

Small Group Discussion

**ONE
HELL
OF A
DAY**

Week #4



Trial Before High Priest – Injustice

READ Mark 14: 53, 55, 61-68, 70-72

Discussion Starter: There have been many injustices perpetuated by the Church on our world which still reflect negatively on Christ. Back in the Middle Ages the Pope announced special privileges from God to anyone going to the Holy Land to rescue it from Muslim invaders. Thus began the Crusades where armies from Europe and Great Britain traveled by horseback to Israel, slaughtering men, women and children who looked even remotely like a Muslim. They ended up killing Christians, Jews and Muslims by the thousands.

Then came the Inquisition where in the name of theological purity the Church tried heretic and reformer alike and burned them at the stake, stretched them on the rack, or many other tortures and death sentences.

Why does the Church become a source of injustice and persecution of the good and the bad (see Matthew 13:23-30)? *Many reasons for this, one is trying to clear out the impurities while Jesus said to let them grow together, there will never be a totally pure Church. When the Church only focuses on purity it neglects the unchurched, when only focused on the unchurched it becomes just like them.*

WATCH Adam Hamilton DVD “24 Hours That Changed the World” Session #3 (about 9 minutes)

The religious leaders had been plotting ways for months to get rid of Jesus. That is startling, that the very one they claimed to serve and worship becomes the very object of their arrest, persecution and death sentence!

READ John 11:45-58, 57; 12:9-13

If Jesus raised a dead man, what would you expect the religious leaders’ response to be?

To say that the religious leaders were threatened by Jesus would be obvious, what did Jesus threaten in their current life that caused them to feel threatened by Him?

In what ways is Jesus a threat to people’s way of life today?

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Small Group Discussion

As we consider the persecution of Jesus by the religious leaders, we are going to include ourselves among their company. Please remember, when Jesus included them in on their ancestors who had killed the prophets who came before them, they became angry, thinking that they had learned from them and were heading down the right path.

There were none that stayed with Jesus without betrayal, denial, abandoning Him, He was all alone, taking their punishment for them. So we all fail God, before our salvation and after. But we can learn from others' failures.

Last week we looked at Judas' betrayal of Jesus, what did Jesus threaten for Judas? (READ John 12:4-6)

How does the fear of money influence the way you follow Christ?

READ

"So they arrested him and led him to the high priest's home. And Peter followed at a distance. The guards lit a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat around it, and Peter joined them there. A servant girl noticed him in the firelight and began staring at him. Finally she said, "This man was one of Jesus' followers!" {John adds that this girl was the cousin of Malchus, the man whose ear Peter had cut off!)

But Peter denied it. "Woman," he said, "I don't even know him!" After a while someone else looked at him and said, "You must be one of them!" "No, man, I'm not!" Peter retorted. About an hour later someone else insisted, "This must be one of them, because he is a Galilean, too." But Peter said, "Man, I don't know what you are talking about." And immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed. At that moment the Lord turned and looked at Peter. Suddenly, the Lord's words flashed through Peter's mind: "Before the rooster crows tomorrow morning, you will deny three times that you even know me." And Peter left the courtyard, weeping bitterly." (Luke 22:54-62, NLT)

What frightened Peter into denying Jesus?

How do you relate to Peter's fear?

When I was a child in Michigan my family went to a German Baptist Church. The Church conducted business by having Membership Meetings each Quarter. Here the direction and decisions of the Church came to the congregation for discussion and vote. A lot of business got handled in these meetings, but not much that would make God proud. The words said to one another and judgments made on ministers' motives got so harsh that my parents wouldn't let us kids attend any more, they didn't want us to see that kind of activity in the name of Christ.

Small Group Discussion

John says in 1st John 3 that the way we treat people is the same way that we treat God!

Why do you think the Church treats each other so cruelly sometimes? (Read James 4:1-3, 7-12)

Why do you think no one stood up in that meeting and read James 4 or 1st John 3? Would you?

Jesus' trial was a collection of injustice and breaking of many laws. Vern asked the question this weekend that we should answer: *Why didn't anyone stand up to this court and cry "Unjust!?"*

The Church throughout its history has also been known for extreme acts of mercy. Many hospitals, for instance, were started by churches (The Clinic in Billings was started by the Methodist Church, St V's by the Catholic Church). There are many Christian adoption agencies, Rescue Missions, Poverty illumination efforts, medical missions.

What is an injustice that has been bothering you and/or the group that your group could do something about? *This could be local, regional or global – e.g. Japan earthquake victims. Check out World Vision's Justice website at*

<http://www.worldvision.org/#/home/main/quake-tsunami-devastate-japan-1-1360>

Has your group considered taking the Harvest Bible Institute *Biblical Leadership* class starting Wednesday, March 30th from 6:30-8:00 at the Lockwood campus? Check out the Church website for details of the class.

http://www.harvestweb.net/heights_bibleinstitute