

# **SUBJECT : TRIALS AND OPPOSITION**

## **BIBLE BASIS:**

Lesson Scripture:

Mark 14:53-65; 15:1-3

## **BIBLE TRUTH:**

The trials and opposition Jesus suffered.

**MEMORY VERSE:** READ Mark 14:55

### **LESSON AIM:**

That you will contrast the innocence of the One accused with the guilt of His accusers

# Introduction

- While the authorities considered JESUS' conduct as arrogant and rebellious, Jesus' best defense was 'no' defense. We feel that if someone accuses us of something that is not true we must defend ourselves. However, some times standing up means shutting up! He does not need us to defend the truth of Him in the face of *false witnesses*. He was able to stand silent before his accusers because he knew that GOD HAD HIS BACK! (John 5:31-32). (John 5:36,37).
- As long as we stand up for what is right in this world, we can expect to be opposed and even persecuted to an extent. But thank God we have the same assurance as believers that the master teacher and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ GOT YOUR BACK! (John 5:11-12).
- It is important to realize when you are accused falsely, that Jesus was a perfect example of how we should deal with false accusations. 1Peter 2:21-24.
- Jesus is our ultimate judge and we must know that he is present and judging righteously in every life situation. John 5:22-24

# Church Folks

And they led Jesus away to the high priest: and with him were assembled all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes. [54] And Peter followed him afar off, even into the palace of the high priest: and he sat with the servants, and warmed himself at the fire.

- Men *flock together* too often to do evil. Men also *flock together* to oppose Christ, even in the church.
- There was the confused, yet courageous Peter. He had attempted to defend Jesus, but Jesus stopped him, and even forbade him to come to His aid (Mark 14:47; John 18:10). In addition, Jesus was giving in to the injustices and indecencies of the mob instead of blasting them away and setting up His kingdom.
- The trail ended up in the courtyard of Caiaphas' palace. It took enormous courage for Peter to enter the courtyard, for Peter was risking his life by being there.
- How much we need a deep love for Christ, a love so great that we would risk our lives to follow Him. Too often, our love is so weak we will not even risk ridicule or embarrassment to witness for Him, much less risk our lives.

# More Church Folks

- [55] And the chief priests and all the council sought for witness against Jesus to put him to death; and found none. [56] For many bare false witness against him, but their witness agreed not together..
- Note how far they went to formulate a charge against Jesus: The witnesses were false witnesses (Mark 14:56). Many came charging Jesus, but they were all false and their testimonies would not stand up in court under the scrutiny of honest and objective minds. Therefore, the leaders faced a problem, for they had to formulate a charge that would convince Pilate and the Roman authorities that Jesus should die.
- The witnesses could not agree. By law two witnesses had to agree for a formal charge to be made and a conviction secured. But note, two witnesses who agreed could not be found, despite “many” who came forward.

# He said, They Heard

- [57] And there arose certain, and bare false witness against him, saying, [58] We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands
- Finally, two witnesses did come forward with a charge that seemed to be strong enough to stand up and convince the Roman authorities. However, note three simple facts. Matthew 26:60-61
- The two witnesses distorted Jesus' words. Jesus had said, "Destroy ye this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" (John 2:19). Jesus had actually said the Jews were to be the **destroyers**; but the false witnesses said, "We heard him say, **I will destroy this temple.**" They distorted His words, making Him the destroyer.
- The false witnesses misunderstood Jesus' words. Jesus was referring to **His body to the temple of His body and to the resurrection of His body.** The Jews apparently thought He meant He would destroy and rebuild the **Jerusalem temple** in three days. It was this charge the charge of being a revolutionary—that the religionists believed they could use to convince the Romans to execute Jesus

# Knowing When To Keep Your Mouth Shut

- [59] But neither so did their witness agree together[60] And the high priest stood up in the midst, and asked Jesus, saying, Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee? [61] But he held his peace, and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? [62] And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven
- The two witnesses who charged Jesus with being a revolutionary could not agree (Mark 14:59).
- Jesus “held His peace.” He was silent; He said nothing in his defense
- The High Priest and court became confused by Jesus’ silence. They needed Him to begin speaking, hoping He would add evidence to the charge and incriminate Himself. The High Priest turned, brow-beating and attempting to pressure Jesus: “Answeredst nothing...?” 1Peter 3:9
- Jesus is not only what an ordinary man is, a son of man; Jesus is what every man ought to be, the Son of Man Himself. He is the Ideal Man, the Representative Man, the Perfect Man, the Pattern, the embodiment of everything a man ought to be.

# What a Mistake

- [63] Then the high priest rent his clothes, and saith, What need we any further witnesses?  
[64] Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? And they all condemned him to be guilty of death.
- The true character of the High Priest. The enmity and the bitter hatred of Caiaphas reached its peak when Jesus made the strong claim to be the Son of God. The High Priest ripped his clothes, which was a custom when God's name was disgraced, 2 Kings 18:37; and he shouted out for the verdict. The whole scene was a travesty, a terrible abuse of justice. Caiaphas pictured for us the character of every man who chooses this world and its institutional religion over Jesus.
- Christ is the great remedy for man's sins. Therefore, unbelief—rejecting and refusing to believe Him—is the great damning sin. What kind of people today want to condemn you and discredit your testimony? John 3:19-20. The unbeliever has not believed. The great sin of unbelief is that it neglects, ignores, denies, abuses, and rejects God's Son.
- The dignity of God's Son is ignored John 1:1-2.
- The truth of God's Son is not believed. John 1:14.
- The goodness of God's Son is not embraced. John 1:14.
- The dearest thing to God's heart is denied. John 3:16.
- The name that is above every name is abused and cursed. Phil. 2:9.
- The only begotten Son of God is rejected. John 3:16-19.

# Some Church Folk

- [65] And some began to spit on him, and to cover his face, and to buffet him, and to say unto him, Prophecy: and the servants did strike him with the palms of their hands.
- Two things got the best of Caiaphas: There was the ridicule of Jesus' claim and the heaping of sarcasm upon Him. This is seen in the religionists' shout to Him, "Prophecy," and in their calling Him "*thou* Christ" (Matthew 26:68).
- There was bitter behavior and hatred. Spitting in the face was a sign of monstrous disrespect. Beating with the fists and palms (the Greek says rods) was an outburst of the inner bitterness within the hearts of the religionists against Jesus



# Are We Warming By The Wrong Fire ?

- [66] And as Peter was beneath in the palace, there cometh one of the maids of the high priest: [67] And when she saw Peter warming himself, she looked upon him, and said, And thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth.
- The cause of failure is simply stated: “Peter was beneath in the palace.” He was where he should not have been. He was with the crowd of rejecters, sitting with them and warming himself by their fire. Peter should have been off alone or else with the other disciples in prayer, seeking an answer to their confusion.
- Peter’s failure seems to have been due to at least four things.
- His misunderstanding of God’s Word. In particular he misunderstood the teaching concerning the Kingdom of God. He thought of the Kingdom of God in physical and material terms only. He failed to see the spiritual Kingdom of God, that is... the death and resurrection of Christ. The Lord’s indwelling power, His rule and reign within the human heart. The remaking of a new heavens and earth, which he was later to understand in the clearest of terms (2 Peter 3:10)

# Is This A Friend?

- [68] But he denied, saying, I know not, neither understand I what thou sayest. And he went out into the porch; and the cock crew. one of them. [69] And a maid saw him again, and began to say to them that stood by, This is one of them.
- Peter cracked under his fear. He denied Jesus, pretending he knew nothing about Him nor had anything to do with Him. He just claimed ignorance of the whole matter.
- The fear of ridicule and embarrassment often causes a person to deny Jesus. Sometimes the denial is...
  - · by voice.
  - · by act (going along with the person or crowd).
  - · by silence.
- **Thought 2**. When out in the world, too many pretend not to know Jesus. They profess Jesus on Sundays and among believers, yet never say a word about Him during the week. Or, they live no differently from the world. No one ever knows they are professing believers. Such pretension is denial.

# Are We Marked For Life?

- [70] And he denied it again. And a little after, they that stood by said again to Peter, Surely thou art one of them: for thou art a Galilaeen, and thy speech agreeth thereto. the second failure is that of fearing a crowd. Fearing a crowd sometimes causes outright denial. It did with Peter. This time a maid recognized him and said to the crowd standing around, “This is one of them.” The pressure upon Peter was stronger because a crowd was present. He denied it more emphatically this time. Matthew says “he denied with an oath.” Note four things.
- Peter actually denied Jesus before men, and he denied Him using an oath. Instead of denying Jesus, he should have been upstairs in the courtroom standing by the Lord’s side and testifying for Him.
- He was denying Jesus because he was not by His side; instead he was standing among the Lord’s rejecters...He was standing among the Lord’s rejecters because he had fled the Lord...He had fled the Lord because he had acted in the flesh...He had acted in the flesh because he had not accepted the Lord’s words. The Lord had told Peter and the others exactly what was to happen, yet Peter had refused to open his mind to the truth. Therefore, he was utterly confused and caught off guard.

# Can It Get Any Worse?

- [71] But he began to curse and to swear, saying, I know not this man of whom ye speak. [72] And the second time the cock crew. And Peter called to mind the word that Jesus said unto him, Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. And when he thought thereon, he wept
- The third failure is also that of fearing the crowd. Fearing a crowd will sometimes cause a cursing and swearing denial of Jesus. Note several things Matthew 26:73-74; Matthew 5:33-37.
- It was the crowd that approached and confronted Peter this time. The pressure was much greater. It was his Galilaean speech that gave him away. Jesus had been arrested secretly, and few knew about it. They just figured no Galilaean would be out this time of night unless he was a follower of Jesus.
- His emotions burst forth in a forceful cursing and swearing denial: “I know not this man.” Note Peter called his Lord “this man,” which was all He was to those standing around.
- A worldly crowd can and will put undue pressure upon a believer. A believer does not belong in the midst of a worldly crowd, hanging around worldly place

# Picture The Sacrifice

- [15:1] And straightway in the morning the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council, and bound Jesus, and carried him away, and delivered him to Pilate.
- The ruling body of the Jews (the Sanhedrin) met to finalize its charges against Jesus. The charges had to be strong enough to convince the Romans. What happened was probably this. The false witnesses had been secured the evening before (cp. Mark 14:53-65). They had probably met until the wee hours of the morning and taken a break for a little rest and breakfast. They were now returning to formulate in writing the charges against Jesus. The charges had to be so strong that the Romans would be forced to condemn Him as a revolutionary. As soon as the charges were finalized, they bound Christ and led Him to Pilate.
- Note the picture of sacrifice. In the Old Testament sacrifices were to be bound with cords (Psalm 118:27). Christ was “bound...and carried away; and delivered” as the great Sacrifice for us (Hebrews 10:5-14).

# Still Confused

- [2] And Pilate asked him, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answering said unto him, Thou sayest it..
- The major charge against Jesus was that He claimed to be the King of the Jews. Note two things. Jesus' meek and humble appearance. The Greek form of Pilate's question points to Jesus' meekness and humility. The question was emphatic: Art thou the King of the Jews?"...the One who stands here...with no revolutionary fire in your eyes or voice...with such a humble and meek aire and look...with no friends or followers supporting you...with such poor clothing, the garb of a peasant...How could you be a king?
- "Thou sayest it". The meaning is "[unmistakably] what thou sayest is true." But it must always be noted: Jesus went on to explain that He was not a threat to Caesar nor to any other civil government. He was the King of man's spirit and of heaven, not of this earth (John 18:36-37). He wished to reign in men's hearts and lives, in the realm of the spiritual and eternal, not in the realm of the physical and temporal.

# A Wrong Decision

- [3] And the chief priests accused him of many things: but he answered nothing.
- The barrage of charges and Jesus' enduring purpose. The leaders accused Him of many things, "but He answered nothing." He was stone silent before His accusers. Why would Jesus not defend Himself, not try to escape death? His purpose was to surrender to the *sinful behavior* of men. The *sinful behavior* to which He submitted was...the very depth of sin itself...the ultimate demonstration of sin...the greatest sin that could be committed.
- The sin to which Jesus subjected Himself was the rejection and killing of the Son of God. Standing before His accusers, He said nothing, enduring their awful indignities. He endured because He was purposed to die for the sins of men.
- Indecision is one of the gross mistakes of men, a mistake that dooms many. There is no excuse for indecision; the evidence that Jesus is the Savior of the world is clearly seen to an open and honest heart.