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven."

⁶³ Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, "What further need do we have of witnesses? ⁶⁴ You have heard the blasphemy! What do you think?"

And they all condemned Him to be deserving of death.

⁶⁵ Then some began to spit on Him, and to blindfold Him, and to beat Him, and to say to Him, "Prophecy!" And the officers struck Him with the palms of their hands

- A. It's early Friday morning (12-3 am)
- B. Hours before this setting, Jesus said
 - a. **John 17:4** I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given me to do

- C. How can He say, I have finished the work when the Cross is hours away?
 - a. He's certainly going to the Cross. This is a sure thing
 - b. The completed work was showing the disciples what God is like
 - i. Before Jesus arrived, God seemed distant
 - ii. In the face of Jesus, God is near and a Father
- D. Now Jesus is bound and going to a mock trial before the Sanhedrin

- I. The Lamb
- II. The Shepherd
- III. The Lion

I. The Lamb

- A. As a silent lamb, Jesus allows them to take Him before the Sanhedrin**
- B. Matt 26:57** Now the ones who had arrested Jesus led him to Caiaphas, the high priest in whose house the experts in the law and elders had gathered
- C.** Caiaphas was appointed from ad18 - ad36 (Ruled 18 years during Christ's time)
- D.** The main court of law was called the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem
 - 1. **Jewish supreme court**
 - 2. Made up of 70 elders, scribes, priests who were the judges in Israel
 - a. With the high priest = 71 members
- E.** This supreme court is looking for false testimony against Jesus
 - 1. to put Him to death

2. They were not looking for truth
3. They already made up their minds and wanted Jesus dead
4. **Mark 14:55** And the chief priest and all the council sought testimony against Jesus to put Him to death, and found none

F. Why were they seeking any testimony against Him?

1. Their **political standing** was jeopardized
 - a. Rome allowed them to keep this power as it helped keep peace
 - i. They were recognized politically
2. Their **social standing** was jeopardized
 - a. They were recognized in their special garments and received honor
 - a. VIP seating at gatherings
 - b. VIP portions of food...
3. Their **financial gain** was jeopardized
 - a. They made a money from manipulating people & receiving silver, gold...
 - ii. They made a fortune at the Temple

G. They wanted Jesus dead

1. He was a threat to their way of life
 - a. Because of His popularity
 - b. His warm message of love and forgiveness
 - c. His assurance of salvation went against the grain of everything they knew and wanted

H. The High priest, chief priests, elders and scribes all wanted Jesus dead

1. If anyone should have known who Jesus is, it would be this group
 - a. They are the ones who study the law

- b. They teach the law

2. There is a danger for people who know the truth but have never experienced the truth

- a. God's truth is not just for information**
- b. It is intended for transformation
- c. If there is no change, all you have is knowledge

- d. Knowledge alone puffs up

3. It then becomes religion

- a. Religion is rules that people try to live by
- b. Right and wrong, do's and don'ts in a hope to please or appease God

4. Religion is not what God intended for his people

- a. it works against what God originally intended

- b. **Micah 6:8** He has showed you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?

c. Any healthy human relationship is the same

- i. It is genuine
- ii. Interchangeable
- iii. It's dynamic
- iv. It grows

- a. Good relationships are not robotic

I. God wants to walk with man as a friend, in intimacy

1. **John 17:3** Now this is eternal life: that they **know you**, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.
 - a. Knowing God and walking with God is eternal life
 - i. Not simply following rules and hoping to make it
 - b. God desires a personal relationship with His creation
2. Religion is the complete opposite of a natural relationship
 - a. Notice how Jesus usually hung out with the outcasts of society and not with the religious
3. When the wise men arrived to see the new King that was born, the religious leaders advised Herod that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem
 - a. Not one of them inquired about the Lord
4. When Jesus was 12 years old in the Temple asking the religious leaders about the law, not one of them stopped long enough to connect the dots
 - a. Religion has no interest in truth that transforms
5. They should have seen the connection between the scriptures they read and the truth they see in Jesus
 - a. **This is a face to face close encounter between the high priest and our great high priest**
 - b. Caiaphas was so close to the truth and missed the truth
 - c. **How do we keep ourselves from falling in the same trap?**
 - i. Ask yourself, "Am I performing for God"?

- a. Looking for His approval?
- ii. Am I going through the motions?
- iii. Is there an infusion of intimacy between my creator and me?

- iv. Do I recognize the fruit of the Spirit in my life?
 - a. Fruit is the natural result of an intimate walk with God

 - b. If the answer is no, then I should take inventory

II. The Shepherd

- A.** Jesus is not only being the perfect Shepherd to the Sanhedrin
 - 1. He's also being a Shepherd to "one person"

- B.** Peter is following Jesus at a distance

- C.** Even though Peter initially ran, he's very interested in what's happening to Jesus
 - 1. He wants to remain a disciple / follower of Jesus

 - 2. Many people give Peter a hard time for following from a distance
 - a. Yet our Great Shepherd doesn't call him Simon
 - i. He calls him Peter (Cephas = part of a large rock)

 - b. Sure, it would have been better to be close to the Lord, but at least he's following

 - c. To the best of his ability, he's doing what he knows

 - d. While it's easy to speak of
 - i. Don't follow at a distance
 - ii. Don't get warm by the enemy's fire
 - a. There is certainly truth in that

- i. We're inclined to go into the world when things get tough

D. I believe this can help teach us about how the Lord views our limited ways of following Him

- 1. I'm speaking of when a person is completely sincere in following Jesus

E. How does the Lord view our incomplete ways?

- 1. A beautiful story in the O.T about Gideon who brought an offering

- 2. When Israel sinned, the Midianites overtook them

- 3. Pour out the broth

- a. God accepted the best and threw out the rest

- b. Our Shepherd is calling him Peter, not Simon

- i. I believe it's an applause, not a rebuke

- ii. **Heb 10:22** let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings

III. The Lion

A. Jesus is much more than a lamb and a Shepherd

- 1. It's going to take great strength and endurance to face what He's facing now**

B. Jewish law required that any accused person had to have a trial before honest judges

C. Deuteronomy 16:18-20 "You shall appoint for yourself judges and officers in all your towns which the Lord your God is giving you, according to your tribes, and they shall judge the people with righteous judgment. You shall not distort justice, you shall not be partial, you shall not take a bribe for a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise and perverts the words of the righteous. Justice and only justice you shall pursue that you may live and possess the land which the Lord your God is giving you."

D. Anyone on trial is entitled to three things

- a. A public trial
- b. An opportunity for defense
- c. No conviction without the confirmation of at least two or three witnesses

E. This supreme court wanted to get things done and quickly at night before the crowd has time to gather

- a. They knew the multitudes loved Jesus and chaos could erupt

F. They searched for false witnesses and broke their own law

- 1. Something about sin that is blinding and you make all kinds of justifications to do the wrong thing

G. So here, they broke their own law

- a. No courts could convene at night
 - i. From sunrise to sunset was the appointed time for any hearings
- b. Could not meet in any other place than the Judgment Hall itself
- c. Needed at least 2 witnesses who were separately examined and could not have contact with each other

- d. Any false witness would pay the same penalty he sought for the one he witnessed against
- e. No trial for execution could be held on a feast day, or the day before a feast day,
 - I. There always had to be a day intervening, which included fasting till a decision was made
 - 1. Giving time for mercy
 - 2. this would be impossible for them to do on the Passover
- f. No one could be executed the same day in which he was tried...
- g. No one could incriminate himself by giving testimony against himself
 - i. The law does not permit the death penalty as a sentence for a sinner by his own confession
- h. **All those were built-in safeguards**
 - i. They violated every single one of them...
- i. **Edersheim** : A non Christian Jewish scholar said
 - i. "this was a private murder committed by burning enemies not the sentence of a regularly constituted Sanhedrin"
- j. Finally 2 false witnesses came forward and said this fellow said "I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in 3 days"
 - i. Destroying the temple is an act of terrorism and a capital offense
 - ii. Their testimony did not agree

iii. **John 2:19** "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." speaking of His body

k. The high priest rose and said "do you answer nothing"

l. Jesus has the wisdom to know when to answer and when to leave foolish arguments alone

m. He *could* have defended Himself easily

I. He could have dispatched angels to defend Him

n. But Jesus opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so He opened not His mouth (Isaiah 53:7)

o. Spurgeon: He demonstrated the silence of patience, not of indifference; of courage, not of cowardice."

i. His silence is not weakness, it's profound strength

ii. **Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?**

iii. Son of God in the Jewish thinking is equal to God

1. Caiaphas is not looking for an answer, he's looking for an accusation

2. He's blinded by his hatred for Jesus that he is unable to see the truth standing before him

H. This teaches us an important lesson

1. The position of my heart going into any setting will determine the outcome

2. Those who seek the truth will find it

I. I AM – signifying His deity

1. The Lion is now speaking

J. you shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven (Psalm 110:1)

i. He's God and man at the same time

K. "You now stand in judgment of Me, but a day is coming when I will be ultimate judge"

L. Jesus is called a blasphemer

ii. Falsely accused

iii. He's condemned

iv. He's spit upon

v. He's beaten and mocked

a. He didn't commit any crimes or hurt anyone

i. Perhaps God allowed the beating, mocking and spitting to happen this way to let us know that He feels the pains of injustice

ii. The lack of justice in this world is astounding

iii. People have been hurt & mistreated by others all throughout history

iv. I believe He's saying, I feel your pain

1. I've been there...

M. When Jesus was insulted and wrongly accused

1. **1 Peter 2:23** When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly

2. **NASB** but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously

a. We can either retaliate or trust that God will be our defense

B. Put your faith in

1. **The Lamb** - who was silent and trusted in God
2. **The Shepherd** - who guides and looks for the best in you
3. **The Lion** - who endured the agony of accusations and suffering and feels our pain