



Turning Lost Students into Christ-Centered Laborers

KILLING THE SON OF GOD • Substitution

What Do I Need to Know About the Passage?

John 18-19:30

Introduction

Today we will look at the night of Jesus' arrest and trial. The book of John and the other gospels record enough details that we can piece together how that night went. Due to the chaotic political environment of the day Jesus faced three different judges and endured both torture and humiliation before eventually being convicted and sentenced to death by crucifixion.

The Arrest

After telling Judas, "What you are about to do, do quickly," Jesus went somewhere Judas could easily find him. The word Gethsemane means an olive grove. This olive grove had a walled enclosure Jesus used regularly. And when Judas came with various Roman and Jewish officials, Jesus stepped out in the open toward them. Some officials staggered back and fell down when Jesus disclosed himself with the words, "I am." These are the words the Lord spoke to Moses at the burning bush in Exodus 3:15.

The Trials

Understanding a little bit of background will help you make sense of this night. In A.D. 6, the Romans installed a man named Annas as the High Priest of Israel. They removed him in A.D. 15 but five of his sons and his son-in-law Caiaphus served in the position after him. On the night Jesus was betrayed, Caiaphus was the proper High Priest, but Annas still controlled the priesthood. That's why, after arresting Jesus, the Jewish leaders took him to Annas first. That's also why both Annas and Caiaphus are called "High Priest" in verses 19-24.

Jewish law forbade the priests from questioning the accused. But that didn't stop Annas. He tried to get Jesus to say something he could use against him and his followers. Jesus didn't answer his questions. Then Annas sent him to Caiaphus.

Mark 14:53-65 tells us what happened between Jesus and Caiaphus. At one point the High Priest asked Jesus directly, "Tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of the Blessed." And Jesus said, "I am." But he didn't stop there. He added, "And you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven!"

It's not really appropriate to call Jesus' tribunals before Annas and Caiaphus trials, there was no presumption of innocence and Jesus did not employ a lawyer. These first two trials were convened simply to find adequate charges so they could sentence Jesus to death.

What's the Big Idea?

Jesus courageously gave His life in order to save mankind from sin and death.

What's the Problem?

We are sinful, and we can deny Jesus with our words and actions.



Having convicted him of blasphemy, the Jews took Jesus to Pilate, the Roman Prefect. Ironically, the Jews asked Pilate to come out of his residence because they didn't want to defile themselves. Their law prohibited them from entering a Gentile's home.

Pilate wasn't interested in Jewish theological controversies. So the Jews spoke in terms he could understand. They told him that Jesus was trying to lead a rebellion. Pilate's discussion with Jesus convinced him that the Jews' charge of rebellion was hogwash, but he didn't care. He allowed them to prevail and sentenced Jesus to death by crucifixion.

Peter

Peter tried to defend Jesus during his arrest. He swung a sword at the head of a guard and cut off his ear. Jesus healed the ear (Luke 22:51), rebuked him, and went with the guards. Peter and John followed at a distance.

Then, notice how the author portrays what happened next. He contrasts Jesus' faithfulness with Peter's failings. Jesus boldly refused to answer Annas and implicate his followers. Jesus boldly told Caiaphus exactly who he was. And Jesus didn't try to convince Pilate to let him go. In contrast, Peter lied three times, denying that he even knew Jesus. John doesn't mention the specifics. Peter denied Jesus vehemently. This night's events caught him completely off guard and overwhelmed him.

The Crucifixion

John 19:17-30 records Jesus' crucifixion and death. Some have described crucifixion as a form of state terror. The Romans knew how to squash rebellions. In 71 B.C., they crucified 6000 rebels led by Spartacus along the road from Rome to Capua.

The Reason Christ Died

Theologians use the phrase Substitutionary Atonement to describe Christ's death on our behalf. Death is the penalty for sin. So Christ died for us to free us from that penalty. Romans 5:8 says that God demonstrates His love for us in this, that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Perhaps Isaiah said it best:

But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all (Isaiah 5:5-6).

Call it Sin, Call it Forgiven, Call on God to Change Me

Christ's death on our behalf is the ground and essence of the Christian faith. We don't have to clean ourselves up to earn God's favor. We could never do that. But we can come to God as we are, because Christ died for us.

Walking with God reflects that reality. When a believer sins, he or she can confess the sin (call it sin), remember that Christ died for our sins, (call it forgiven) and submit afresh to the Lord (call on God to change me). That's a great little saying to remember. *Call it sin. Call it forgiven. And Call on God to Change Me.*

What's Our Response?

It's helpful to dwell on why Jesus courageously gave his life for us. It's also important to know how to deal with sin as believers who are seeking to follow Jesus.

What Are the Questions?

John 18-19

LAUNCH

Can you name any of Jesus' miracles from the Bible? If you could be there to see one, which would you choose?

EXPLORE

Read [John 18:1-14](#).

1. Why do you think Jesus went to a familiar place where Judas could easily find him?
2. When the soldiers said they were seeking Jesus, he replied, "I am." Why? What happened next?
3. What words would you use to describe Peter's response?

Read [John 18:15-27](#).

4. In your opinion, was Peter courageous, cowardly, or both? Where were the rest of the disciples?

Check out [Matthew 26:2-4](#).

5. This passage describes what's been going on at Caiaphas' place in the last 24 hours. What are the chances that Jesus is going to get a fair trial there?

Check out [Mark 14:55-65](#).

6. What stands out to you from this trial before Caiaphas? How did they try to convict him?
7. When Caiaphas finally spoke to Jesus, how did he respond?

Read [John 18:28-19:16](#).

8. Why did the Jewish leaders restrain from entering Pilate's palace? Do you see any irony in their behavior?
9. Roman trials followed four steps: An accusation, an interrogation, a defense and a verdict. Can you trace each step through verses 28-40?
10. How did Pilate react when he realized the Jews wanted Jesus dead for claiming to be God? Why?

Read [John 19:17-30](#).

11. Why do you admire Jesus for how he acted throughout this whole ordeal?
12. Why did Jesus have to die?
13. Describe everything Peter did on this fateful night. Describe his emotional journey.
14. Peter once boasted that he would never abandon Jesus. How do you think he felt after this night?

APPLY

15. How does Jesus' death touch you?
16. Why is it important to remember why Jesus died?
17. Can you think of a time when it's been easiest to deny Jesus?
18. What is a believer supposed to do when he sins?

What Are the Answers?

1. Jesus wasn't trying to evade his arrest.
2. When Jesus said, "I am," He was using the name that the Lord spoke to Moses from the burning bush in Exodus 3:14. His words and his presence evidently startled the guards.
3. Peter swung at a soldier's head but only got an ear. Jesus stopped the fighting and healed the ear (Luke 22:51). He didn't want or need Peter's help. Around 600 guards were present to arrest Jesus that night. Twelve legions of angels would be 72,000 angels.
4. Peter was completely misguided. He was both courageous and cowardly. Peter and John tried to follow Jesus. The others fled.
5. Discuss
6. The purpose of the trials was to find some legal basis to condemn Jesus to death. Judas' testimony would have been crucial to their case but he was nowhere to be found. Several false witnesses volunteered but their testimonies didn't agree. Finally two said that Jesus had once threatened the temple, based on a statement Jesus had made 3 years earlier (John 2:19).
7. Notice how bold Jesus was when they asked him if he was the Christ. You might check out Daniel 7:13-14, and Psalm 101.
8. They didn't want to become unclean by entering a Gentile's home - on the night that they were murdering the Son of God.
9. Discuss
10. The Jews pressured Pilate for a conviction but they weren't able to give him any evidence. Initially he refused, but he eventually agreed and assigned Jesus to crucifixion.
11. Jesus was not intimidated by Annas, Caiaphas, or Pilate. He boldly proclaimed the truth about his identity. He refused to implicate his followers. He took care of his mother. He suffered willingly.
12. Jesus did all this on purpose. He endured the suffering and shame and execution for us. Mankind is sinful (Romans 3:23) and the wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23). And Jesus willingly paid that penalty for us (Romans 5:8, 2 Corinthians 5:21).
13. Discuss
14. Peter wept bitterly (Matthew 26:75).
15. Discuss
16. When we forget why Jesus died, we forget his love and we fail to take sin seriously.
17. Discuss
18. Keep "Short Accounts" See the sidebar.

Memorize

But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 5:8 (NASB)

Keep Short Accounts

Everybody sins. Even believers. But mature believers know what to do to restore fellowship with God after they sin.

1. Call it Sin

Step one in restoring fellowship with God is specific confession. We must agree with God concerning our sinful choices, whether they be attitudes, beliefs, or actions. It's best to state the sin specifically.

2. Call it Forgiven

But then we get to acknowledge that Jesus died for our sins (even the most recent one) and he has *already* forgiven us.

3. Call on God to Change Me

Lastly, ask God for strength. Submit to Him again and ask Him to fill you with His Spirit, so that you don't repeat the same mistakes.