

Calvary Chapel  Philadelphia



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY TEACHER'S PACKET

1st Grade

Sunday Morning

Study 29

Jesus' Trial

Jesus' Trial

The Objective is the key concept for this weeks lesson. It should be the main focus of the study

These are the key verses that you will find helpful in teaching your study this week. The "Main passage" is the basis of the study, where the other verse support the objective of the lesson.

There is a memory verse for the students that relates to every study. If a student can memorize the verse for the following week you may give them a prize from the "reward box" found on your cart.

An introductory activity or question that will settle the class, draw their attention to the study and prepare their hearts for God's Word.

Objective This lesson will tell the story of how Christ died as an innocent substitute for Barabbas as an image of how He died in our place as well.

Key Verses

Mark 14:55-65; 15:1-15—Main Teaching Passage

Matthew 26:59-68; 27:11-26; Luke 22:63-23:25; John 18:19-19:16 (Parallel Passage)

Romans 3:23; 6:23; 10:9

John 3:16

Memory Verse - Romans 6:23

"For the wages of sin *is* death, but the gift of God *is* eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Hook

Review last week's memory verse, 2 Corinthians 10:17.

Read Romans 6:23 with the class and ask them if they know what a wage is. Explain that a wage is a payment or result of something you do. When someone does a job, for example, they get a wage of money as payment.

On your cart are three envelopes, each with a "job" written on them. Inside will be a sheet of paper with the "wages" for that job. Have the class guess each wage before revealing them. The final envelope is labeled "sin," and inside it says "death." Explain that the right result of our sin should be death.

What does the Bible say? This is where we will read a passage or series of passages that teach on the subject of the day.

BOOK

In Mark 14:55-65, we see that while Peter's faith was failing (see last week's lesson), Jesus was boldly demonstrating His innocence. The religious leaders who had just arrested Jesus were having a meeting trying to accuse Him of a sin so they could put Him to death. The problem was, nobody could find anything wrong with Him. Some tried to say that Jesus threatened to destroy the temple, but they could not agree on what happened. To all of these accusations, Jesus gave no answer. Finally, the high priest asked Him if He was the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus answered this question only, saying that He was. The religious leaders were furious at this answer and declared that Jesus deserved death.

The story picks up in Mark 15:1-15 with the chief priests taking Jesus to Pilate, the governor of Judea. Luke 23 tells us that the priests told Pilate that Jesus was trying to lead the nation in rebellion against Rome and tell the Jews not to pay taxes to Caesar. They also said that He claimed to be King of the Jews. When Pilate asked Jesus about this, He said, "You have said so." The priests continued to accuse Him, but Jesus did not respond. Finally, Pilate told the gathering crowd that he would release one prisoner, which was a tradition. They could either choose Jesus or a murderer named Barabbas. The crowd asked for Barabbas, even though Pilate said there was nothing wrong with Jesus. When Pilate asked them what to do with Jesus, they all shouted, "Crucify Him!"

The interpretation/exegesis of the passage. What does this passage mean? How does this passage apply to my life?

LOOK

All throughout the trial sequence, Christ proved Himself to be innocent. Try as they may, the chief priests could not agree on a single accusation against Jesus because there was nothing to accuse Him of. When He stood before Pilate, Pilate could find no fault in Him. All year, we have looked at the life of Jesus, and not once have we seen Him sin. We saw Him tempted by the Devil without falling. He cleansed the temple in anger, but not sinfully. No one was ever going to find sin in Jesus, because there is no sin to find. And yet, when He was on trial, Jesus was declared guilty and sentenced to death.

In contrast, Barabbas was not just a sinner. He was a murderer. Matthew calls him a notorious prisoner. The guilty Barabbas was about as opposite of the innocent Christ as possible. This makes it all the more shocking that the crowd would choose for Pilate to release Barabbas and crucify Jesus. Barabbas deserved to be punished for his crimes, yet not only did he get away without punishment, but the innocent Jesus had to die in his place.

LOOK (Continued)

What Jesus did for Barabbas is actually the very thing He has done for everyone who believes in Him. We might not think we are very much like Barabbas, but the Bible tells us that we all have sinned (Romans 3:23) and the wages (the just and fair result) of that sin is death (Romans 6:23). The only person in all of human history who never sinned, who was not guilty, who did not deserve death, is Jesus. Yet it was He, not us, who died on the cross to pay the price for our sins. We deserved to die on the cross as punishment for our own sins, but Jesus knew that the only way to save humanity was to die on the cross in our place. He may have literally taken Barabbas' place on the cross, but those who believe in Christ can say that He died in our place as well.

Remember, this only applies to those who have put their faith in Jesus. He came and died so that everyone who believes in Him can avoid the death they deserve and have eternal life with Him (John 3:16), but as the verse says, you can only receive this eternal life if you believe in Jesus Christ. To do this, the Bible says that we must confess Jesus as our Lord and believe that God raised Him from the dead (Romans 10:9). If we have done that, the Bible says that we receive the same gift that we read about today: Jesus dying in our place so that we can live with Him forever.

What is my response to this passage of Scripture? How should my life change according to what this passage teaches me? What are the practical things I can do throughout the week to make this true in my life?

TOOK

Give the students an opportunity to respond to the Gospel and ask Jesus to be their Lord and Savior. Make sure that they know what this means before making their decision.

As a class, memorize Romans 6:23.

Pray: Worship Jesus for His innocence and His sacrifice for sins. Thank Him for dying on the cross in our place.

Parent Question: How is what Jesus did for Barabbas like what He did for us?

FURTHER STUDY

Commentary on Mark 14:55-65 & 15:1-15 by David Guzik

D. The trial before the Sanhedrin.

1. Mark does not record the preliminary trial before Annas, who was the real power behind the high priest's office (recorded in [John 18:12-13, 19-23](#)), nor does he record the second trial of Jesus before the Sanhedrin, the "official" daylight trial recorded in [Luke 22:66-71](#).

a. There are similarities between the trials, because the same people are involved. There were actually three phases of Jesus' trial before the Jewish authorities and three phases of His trial before the Roman authorities, and they should not be confused.

b. Upon His arrest, Jesus was first taken to Annas, then to an illegal "night court" of the Sanhedrin (which Mark will describe next), then to an "official" daylight trial of the Sanhedrin, then to Pilate, who sent Jesus to Herod, who sent Jesus back to Pilate, where He then went to the cross.

2. ([Mar 14:53-59](#)) Jesus is accused before the Sanhedrin.

And they led Jesus away to the high priest; and with him were assembled all the chief priests, the elders, and the scribes. But Peter followed Him at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest. And he sat with the servants and warmed himself at the fire. Now the chief priests and all the council sought testimony against Jesus to put Him to death, but found none. For many bore false witness against Him, but their testimonies did not agree. Then some rose up and bore false witness against Him, saying, "We heard Him say, 'I will destroy this temple made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands.'" But not even then did their testimony agree.

a. **The led Jesus away to the high priest:** This trial of Jesus was terribly illegal according to Jewish law. There was much in the Jewish legal process to protect the rights of the accused, and all of this was ignored and deliberately broken by those who were determined to put Jesus to death.

b. **Heard Him say, "I will destroy this temple":** Jesus, as recorded in [John 2:19](#), spoke clearly of the temple of His body. The words of Jesus' false accusers - "**this temple made with hands**" were never uttered by Jesus. Essentially, they accused Jesus of being a terrorist who wanted to destroy the temple.

i. "The accusation was utterly serious, for throughout the Graeco-Roman world the destruction or desecration of places of worship was regarded as a capital offense." (Lane)

ii. Morgan on their accusation: "This is the most diabolical form of untruth, because it is an untruth in which there is an element of truth. We remember Tennyson's words: 'A lie that is all a lie, may be met and fought outright; But a lie that is partly the truth, is a harder matter to fight.'"

c. **But not even then did their testimony agree:** Though it was a false case, the accusers of Jesus could not put together a good case. The false witnesses kept disagreeing with one another.

i. "It was harder to agree on a consistent lie than to tell the simple truth." (Cole)

3. ([Mar 14:60-62](#)) Jesus testifies at His own trial.

And the high priest stood up in the midst and asked Jesus, saying, "Do You answer nothing? What *is it* these men testify against You?" But He kept silent and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked Him, saying to Him, "Are You the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?" Jesus said, "I am. And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven."

a. **And the high priest stood up in the midst and asked Jesus:** "For greater solemnity he arose to make up by bluster the lack of evidence." (Robinson)

i. "Suggesting that the high priest arose from his seat and advanced into the semi-circle of the council towards Jesus - the action of an irritated, baffled man." (Bruce)

ii. "It was a tacit confession that Christ had been proved innocent up till then. The high priest would not have needed to draw something out of the accused one if there had been sufficient material against him elsewhere. The trial had been a dead failure up to that point, and he knew it, and was red with rage. Now he attempts to bully the prisoner that he may extract some declaration from him which may save all further trouble of witnesses, and end the matter." (Spurgeon)

b. **He kept silent and answered nothing:** Jesus *could* have mounted a magnificent defense here, calling forth all the various witnesses to His deity, power and character. The people He taught, the people He healed, the dead risen, the blind who see, even the demons themselves testified to His deity. But Jesus *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* ([Isaiah 53:7](#)).

c. **I am. And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power:** Jesus, when asked under formal oath to "incriminate" Himself, essentially said, "You now stand in judgment of Me, but I will be the ultimate judge." These were words that would have given any wise judge pause, but did not slow His accusers down at all.

i. Here we see that Jesus was on trial - He seemed to lose, but He really won. His conduct at His trial showed His innocence, and was all part of the plan of redemption - which we must receive as God's gift.

ii. In a real sense, it isn't Jesus that is on trial at all - it is more true to say that the religious leaders were on trial - they seemed to win, but they really lost. In fact, we all are on trial before Jesus, and will be held to account for what we do with Him.

4. ([Mar 14:63-65](#)) The Sanhedrin condemns Jesus to death.

Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, "What further need do we have of witnesses? You have heard the blasphemy! What do you think?" And they all condemned Him to be deserving of death. Then some began to spit on Him, and to blindfold Him, and to beat Him, and to say to Him, "Prophecy!" And the officers struck Him with the palms of their hands.

a. They react with a self-righteous, melodramatic horror (**the high priest tore his clothes ... You have heard the blasphemy!**) and subsequent abuse and brutality (**some began to spit on Him ... and to beat Him**).

b. **And the officers struck Him with the palms of their hands:** As terrible as the judgment of the religious leaders against Jesus was, at least it had a *reason* - envy and fear of Jesus. These **officers**, taking a bizarre pleasure in torturing Jesus, don't even have a *reason* - they do it only because of what others (the religious leaders) said about Jesus.

i. In this sense, we see also that these **officers** were "on trial" before Jesus, and they seemed to win because they landed the punches and laughed, but they really lost.

ii. When we consider who Jesus is - the sinless Son of God, who *never* sinned against God or man in His entire life, the scene becomes all the more horrifying: this is what the world does to God when they have the opportunity.

iii. "Be astonished, O heavens, and be horribly afraid. His face is the light of the universe, his person is the glory of heaven, and they 'began to spit on him.' Alas, my God, that man should be so base!" (Spurgeon)

c. Understanding that Jesus endured such pain and humiliation should cause us to respond in three ways.

i. *We should bravely bear pain and humiliation for the sake of Jesus ourselves.* "How ready should we be to hear slander and ridicule for Jesus' sake. Do not get into a huff, and think it a strange thing that people should mock at you. Who are you, dear sir? Who are you? What can you be if compared with Christ? If they spat upon him, why should they not spit upon you? If they buffeted him, why should they not buffet you? Shall your Master have all the rough of it? Shall he have all the bitter, and you all the sweet? A pretty soldier you, to demand better fare than your Captain!" (Spurgeon)

ii. *We should be more diligent to praise Jesus.* "How earnestly, next, ought we to honor our dear Lord. If men were so eager to put him to shame, let us be ten times more earnest to bring him glory. Is there anything we can do today by which he may be honored? Let us set about it. Can we make any sacrifice? Can we perform any difficult task which would glorify him? Let us not deliberate, but at once do it with our might. Let us be inventive in modes of glorifying him, even as his adversaries were ingenious in the methods of his shame." (Spurgeon)

iii. *We should have more assurance and confidence in receiving the finished work of Jesus for our redemption.* "Surely I know that he who suffered this, since he was verily the Son of the Blessed, must have ability to save us. Such griefs must be a full atonement for our transgressions. Glory be to God, that spittle on his countenance means a clear, bright face for me. Those false accusations on his character mean no condemnation for me." (Spurgeon)

A. The trial before Pilate.

1. ([Mar 15:1-5](#)) The first audience with Pilate.

Immediately, in the morning, the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council; and they bound Jesus, led *Him* away, and delivered *Him* to Pilate. Then Pilate asked Him, "Are You the King of the Jews?" He answered and said to him, "*It is as you say.*" And the chief priests accused Him of many things, but He answered nothing. Then Pilate asked Him again, saying, "Do You answer nothing? See how many things they testify against You!" But Jesus still answered nothing, so that Pilate marveled.

a. **Held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole counsel:** This is the "official" daylight trial of Jesus before the Sanhedrin described in [Luke 22:66-71](#).

i. This trial was held **immediately, in the morning** for good reason. "The detail that Jesus was delivered to Pilate's forum early in the morning is a significant index of the historical accuracy of the tradition. It was necessary for the Sanhedrin to bring its business to Pilate as soon after dawn as possible because the working day of a Roman official began at the earliest hour of daylight. Legal trials in the Roman forum were customarily held shortly after sunrise." (Lane)

b. **Delivered Him to Pilate:** Why did the Jewish leaders take Jesus to Pilate at all? First, they did not have the legal right to execute their own criminals because Rome revoked that right in 7 A.D. At the time, the Jews re-

garded this loss as a national disaster because to them it was the final proof that they no longer had the basic right of self-government: to punish their own criminals, and it demonstrated that they were totally under the boot of Rome.

i. There were times when the Jews disregarded this prohibition of the Romans and executed those they considered criminals, such as at the stoning of Stephen ([Acts 7:57-60](#)). Why didn't they take things into their own hands regarding Jesus? Because they knew multitudes had a favorable opinion of Jesus and if Pilate executed Him, they could distance themselves from the political fallout.

ii. In all probability, they brought Jesus to Pilate's residence when he visited Jerusalem at Herod's Palace. "When the Roman officials came to Jerusalem on special occasions, particularly at the great Jewish festivals, they took up quarters in the palace of Herod, which was situated at the northwest of the city. Josephus states explicitly that the procurator, Gessius Florus, lived there and held his court on the public square in front of the buildings" (Lane)

c. **Delivered Him to Pilate:** The Jewish leaders had reason to expect a favorable result when they sent Jesus to Pilate. Secular history shows us he was a cruel, ruthless man, and completely insensitive to the moral feelings of others - surely, they thought, **Pilate** will put this Jesus to death.

i. There was something working *against* this expectation. History tells us that Pilate simply didn't like the Jews, and that he believed they were a stubborn and rebellious people. Since he was constantly suspicious of the Jews, when *they* brought him a prisoner for execution he immediately suspected there was a hidden agenda at work.

ii. Nevertheless, before Pilate could make a decision, he had to follow the normal procedures for a trial. Just like everything the Romans did, there was an established procedure for a criminal trial - trials that were public by principle.

- The plaintiff brought an indictment against the accused

- The magistrate - the judge - examined both the accusation and the accused

- The two main sources of evidence were the statements of the accused and evidence brought by witnesses, either for or against the accused

- When all the evidence was received, a court official declared that all the evidence was in

- The magistrate was then free to consult with advisors, and then announce his verdict from the judgment seat. The sentence was executed immediately

iii. Mark picks up the trial of Jesus at the second step - the charges were brought to Pilate ("This man is guilty of treason because He claims to be the king of the Jews in opposition to Caesar"). Now Pilate will examine the accused: **Are You the king of the Jews?**

d. **Are You the King of the Jews?** The Jewish rulers knew that if they brought Jesus before Pilate on the charge of claiming to be God, Pilate would merely yawn. He would say, "We Romans have hundreds of gods. What is the harm with one more?" Yet, if they brought Jesus before Pilate as **the King of the Jews**, Pilate would have to take Jesus as a potential *political* threat, because there could be no king except Caesar, and Pilate was Caesar's representative.

i. Ironically, Jesus stood accused of doing exactly what He refused to do: taking a political stand against Rome.

ii. Jesus was indeed the king of the Jews, but not in a political or military sense. This is why He said, "yes" to Pilate's question, but "yes" with a reservation (**It is as you say**), and why He said nothing to the further accusations against Him (**the chief priests accused Him of many things, but He answered nothing**). If Jesus would have answered a plain "Yes" to Pilate's question, Pilate would have all he needed to hear, and would have immediately declared Jesus guilty of treason against Rome. Because Jesus gave a qualified "Yes," it merited further examination.

iii. [Luke 23:2](#) tells us what these accusations were. They said Jesus incited the people to riot, that He told them not to pay their taxes, and that He fancied Himself a king in political opposition to Rome. Pilate was unconvinced, so the accusers repeated and strengthened their third charge: *He stirs up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, beginning in Galilee to this place* ([Luke 23:5](#)).

e. **The chief priests accused Him of many things:** Why, when Jesus had already "confessed" to Pilate? "The Sanhedrists must have seen from Pilate's manner, a smile on his face perhaps, that he did not take the confession seriously." (Bruce)

f. **Pilate marveled:** No doubt, Pilate had seen many men grovel for their lives before him. He also stood in judgment of many men as the governor of a Roman province. Yet there was something different about Jesus that Pilate marveled at.

i. "Such silence was wholly unusual in the forum, and demonstrated a presence and a dignity which puzzled the prefect." (Lane)

ii. Without a defense from the accused, the law was on the side of the accusers. Roman magistrates didn't like to find an undefended man guilty, but they often felt they had to.

2. ([Mar 15:6-15](#)) The second audience with Pilate.

Now at the feast he was accustomed to releasing one prisoner to them, whomever they requested. And there was one named Barabbas, *who was* chained with his fellow rebels; they had committed murder in the rebellion. Then the multitude, crying aloud, began to ask *him to do* just as he had always done for them. But Pilate answered them, saying, "Do you want me to release to you the King of the Jews?" For he knew that the chief priests had handed Him over because of envy. But the chief priests stirred up the crowd, so that he should rather release Barabbas to them. Pilate answered and said to them again, "What then do you want me to do *with Him* whom you call the King of the Jews?" So they cried out again, "Crucify Him!" Then Pilate said to them, "Why, what evil has He done?" But they cried out all the more, "Crucify Him!" So Pilate, wanting to gratify the crowd, released Barabbas to them; and he delivered Jesus, after he had scourged *Him*, to be crucified.

a. **He was accustomed to releasing one prisoner to them:** Pilate knew Jesus was an innocent man ([Luke 23:14](#) records him as saying, *I have found no fault in this Man*). Yet Pilate had a politically explosive situation on his hands. Will he do what is right (free an innocent man) or what is politically expedient (execute a man brought before him by the Jews for treason)?

i. In addition, Pilate was no friend of the Jews. He could see through their manipulation, and **he knew that the chief priests had handed Him over because of envy**. This made Pilate want to find a way to free Jesus even more.

b. **Then the multitude, crying aloud, began to ask:** This Jewish **multitude** - mostly Jews from Jerusalem, because most of the visiting pilgrims stayed out in *the country* ([Mark 15:21](#)) and were not in the city this early - didn't like or trust Pilate at all. When he suggested the release of one of two prisoners, they immediately chose the *other* one, as much anything just to be "against" the Roman magistrate. As far as the crowd was concerned, it was simple. *Their* Sanhedrin said Jesus should die, but said nothing about Barabbas. *Rome's* magis-

trate said Jesus should be set free and Barabbas executed. They would always side with *their* Sanhedrin against *Rome's* magistrate.

i. "The crowd seems to have come to Pilate's tribunal for the primary purpose of asking for Barabbas's release since it was customary for a prisoner to be released at the Passover Feast." (Wessel)

ii. "If one wonders why the crowd was fickle, he may recall that this was not yet the same people who followed him in triumphal entry and in the temple. That was the plan of Judas to get the thing over before those Galilean sympathizers waked up." (Robertson)

c. **Do you want me to release to you the King of the Jews?** In the midst of this, Pilate believes he has found a way to do what is right, yet not pay a price for it. Pilate thinks Jesus can escape death if He is released according to the custom of releasing a prisoner every Passover season.

i. Pilate figures, "If this man claimed to be king, and was even the slightest bit hostile to Rome, then the crowd will love him. These Jewish leaders don't want Jesus to go free, but the crowd will sympathize with Him."

ii. It is a strange, almost insane scene: a cruel, ruthless Roman governor trying to win the life of a miracle-working Jew against the strenuous efforts of both the Jewish leaders and the crowd.

d. **They cried out again, "Crucify Him!"** Pilate was convinced the crowd would release Jesus, but instead they chose **Barabbas, who was chained with his fellow insurrectionists**. The word "**insurrectionists**" basically amounts to "terrorists." Barabbas was a *real* political enemy of Rome, not a falsely accused political enemy, as Jesus was.

i. **What then do you want me to do with Him whom you call the King of the Jews?** Pilate probably hoped that the crowd would be satisfied with a lesser punishment - that Jesus could be beaten and then let go. Pilate was probably surprised and horrified that they **cried out more exceedingly, "Crucify Him!"**

ii. Why did the crowd choose Barabbas? Because **the chief priests stirred up the crowd, so that he should rather release Barabbas to them**. We may imagine that many in this crowd had, just a few days before, been crying "Hosanna" to Jesus - but there has never been a shortage of people who will just do whatever the crowd will do.

iii. As the crowd rejects Jesus, they embrace Barabbas - whose name means "son of the father," and who was a terrorist and a murderer. They have accepted a false "son of the father."

iv. If anyone should be able to say, "Jesus died for me," it should be **Barabbas**. He knew what it was to have Jesus die on his behalf, the innocent in the place of the guilty.

e. **They cried out more exceedingly, "Crucify Him!"** Pilate is now in a dangerous place; the crowd is almost becoming a riot. If there was one thing that would get him in trouble with his Roman superiors, it was a riot. So, with both the people and the Jewish rulers demanding the death of Jesus, Pilate found it impossible to oppose them both - so he began the process of execution by having Jesus **scourged**.

i. Even before Jesus was to be **scourged**, His physical condition was weak. We can assume that Jesus was in good physical condition up until the night of His arrest. "The rigors of Jesus' ministry (that is, traveling by foot throughout Palestine) would have precluded any major physical illness or a weak general constitution." (Dr. William Edwards [with others] in *JAMA*, 3/21/86)

ii. Add to Jesus' condition the horror of being **scourged**. The goal of the scourging was to weaken the victim to a state just short of collapse and death. "As the Roman soldiers repeatedly struck the victim's back with full

force, the iron balls would cause deep contusions, and the leather thongs and sheep bones would cut into the skin and subcutaneous tissues. Then, as the flogging continued, the lacerations would tear into the underlying skeletal muscles and produce quivering ribbons of bleeding flesh. Pain and blood loss generally set the stage for circulatory shock. The extent of blood loss may well have determined how long the victim would survive the cross." (Edwards)

iii. "The severe scourging, with its intense pain and appreciable blood loss, most probably left Jesus in a pre-shock state. Moreover, hematidrosis had rendered his skin particularly tender. The physical and mental abuse meted out by the Jews and the Romans, as well as the lack of food, water, and sleep, also contributed to his generally weakened state. Therefore, even before the actual crucifixion, Jesus' physical condition was at least serious and possibly critical." (Edwards)

f. **To be crucified:** In pronouncing the sentence, "The mode of death had to be specified under Roman law, and it may be assumed that Pilate used the conventional form, 'You shall mount the cross' (*ibis in crucem*) or 'I consign you to the cross' (*abi in crucem*).'" (Lane)