

Study of the Gospel of Mark

Chapter 14 (Part 4)

Background

In these verses Jesus is taken from Gethsemane back into Jerusalem during the dark hours of Thursday night and early Friday morning. Jesus is taken before the Jewish high council where He is tried and convicted before being turned over to the Roman authorities. It was the Romans who would have to confirm and ultimately carry out the death penalty against Jesus.

1. Between the time that Jesus was arrested in Gethsemane and when He was turned over to Pontius Pilate on Friday morning, the Jewish leaders conducted several meetings and trials. The Gospels actually record two trials before the council and a preliminary trial prior to the actual trials. Read each of the sections below and write down the striking parts of each trial.

The preliminary trial before Annas is recorded in John 18:13-14, 19-23.

The first trial before Caiaphas at his home is mentioned in all the Gospels (Matthew 26:57-68; Mark 14:53-65; Luke 22:54, 63-65; John 18:24).

The second trial before Caiaphas is mentioned by the synoptic Gospels, with Luke describing it the most fully (Matthew 27:1; Mark 15:1a; Luke 22:66-71).

2. What do each of the three trials have in common?

3. By Jewish law, trials involving the death penalty had to be carried out in a very specific way to insure that justice was carried out. The law required that two trials be held, at least one day apart, and during daylight hours. In the case of Jesus they conducted two trials, but the other regulations were ignored. The Jewish leaders had been planning this for a long time, and were now ready to break their own laws in order to do what they thought was for the greater good (see John 11:49-50).

4. Read Mark 14:53-65. We can see injustice in the actions of the Jewish leaders over and over again on this night. List examples of injustice and wrongdoing by the Jewish leaders (and others) in these verses.

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

D. _____

5. What can we learn from the improper actions of the Jewish leaders to apply to our lives?

6. Read Mark 14:66-72. Peter was able to get into the courtyard (John 18:15-16) to see what would happen to Jesus. While his intentions may have been good, we see that the result was not. Peter was led into the very sin Jesus had warned him of earlier that very night. These denials of Peter were spread out over the course of the night. Luke tells us that the denials were separated by quite a bit of time (Luke 22:58; Luke 22:59). The last denial came between the two trials, as Jesus was being moved from Caiaphas' home to the place where the Sanhedrin met (Luke 22:61). The crowing of the rooster and the look of Jesus reminded Peter of Jesus' words and Peter realized his sin. This account reinforced the dangerous nature of sin, and how it pulls us further and further into its grasp. What lesson can we learn from the experience of Peter to help us in time of temptation and sin?

7. Mark tells us that Peter even cursed and swore (Mark 14:71) in order to prove the truth of what he was saying. Many times we too become hardened in our sin or are led into more sin when we try to cover up a previous sin. Think for example of David and his adultery with Bathsheba, which led him into other sins as he tried to cover up what he had done (2 Samuel 11). This only makes matters worse. We can't hide our sin from God. What did God use to bring Peter to this knowledge? What does God use in our lives to reveal our sin and to remind us of the danger of increasing our sin or trying to cover up our sin? What does God want us to do instead? (See 1 John 1:9; Proverbs 28:13).
