

Jesus Bible Study Series

HMR
Men's Bible Study

Week #7 (Chapter Thirteen)
Analysis of a Courtroom Fiasco

Main Idea

It is hard to imagine anything more horrific than taking an innocent life. What makes it even worse is when the lost life is due to the anger and hatred of self-righteous men protecting their own sinful way of life. Jesus was forced to endure six different trials before finally facing death on the cross. On one hand we see the travesty of the trumped-up charges and His pre-determined "guilt" with no chance for redemption, while on the other hand we see God's Sovereign Hand in sacrificing the life of His only begotten for the sins of the world, including yours and mine.

Deep Thoughts

Have you ever taken time to consider why Jesus had to endure the trumped-up charges associated with the courtroom fiascos? From a human perspective the horrific experience of the Cross was bad enough; however, the emotional anguish associated with being falsely accused on so many false charges had to be morally degrading beyond human comprehension. To make matters worse, Jesus knew that He was going to be subjected to a death experience worse than any human had ever faced (past, present, and future). At the core of this particular study is Jesus' complete surrender to the will of the Father. *It was not about what He wanted to do, but what He knew God wanted Him to do.* There is an extremely valuable lesson for you and me in all of this. The true mark of a mature Believer is one who constantly asks – God, what is your will in all of this? When I study the trials of Jesus and His willingness to go to the Cross as an innocent man for the guilty, I am haunted by my immaturity. Oh that God would create in us a desire to fulfill His will for our lives and place our personal agendas on the shelf. In this lesson we continue our focus on *abiding in Christ by understanding who He was, who He is, and who He calls us to be.*

Supporting Scriptures See chart on the following page detailing Scripture passages associated with the six trials of Jesus.

Questions for Consideration

1. Refer to the table on the following page. For each of the specific trials complete the following:
 - a) Read the appropriate Scripture passages and cite the accusations that were brought before the "court".
 - b) Discuss how the outcome from each trial resulted in the escalation of activities that led to the subsequent trial or event.
2. For you personally, what is the most profound insight gained in studying the trials of Jesus? How does developing a greater understanding of Jesus' response to these events impact your walk for Christ?

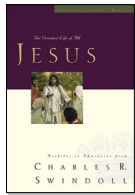
Take-away Points

Take an inventory of the decisions that you make on a daily basis. How many of those are based on God's desire for your life? Especially consider those decisions where you are required to make a choice requiring surrender of your own will. Remember that the mark of a mature Believer is a willingness to wait on God's timing, in contrast to self-centered living where instant gratification is the primary driver in the choices that we make.

The Trials of Jesus

(from *Jesus, The Greatest Life of All*, page 190)

Trials	Officiating Authority	Scripture	Accusations	Legality	Type	Result
1	Annas, Former High Priest from AD 6 - 15	John 18:12-23	No specific charges were brought.	Illegal: No jurisdiction Held at night No charges No witnesses Abused during trial	Jewish and Religious	Jesus was found "guilty" of irreverence and was sent to Caiaphas.
2	Caiaphas, High Priest from AD 18 - 36, and the Sanhedrin	Matthew 26:57-68 Mark 14:53-65 John 18:24	Jesus claimed to be the Messiah, the Son of God, which they deemed blasphemy.	Illegal: Held at night False witnesses No former charge Abused during trial	Jewish and Religious	Jesus was declared "guilty" of blasphemy and was held for sentencing until morning.
3	The Sanhedrin	Mark 15:1 Luke 22:66-71	As a continuation of the earlier trials before the Sanhedrin, the charges remain the same.	Illegal: Accusation changed No witnesses Improper vote	Jewish and Religious	Jesus was sentenced to be turned over to the Romans for execution.
4	Pontius Pilate, Governor of Judea from AD 26 - 36	Matthew 27:11-14 Mark 15:2-5 Luke 23:1-7 John 18:28-38	Jesus was charged with treason and Sedition against Rome.	Illegal: Found "not guilty" yet kept in custody No defense representation Abused during trial	Roman and Civil	Jesus was declared "not guilty" and pawned off on Herod Antipas to find a loophole.
5	Herod Antipas, Governor of Galilee from 4 BC - AD 39	Luke 23:8-12	No specific charges were brought. Jesus was questioned at length by Herod.	Illegal: No jurisdiction No specific charges Abused during trial	Roman and Civil	Jesus was mistreated, mocked, falsely accused, and returned to Pilate without a discussion made.
6	Pontius Pilate	Matthew 27:15-26 Mark 15:6-15 Luke 23:13-25 John 18:39-19:16	As a continuation of the earlier trial before Pilate, the charges remained the same.	Illegal: Declared "not guilty" yet condemned	Roman and Civil	Jesus was declared "not guilty" but was sentenced to be crucified to mollify the angry mob. Simultaneously, a man guilty of murder, treason, and sedition was released.



Jesus Bible Study Series

Week #7 (Chapter Fourteen)
The Last Trials and Torture of Jesus

HMR
Men's Bible Study

Main Idea

The trials and torture of Jesus were a necessary part of convicting mankind at large for the death of Jesus. We know that they were necessary because God allowed them to happen. There are certain milestone events in the annals of Biblical history; the death of Jesus is certainly near the top of the list, while the resurrection certainly tops them all. As Genesis 3 tells us of man's guilt in sinning before a perfect God, the Gospels (i.e. Matthew 27, Mark 15, Luke 23, and John 19) tell us of man's unequivocal guilt at Calvary. As Paul wrote in Romans 3:23 – for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

Deep Thoughts

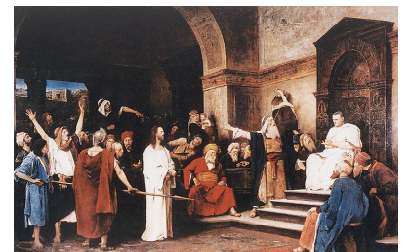
As I have studied the trials of Jesus in both chapters 13 and 14 of Dr. Swindoll's book, I have discovered a concept that I had not previously considered. The trumped-up charges levied against Jesus and even the trials themselves are preposterous, even to one untrained in the law. However, in studying these trials I am convinced that many of us have viewed these proceedings in the wrong light. In actuality, it was mankind who was on trial. Now I am not discounting that in order for Jesus to be crucified that there had to be a series of decisions made by the powers that be that led to His death. However, when we really dig into the words that were spoken by Jesus during all six trials, we are left to conclude that Jesus sounded more like the lawyer and judge than the defendant. Jesus' conversations with Pilate were the reasons for my newfound perspective. In John 18:34 Jesus asks (i.e. lawyer) Pilate regarding His being called the King of the Jews: Is that your idea, or did others talk to you about me? While in John 19:11 we read Jesus' comment regarding Pilate's "idea" that he had the power to convict and crucify Jesus (i.e. judge): 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. Studying the trials of Jesus helps us better understand the great sacrifice that He made for us. Our often lackadaisical approach towards Jesus, as reflected in the way we often live our lives, indicates that we do not fully-comprehend His experience for us in death and appreciate His grace towards us. In this lesson we continue our focus on abiding in Christ by understanding who He was, who He is, and who He calls us to be.

Supporting Scriptures Luke 23:8-12; John 18:28-38; and John 18:39 – 19:16.

Questions for Consideration

3. The fourth trial of Jesus took place before Pontius Pilate. In John 18:28-38 we read about the interaction that took place between Jesus and Pilate. What were the three responses that Jesus provided to the questions posed by Pilate? What insights do we gain about Jesus, especially in relation to His claims to be the Messiah?

- a) First interaction: _____
- b) Second interaction: _____
- c) Third interaction: _____



Christ before Pilate, Mihály Munkácsy, 1881

4. The fifth trial of Jesus was before Herod Antipas (Luke 23:8-12). He inherited his territories when the kingdom of his father, Herod the Great, was divided upon his death in 4 BC, Antipas ruled them as a client state of the Roman and would govern Galilee and Perea for forty-two years. In this trial we see that Jesus offered no response. What are your thoughts on Dr. Swindoll's comment (p. 208): *words are wasted on people who have no desire for truth?*



Coins of Herod Antipas

5. The sixth and final trial of Jesus took place before Pilate (again). Unlike His interaction with Herod, Jesus does speak again to Pilate. In John 18:39 – 19:16 we read Jesus' final words during the court proceeding, as well as details associated with His flogging. It is easy to be critical of Pilate and also the unbelieving world around us, but the really hard questions must be asked of us. Why are you and I so apt to forget what Jesus did for us?

Take-away Points

As if the crucifixion experience were not bad enough, all four Gospels provide for us a clear picture of the courtroom drama and horrific beatings that took place prior to Calvary. The greatest danger that faces the Believer is placing the events of this infamous day in the distant memory banks of our minds. We must continue to remember Jesus' sacrificial gift for us if we are to truly live for Him. Unfortunately, there is no other option that exists for us.

Next Meeting Time: Tuesday, April 15. In preparation read Chapters 15 and 16 in *Jesus, The Greatest Life of All*.

