

Mark 14:53-65

“A life changing decision”

- I. **Introduction**
- II. **Vs. 53-54 Two trials**
- III. **Vs. 55-61 Kangaroo court**
- IV. **Vs. 62-65 False verdict**

I. **Introduction**

For the better part of a year we have been hearing about the presidential election and the warning from both candidates that this is a “*the most important election ever*” as it has life changing implications. This morning we are going to examine the **ONLY** event in human history that not only has life changing implications is has eternal life changing implications, the trail of Jesus. The death of Christ is the most significant event in all of human history. In fact, it is the focal point not only of human history but of all time, space and matter, beyond our galaxy, solar system beyond all that there is or ever has been.

When we pick up Mark’s narrative: Jesus has been arrested in Gethsemane, the disciples have been scattered. Now Jesus will face the 1st of three trials:

- a. First according to John chapter 18, Jesus was taken to Annas the disposed High Priest who was the father-in-law of the acting High Priest Caiaphas. Mark doesn’t record this event but John does.
- b. Next Jesus is taken to Caiaphas and the courtyard of his residence where two events happen simultaneously:
 - 1. ***First*** according to verses 53, 55-65 Jesus is question and false witnesses are brought forward for the expressed desire that the predetermined verdict of guilty would be rendered.
 - 2. ***Second*** according to verses 54, 66-72 Peter under goes his trial in the courtyard of public opinion. Both by the way were found guilty!
- c. Lastly in Mark chapter 15, Jesus will be tried before Pilate and Herod will make an appearance as well as they will find not enough evidence to find Him guilty but to appease the crowd they will go along with it.

II. Vs. 53-54 Two trials

Vs. 53-54 According to John 18:12, they bound Jesus. *Six hundred men bound a savior, the Lamb of God who needed no human rope to get Him to the cross as His love for the Father and His love for us was what was driving Him there, not the cords of human rebellion but the cords of divine love.* It is here that the words of Paul in Romans 8:38-39 come to mind where he writes, “*I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*” ***The very ones that bound Him didn't realize that He's willingness to be bound was in order to liberate them from the bondage of sin.*** In John's gospel he tells us that the troops first led Jesus to Annas (John 18:13) so this must of been very early in the mourning. Annas' family were racketeer's as he and his five son's ran the temple business. Normally the high priest served for life, but when the Romans took over they made the position an appointed one. Annas had served as high priest for 9 years then each of his five son's served as well. Having run out of sons he had his son-in-law Caiaphas serve. But the truth was everyone knew that Annas was still the power behind the seat. They were all Sadducees which meant that they did not believe in the resurrection, or anything accept the first five books of Moses. Apparently when Annas realizes he can't get any where he sent him across the court yard to his son in law Caiaphas. It was Caiaphas who only a few months earlier after the resurrection of Lazarus said in John 11:49-50 that it was “*expedient...that one man should die for the people*”. We are told again by John in chapter 18 verse 19 that Caiaphas, came and

examined Jesus asking Him about His disciple's and His doctrine. This information is important as the record shows that the sun is about to rise and based upon Jewish law this was a **completely illegal trial, for four reasons:**

- 1.) **All criminals must be tried in the daylight.**
- 2.) **No criminal case could be tried during Passover time.**
- 3.) **Only a "Not guilty verdict" could be issued on the same day of the trial, guilty verdicts had to wait one day.**
- 4.) **Only decisions made at the official court were valid, this was at the home of the high priest.**

These were the highest religious leaders in the land, they could trace their ancestors back to Aaron the first high priest. Their position was sacred, yet these men were nothing more than murders! Isa. 8:20 says, "To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." It is yet another reason we must not follow a man or religion but instead ONLY follow the Lord through His word! So while Peter was in the courtyard warming himself by the fires of the world denying Jesus, Jesus was before the court protecting Peter. As we look at John's account his first impressions are not Jesus trial before the high priest but Peter's trial before three servants. In Matthews account we are told that Peter followed Jesus from a distance. Now I suppose when compared with the other 9 disciples, that we can say that at least Peter followed Jesus. But listen up, **I believe that we always invite trouble when we follow Jesus from a distance.** You will **NEVER** hear someone say, "I know when all my problems started, it was right when I became more devoted to Jesus and decided to follow Him closer without compromise!" **Denial never happens up close it always happens from a distance!**

III. Vs. 55-61 Kangaroo court

Vs. 55-61 They had already predetermined Jesus guilt and now they were just looking for people who could substantiate their conclusion. The 9th commandment states that you

shall not bear false witness against your neighbor, but they didn't care. The problem was they couldn't find honest witnesses so they had to come up with some and a charge if they were going to put Him to death but none came forward that would substantiate each other. Finally, according to Matthew 26:60 after a night of searching two guys come forward. Now these guys twisted what Jesus said to make it sound something different. What Jesus had said is recorded in John 2:19 and what these two false witnesses claimed Jesus said is recorded in Matthew 26:61:

A.) John 2:19 "*Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.*"

B.) Matt. 26:61 "*I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in three days.*"

Jesus never said "*I am able*" to destroy the temple! He said "*destroy this temple*". To the religious leaders, to speak against the temple was a serious matter, a charge that was punishable by death. Jesus is not the destroyer, that is not His work. To find the truth of what Jesus was speaking of you will need to go back at the beginning of His ministry to when He first cleansed the temple in John chapter 2:19-21 as John adds the commentary saying, "*He was speaking of the temple of His body*".

At this point Caiaphas steps up and saves their case by doing something that was illegal in their courts by trying to get Jesus to incriminate Himself. Notice Jesus' reaction to their statement, silence! Isaiah the prophet said some 700 years earlier that the reaction of the Messiah would be, "*He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth.*" Jesus made no effort to defend Himself, to answer any of the lies of the false witnesses.

In verse 61 Caiaphas uses the legal system to put Jesus under obligation to speak. *The question of Caiaphas reveals insight into what the nation had observed about Jesus'*

life and ministry. **“Tell us if You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”** The hope of the nation was the Messiah and they understood that He should be the Son of God, anointed for the purpose of accomplishing Gods will upon the earth. They affirm that what Jesus of Nazareth had been doing and saying pointed to the fact that He was making this claim. You do not put a person on trial for pretending to be something if they had not acted as if they were indeed that person. These religious leaders had observed Jesus to the point that they understood what He claimed to be. So they ask Him, **“Let’s make it official under oath to God, are you what you claim to be, the Messiah?”** **“Give us an open confession in court!”**

IV. Vs. 62-65 False verdict

Vs. 62 Jesus gives a twofold answer:

A.) “I am” or as Matthew records **It is as you said.** Jesus’ answer to the question is as simple as it is profound. **“You have observed me correctly!”** There is such overwhelming evidence in the truth of who Jesus is. People who really search will find out, but then they will be faced with a choice of what to do with the truth!

B.) **“And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven.”**: The Caiaphas, under oath asks Jesus the question concerning His Messiah-ship. Yet the high priest had already come to the conclusion that Jesus was not. He already had his bias, his presupposition and prejudice. Matthew 26:64 records that Jesus first said the words, **“Nevertheless I say to you”**. Which indicates the force behind these words of Jesus as being in spite Caiaphas’ prejudice and pride he would still see. **Jesus prophesies the destiny that awaits him at his insistence of continuing in his prejudice.** There are many critics of the Bible like Caiaphas, that say that Jesus never claimed to be the Messiah or the Son of God. They say that such claims were inserted by over zealous disciples. But here is a clear passage of scripture that contradicts such false assumptions. Jesus in making this statement quotes two old testament passages:

1.) Ps 110:1 **“The LORD said to my Lord, “Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.”**

2.) Dan. 7:13-14 **“I was watching in the night visions, and behold, One like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven!”**

But why did Jesus choose those two verses to share with Caiaphas? What Jesus is

informing Caiaphas is that no matter what Caiaphas decided to do; Jesus was going to raise, ascend and return in glory. **What people do with the truth will never change the truth, but it will change where we will spend eternity.**

Vs. 63-64 With this twofold response Caiaphas displays a hypocritical gesture of righteousness as he tears his clothes in a move that demonstrated to all present that he believed Jesus was guilty of blasphemy and having done so in front of the Sanhedrin it sealed Jesus conviction. Without considering the evidence sentence is passed. This hypocritical gesture by Caiaphas according to Leviticus was in its self a violation of the law as it was against the law for the high priest to tear his garments in anger or sorrow. When Caiaphas did this he disqualified himself from being a high priest and unbeknownst to him established Jesus as the Great High Priest, who does not offer animals for the sins of man, He offers himself!

Vs. 65 Though not all recorded by Mark there were four impromptu punishments dished out upon Jesus.

- A. **First they spit on him**: This is a sign of total disdain and contempt. A nasty thing to do as the Greek words inform us that this was not just saliva, it was mucus!
- B. **Then they beat Him**: Only Mark informs us that they first blindfolded Him. If you blindfold someone then hit them they lose that natural reflex reaction of rolling with the punches. So the blows were having full impact upon His face.
- C. **Other hit him with the palm of their hands while others used rods.**
- D. **Finally Isa. 50:6 tells us that pulled out the hair of His beard as well.** This is why Isa 52:14 says, “*So His visage was marred more than any man, And His form more than the sons of men;*” Further more Isa. 53:3 says that, “*And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him;*” By the time the beating was over, you wouldn’t have been able to recognize Jesus. Yet, through out it all He did not upon His mouth.