

SHARE THE BIBLE LESSON
WEEK 22

The trial and denial of Jesus
Mark 14:53–15:15



DAY 1

The Jews judged the true Judge • Mark 14:53–65

READ 

Mark 14:53–65

EXPLAIN 

The truth of Mark 14:53–65

The trial of Jesus was the opposite of justice. Jesus was taken to the house of Caiaphas where the Sanhedrin had already gathered. Eventually, two witnesses accused Jesus of speaking against the temple (Matt 26:60–61). Even though the accusation was false (Mark 13:2) and the witnesses didn't agree, Jesus' enemies used it against Him. Jesus willingly chose not to defend Himself, because He had chosen to go silently to slaughter (Isa 53:7). Surprised, the high priest questioned His authority. This time Jesus was not silent. Since it was time for Him to die, He said He was the Messiah. The Jews' response is ironic. Caiaphas had said "Blessed One" instead of "God" to be extra careful not to blaspheme, and he tore his clothes as a sign of grief and horror at blasphemy. But Jesus did not blaspheme because He spoke the truth. It was the Sanhedrin who were blaspheming by dishonoring the Son of God right in front of them. Second, the temple police mockingly urged Jesus to prophesy. By mocking and spitting on Him, they were actually causing Jesus' prophecy to come true (Mark 10:34), and Isaiah's too (Isa 50:6).

ASK 

1. What was wrong with the accusations against Jesus?
They were false and inconsistent.
2. Did Jesus defend Himself?
No. There were no real charges. Besides, Jesus was not trying to escape death.
3. What did Caiaphas ask Jesus?
Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?
4. Who was committing blasphemy?
Not Jesus, because He spoke the truth. The high priest was, because he was directly opposing the Son of God.

DISCUSS 

1. How are human judges similar to Jesus, the true Judge? How are they different?
2. Why was it ironic that the Jews were judging Jesus (John 5:22)?

DAY 2

Peter denied his true Friend • Mark 14:66–72

READ

Mark 14:66–72

EXPLAIN

The truth of Mark 14:66–72

Peter loved Jesus, but even he abandoned Jesus. When Jesus was accused, He spoke the truth and did not defend Himself. But when Peter was accused, he lied to defend himself. The third time, he used an oath, asking God to curse him if what he was saying was not true. Peter's failure warned and encouraged the Christians who first read Mark's gospel. Their loyalty to Jesus was being tested by persecution. Peter's failure warned them that if they were self-confident and prayerless like Peter was, they would fail (1 Cor 10:12). But Peter's restoration encouraged them that even in failure, there is hope through repentance. When Peter heard a rooster crow the second time, he burst into tears. He realized he had failed the One he loved most (Luke 22:61–62). Jesus later restored Peter, and Peter wrote down two important lessons he had learned from his failure. First, be humble, because Satan easily devours proud people (1 Pet 5:5–8). Second, even in failure, have hope. Because Jesus did not fail, God is able to restore and strengthen you to the very end (5:10).

ASK

1. When asked if he was a follower of Jesus, what did Peter do?
He denied Jesus.
2. Did Peter speak the truth like Jesus did?
No. He lied three times.
3. Why did Peter burst into tears after the rooster crowed?
He remembered what Jesus had said, and he realized he had betrayed the One he loved most.

DISCUSS

1. Think of the last time you lied. Why did you lie? What did you do afterward?
2. When you have sinned against Jesus, how can Jesus' sinlessness give you hope (1 John 2:1–2)?

DAY 3

Pilate handed over the true King • Mark 15:1–15

READ

Mark 15:1–15

EXPLAIN

The truth of Mark 15:1–15

As the Roman governor, Pilate's job was to uphold justice, but instead he unjustly condemned Jesus. He was more concerned about his own career. Recently, he had foolishly tried to put shields with Emperor Tiberius' image on them in his headquarters in Jerusalem. This violated the Jewish ban on images in Jerusalem, so the Jews sent messengers to appeal directly to Tiberius. Tiberius sided with the Jews, and

Pilate only avoided Tiberius' wrath because he was friends with Sejanus, Tiberius' second-in-command. But recently Tiberius had executed Sejanus for treason. Pilate was now vulnerable and could not risk the Jews appealing to Caesar again. Still, Pilate hated to give in to the chief priests. When he heard the crowd asking for him to keep his custom, he suggested releasing Jesus. But as usual, Pilate was wrong about the Jews. So for the sake of his own political ambition, Pilate condemned the real King. He released Barabbas, whose name means "son of a father," and he failed to protect Jesus, the Son of the Father. Now the innocent would die in the place of the guilty.

DAY 3 CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

ASK 

1. What did Pilate call Jesus?
The King of the Jews.
2. Did Pilate think Jesus had done anything wrong?
No.
3. Who did Pilate condemn, and who did he release?
He condemned Jesus and released Barabbas.
4. Why didn't Pilate set Jesus free?
Pilate was more concerned about himself than about an innocent man. He valued his own political career more than the King of kings.

DISCUSS 

1. How did the religious leaders intimidate Pilate?
2. Have you done something wrong recently in response to peer pressure? What does this show about what you care about most?

DAY 4*Jesus suffered silently • Isaiah 53:7***READ** 

Isaiah 52:13–53:12

EXPLAIN **The truth of Isaiah 53:7**

Jesus died on purpose. He could have resisted the angry mob that came to arrest Him, but He didn't (Matt 27:53). He could have defended Himself before the blasphemous high priest, but He didn't (Mark 14:60–61). He could have refuted the false accusations, but He didn't. Why not? Why didn't Jesus defend His innocence, refute the false charges, and reveal His enemies for what they really were: jealous hypocrites willing to do anything—including murdering an innocent man—to preserve their position and power. But Jesus remained silent before His accusers for two reasons. First, He willingly chose to die as a sacrifice for sin, the innocent in the place of the guilty (2 Cor 5:21). If Jesus had resisted during His arrest, trial, or execution, He could easily have overpowered and overwhelmed any who stood against Him. But Jesus also remained silent for a second reason: to fulfill Scripture. The prophet Isaiah, long before Jesus' birth, declared that the Servant would suffer silently, like a lamb led to slaughter. Like a lamb, He would utter no protest, and like a lamb, He would submit to His oppressors.

ASK 

1. Why did Jesus not resist the angry mob, Caiaphas, or Pilate?
Because He willingly chose to die as a sacrifice for sin. He also willingly suffered in order to fulfill Scripture.
2. Did Jesus have the power to resist His enemies?
Yes! He could have called thousands of angels to defeat His enemies.
3. How did Isaiah say the Servant would suffer?
Like a lamb. He would be silent before His oppressors.
4. What did Jesus accomplish through His willing death?
Salvation. He died so that others might live through Him.

DISCUSS 

1. Have you ever been accused of something you didn't do? How did you respond?
2. Why did Jesus suffer in our place? What can you praise Him for in light of what you learned today?

DAY 5

Jesus restores Peter • John 21:15–17

READ

John 21:1–19

EXPLAIN

The truth of John 21:15–17

Because Jesus obeyed God to the point of death, He is able to forgive us when we have not obeyed. Even though Peter denied Jesus, Jesus did not leave Peter in his despair. Not long after Jesus rose from the dead, He appeared to Peter and some of the other disciples while they were fishing in the Sea of Galilee. After providing a miraculous catch of fish, Jesus joined His disciples on the seashore for breakfast. After breakfast, Jesus asked Peter: “Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?” Of course Peter did! But then Jesus asked a second time, and then a third time. Finally, after Jesus asked the third time, Peter appealed to Jesus’ perfect knowledge of him: “Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.” And Peter did. He would spend the remainder of his life ministering to Jesus’ flock. And in the end, he would make the ultimate sacrifice for his Master, dying as a martyr for his one, true friend. Because Jesus loved us to the point of death, His love keeps and restores us even when our love wavers.

ASK

1. How many times did Jesus ask Peter if he loved Him?
Three times.
2. How did Peter respond after Jesus asked him if he loved Him for the third time?
Peter appealed to Jesus’ perfect knowledge of him.
3. How do we know Peter loved Jesus?
Peter wept bitterly after he denied Jesus, and Peter spent the rest of his life serving Jesus, even dying as a martyr.

DISCUSS

1. How does this story show the kindness of Jesus?
2. When you sin, how quickly do you come back to Jesus? Are you too afraid or ashamed? How does Jesus’ death for sin and His love encourage you to repent quickly?

NEXT WEEK

Jesus endures the cross

Mark 15:16–47

