



G R A C E

REFORMED BAPTIST CHURCH

SOLI ◇ DEO ◇ GLORIA

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

Sermon Notes

The Arrest, Trials, and Crucifixion of Jesus Christ

John 18:12-27

August 20, 2006

- Recall, that when Jesus is in the Garden with His eleven disciples, He is confronted by BOTH a Roman cohort [Gentiles] as well as officers from the chief priests and the Pharisees [Jews]. Therefore, it is the whole world who arrests, tries, and crucifies Christ.
- Notice also the uniqueness of Jesus Christ, as compared to both those who were arresting Him, as well as His disciples.

The Gospel Accounts of the Trials, Crucifixion, and Resurrection of Christ:

Matthew 26:30-27:66

Mark 14:26-15:47

Luke 22:39-23:56

John 18:1-19:42

I. THE ARREST OF JESUS

- a. In the Garden of Gethsemane

II. THE SIX PHASES OF THE TRIAL(S) OF JESUS

a. The Jewish (Religious) Trial(s)

- Peter's denials begin
 1. Matt. 26:69-71a; Mk. 14:66-68; Luke 22:56-57; John 18:16-18
- ii. Before **Annas** – the former High Priest in Jerusalem
 1. John 18:13-23
- iii. Before Joseph **Caiaphas** – the current High Priest in Jerusalem
 1. Matthew 26:57-68; Mark 14:53-65; [Luke 22:67-71]; John 18:24
- Peter's final denial at cockcrow
 2. Matt. 26:71b-75; Mk. 14:69-72; Luke 22:58-62; John 18:25-27
- iv. Before **the Sanhedrin** at dawn – the Jewish governing body
 1. Matt. 27:1; Mark 15:1a; Luke 22:66-71; John 18:28b
 2. Sentenced to Death
- Remorse and suicide of Judas Iscariot

1. Matthew 27:3-10; Acts 1:18-19

b. The Roman (Civil) Trials

- i. Before **Pontius Pilate** – the Roman procurator
- ii. Before **Herod Antipas** – the tetrarch of Galilee
- iii. Before **Pontius Pilate**

1. Sentenced to be Crucified

III. THE CRUCIFIXION OF JESUS CHRIST

- a. Nailed to the cross at 9:00 a.m. Friday morning
- b. Jesus gives up His spirit and dies at 3:00 p.m.

“As a fact of history the trial and death of Jesus of Nazareth is a matter beyond dispute. It is better attested and supported with a wider array of evidence than any other comparable event known to us from the ancient world.” *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels* (p. 841)

Verses 12-14

- ❑ Immediately after His arrest, the soldiers and guards lead Jesus to Annas, the father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was the high priest in Jerusalem that year.
- ❑ John is the only Gospel writer that records this meeting.
- ❑ The reason why Jesus is brought to Annas first is not entirely clear, but upon further investigation, such a move is understandable.
 - First of all, according to Jewish law, a criminal could not be sentenced on the same day as his trial. Although the trials of Christ do not in any way meet this Jewish legal requirement, it is very possible, that bringing Christ before Annas first was an attempt to *appear* that a sincere effort was being made to ensure the legality of His trials. “...they must at least try to save appearances as far as possible, and to offer the semblance of a first preliminary meeting, before that at which the sentence should be pronounced.”
 - Secondly, there is no doubt that Annas held a great deal of influence in Jerusalem, even though he was no longer the high priest. “Annas held the office from AD 6 until AD 15, when Valerius Gratus, Pilate’s predecessor, deposed him. Annas continued to hold enormous influence, not only because many Jews resented the arbitrary deposition and appointment of high priests by a foreign power (under the Mosaic legislation the appointment was for life!), but also because no fewer than **five of Annas’ sons, and son-in-law Caiaphas**, held the office at one time or another (Josephus, *Anti.* xx. 198). Annas was thus the patriarch of a high priestly family, and doubtless man still considered him the ‘real’ high priest even though Caiaphas was the high priest by Roman lights.”

D.A. Carson

- After noting that Annas was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, John reminds the reader that Caiaphas is “the one who had advised the Jews that it was expedient for one many to die on behalf of the people.”
 - This Verse calls back to mind John 11:49-52.
 - In the context of this passage (John 11:49-52), John himself commented: “Now he did not say this on his own initiative, but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus was going to die for the nation, and not for the nation only, but in order that He might also gather together into one the children of God who are scattered abroad.”
 - This passage, and statement by Caiaphas, revealed two powerful truths:
 - ◆ First, **Jesus Christ was an innocent man.** The context of Caiaphas words clearly indicate, that as he sees it, either one man will die [although innocent] or an entire nation. Obviously, Caiaphas views the former as more preferable [although not necessarily ideal].
 - ◆ Second, **Jesus Christ does die for “the people”...they are His people.**
 - This point underscores the truth of the doctrine of **substitutionary atonement.**
 - ❖ What an amazing truth to know that God uses all men, without exception, to bring glory to Himself...even His own enemies.
- Therefore, John’s reason for reminding the reader of this truth about Caiaphas is to once again highlight the series of ironic events that lead up to the crucifixion of our Lord. However, these ironies further point to the truth that it was the Father’s sovereign will that this all occur in the manner in which it did.

Verses 15-18

- In John’s eloquent literary style, he quickly shifts from the scene of Jesus being brought before Annas to Peter, denying His Lord in the courtyard of the high priest.
- Now, why would John do such a thing? Probably for at least two reasons:

- First of all, to show that, although Jesus is now arrested and going before Annas, He is in complete control. The reason we know this is because Jesus clearly predicted that Peter would deny Him in John 13:38.
- The second reason that we likely see this shift in scenes is because John is demonstrating the great contrast between Jesus and even His most intimate followers: Peter (and likely John). Jesus is speaking truth openly and Peter is denying, in the dark, the very One who is about to die for Him.
 - Also, what a contrast is this to the one who so impulsively cut off the ear of Malchus.
 - It is obvious now that ONLY Jesus would be willing and able to drink the cup of wrath from the Father!
- John informs the reader that not only Peter, but ‘another disciple’ followed Jesus as He was lead away to Annas.
 - This other disciple is likely John, ‘the beloved disciple.’
 - This is the traditional view; however, there is also biblical evidence to suggest this.
 - Peter and John appear to have had a close relationship (John 13:23-24; 20:2-10; 21:20-24).
 - Whoever the ‘other disciple’ was, he was ‘known to the high priest’ and was able to gain access into the high priest’s courtyard without suspicion.
 - NOTE: as is typical in the Gospel of John, the word for ‘known’ [*gnostos*] means more than simply recognition or knowledge about, but, rather, a personal knowledge and relationship with.
 - John’s father, Zebedee, according to Mark 1:20, had hired servants, and John and his brother James, or their mother (or both) had ‘prestigious ambitions’ (Matthew 20:28).
 - Furthermore, many scholars believe that John came from a priestly class, which would also explain the high priest’s ‘knowledge’ of him.
 - ◆ This comes from a letter of Polycrates, written in about A.D. 190, in which he says that John, ‘was a priest wearing a *petalon*.’
- The courtyard, here, may be referring just the courtyard in the home of Annas; or it may be that Annas and Caiaphas share a common courtyard.

- We must note, however, that this home and courtyard must be outside of the temple precinct area, as John makes mention of a young girl as the doorkeeper, and only men held this position in the temple.
- After the ‘other disciple’ went and spoke to the young girl, the doorkeeper, he brought Peter into the courtyard with him.
- As Peter is entering into the courtyard, the servant girl recognizes him, and asks, “You are not also one of this man’s disciples, are you?”
 - Peter immediately answers, ‘I am not!’
 - The contrast between Peter and Jesus, here, is profound:
 - When Jesus is confronted in the Garden of Gethsemane by, not only Jewish guards from the Temple, but also a Roman cohort, ‘went forth’ and, when they asked for ‘Jesus the Nazarene,’ He immediately responds ‘I am.’
 - Yet, Peter, the disciple who ‘would go anywhere and do anything for Jesus’ when confronted by ONE SLAVE GIRL, immediately denies any association with His Master (this may have to do with not wanting to be identified as the one who cut off Malchus’ ear).
- Then, after denying His Lord the first time, Peter goes over and joins the SLAVES and OFFICERS near a charcoal fire, because it was cold.
 - Note: Only John says that it was a *charcoal* fire, which seems to indicate that He was there, that is, he had personal knowledge of the experience, giving further credence to his identity as the ‘other disciple.’
 - But what is so significant, here, is that, not only does Peter deny His Lord for the first time [of three], but after denying Him, Peter goes, **joins the Jewish slaves and officers of the high priest [who is now interrogating Jesus] and seeks the personal comfort of a warm fire in the middle of a cold night.**

This is no doubt the contrast that John is making between Peter, one of Jesus’ closest disciples, and Jesus Himself. While Peter is denying his Lord in the face of little opposition [a slave girl], and then seeking to comfort himself, Christ is speaking openly and truthfully in the face of great opposition in order to save, not only Peter, but **all that the Father has given Him.**

Once again – **ONLY JESUS** WAS WILLING AND ABLE TO ‘DRINK THE CUP OF WRATH’ FROM THE FATHER!

- ❑ Also, the fact that John says ‘it was cold’ indicates further that it was nighttime. Jerusalem sits at about 2,500 feet above sea level, and the spring nights can get quite cold.
- ❑ The fact that it was cold, and subsequently nighttime, point to another truth – that Jesus’ trial, which has now begun, is illegal. For, in regular circumstances night proceedings were viewed as illegal.

Verses 19-24

- ❑ John, once again, switches scenes, back to Jesus, who is in the presence of Annas, ‘the high priest.’
- ❑ Notice the two things that Annas asks Jesus about:
 - First, **His disciples**; and
 - Secondly, **His teaching**.

The Jewish leaders (Sadducees, Pharisees, Sanhedrin) set out to sentence Jesus to death by crucifixion; however, under Roman rule, the Jews did not have the authority to execute anyone. Therefore, the Jewish leaders found themselves in a situation where (1) they needed to convict Jesus on a charge that, according to Jewish law, was worthy of the death penalty [the charge would be blasphemy], and (2) they needed another charge that was punishable by death under the Roman system, as the Romans would be the ones carrying out the execution [blasphemy was not a capital crime under the Roman system; however, sedition was].

- ❑ The first question, about His disciples, likely centered around two concerns:
 - Who they were; and
 - How large was the group.
- ❑ No doubt, they are trying to build a case against Jesus when they send Him to Pilate, who would not be concerned about the theology of His message, but would be concerned about the possibility of a conspiracy, insurrection, or riot, caused by Jesus and His disciples.
- ❑ However, the second question, about His teaching, shows that the primary concern of the Jewish leaders with Jesus was theological in nature – for He, in their eyes, was a blasphemer – a crime punishable by death.
 - Note: It may have been illegal, in the first century, to ask questions of the defendant. A case was to be built against someone on the testimony of two or three *witnesses*. If this is the case – that questioning the defendant was illegal – then it even further demonstrates the injustice against Christ during

His trial and crucifixion [which, of course, stands in contrast to the very essence of who Jesus is – He is TRUTH.]

Notice, how Jesus responds to the Jewish authorities: HE MAKES NO MENTION OF HIS DISCIPLES OR THEIR IDENTITY, FOR **CHRIST IS DETERMINED TO PROTECT THEM TO THE END!** [SEE, AGAIN, VERSE 9]

Once again – contrast Jesus' protection of His disciples with Peter's denial of His Lord.

- ❑ However, Jesus does testify about His teaching – that it was PUBLIC!
- ❑ Paul echoes this passion for publicly declaring the truth when he says, “For I am not ashamed of the Gospel!” (Romans 1:16)
- ❑ Jesus may be appealing to the Jewish law here, stating – ask WITNESSES, for they will bear witness to the truth of what I am saying!
- ❑ In other words, there are likely thousands of people who could testify to the truthfulness of my words – ASK THEM!
- ❑ Then, immediately, an officer struck Jesus, saying, ‘Is that the way You answer the high priest?’
 - Notice the irony here: **JESUS CHRIST, not Annas or Caiaphas, is the one TRUE High Priest!**
 - [Note: the officers referred to Annas as the high priest, likely, in the same way as we refer to *former* Presidents as, for example, President Clinton, even now, although they no longer formally hold the office.]
- ❑ Jesus, then, responds to the officers and high priest, ‘If I have spoken wrongly [which, of course, He had not], testify of the wrong; but if rightly, why do you strike Me?’
 - Jesus is, of course, testifying to the truthfulness of His testimony, and, in a sense, requesting a fair trial [although knowing He would not receive one].

THE TRIALS OF JESUS ARE ONE OF THE CLEAREST PLACES IN SCRIPTURE WHERE THE AUTHOR DEMONSTRATES WHAT HAPPENS WHEN LIGHT, INDEED, THE ‘LIGHT OF THE WORLD,’ CONFRONTS DARKNESS – THE DARKNESS HATES IT AND FLEES!

- ❑ This is, no doubt, why the officers and the high priest never address Jesus’ questioning, for they CANNOT!

- ❑ **Although Jesus is, historically, on trial here, it is the Jewish officials who are declared guilty!**
- ❑ Not knowing what to do with Jesus, and not being able to ‘get anywhere with Him,’ Annas then, sends “him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.’

Verses 25-27

- ❑ John, once again, shifts scenes, back to Peter, who remains in the courtyard, warming himself by the charcoal fire, along with the Jewish officials and slaves.
- ❑ Peter, here, denies his Lord the final two times.
- ❑ First, the Jewish officials and slaves, asked him if he was a disciple of Christ, and he denied it.
- ❑ Then, a relative of Malchus recognized Peter from the Garden, asking him, “Did I not see you in the garden with Him?” Peter denied it.
- ❑ ...and *immediately* a rooster crowed.
- ❑ What this account of Peter’s denial demonstrates is that Jesus’ words in John 13:36, , were, indeed, fulfilled.
- ❑ It also demonstrates the necessity of Christ’s death – for without Peter will not be able to follow Christ.