Jesus on Trial Part 2

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Preacher: Dr. Michael Staton

[0:00] This is the First Mustang Pulpit Podcast, a podcast of the weekly preaching and teaching at First Mustang.! Thank you for joining us. Just a few thoughts before we get into our time in the Word this morning.

I want to extend very sincere thanks for many of you who have reached out to me this week and were praying for me as I was in California at Masters University and seminary there.
Thankful for your encouragement. They kept me extremely busy. I think I ended up leading five services as well as leading a time of study with the staff at the university.
So I'm so grateful for your prayers for that. Thank you. Thank you. This really begins just an extended, extremely busy season. This weekend we are hosting the G3 conference here.
We'll have about a thousand people here from all over the nation and people watching from literally all around the world this weekend.
[1:14] So for many of you who have volunteered to serve, thank you for doing that. This is a really important weekend as we get a chance to be a blessing and we pray show biblical hospitality to people from all around the country.

I'll be preaching one of those plenary sessions this coming weekend and so I appreciate your prayer support in that regard. And then in two weeks we're going down to Southlake, Texas.
I'll be preaching at a conference there at Countryside Bible Church. And so pray for Marce and I as we travel down there and she drives, I preach.
That's kind of what we both do. We never get those mixed up. So be praying for that. And so we are excited about all that is going on this next month or so and approach it prayerfully.
Also, just one last word. As a church, many of us have been reading through the Bible this year through one specific reading plan. If you are a part of that, let me encourage you to hang in there.
[2:33] We're almost there. We have finished now 75% of the read through the Bible. If you don't have a reading plan and you kind of feel like your time in the world is just kind of floundering, let me encourage you to jump in here these last three months with us.

You can go to our church website, fbcmustang.org, and click on the podcast tab. And then go down to where it says through the Bible.
And on there is our reading plan. You can jump in on Tuesday, which starts a new month for us, October 1st. And each day I provide 12 to 15 minutes of teaching on what we have been studying, which means I am 75% through also with that task that I chose to take on this year.
And so prayers, as the Lord brings that to your mind, I want to finish that well and finish that strong and maybe even live to be on the other side of it.
We'll see. But if you don't have a Bible reading plan, jump in with us and join with us this last quarter of the year. Mark chapter 14.
[3:52] Let me invite you to open with me again to Mark chapter 14. We are looking at the trials of Jesus as we've come here in our study through Mark's gospel.

And just let me take a few minutes to remind you of where we have been in our study the last several weeks, as well as a review from last Sunday with the trials.
So just recall that Jesus has been in the upper room with his apostles in the upper room. He has taught them. He has served them. He has demonstrated what humility looks like as he washed their feet.
He has taught them about his coming sacrifice and what that entails. Judas has been dismissed. He is going to begin the work of the final details of the betrayal of Christ.
Jesus leads the 11 apostles. 11 because Judas, one of the 12, has left. So it's Jesus and the 11 that will go out from the upper room across the Kidron, up through that part there on the eastern

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side on the Mount of Olives, to a specific place known as the Garden of Gethsemane.
[5:13] In the Garden, he will ask his disciples to spend an hour in prayer. During most of the time, the disciples sleep more than they pray. Christ pours out his heart to his Father.

We see the anguish of his soul. Jesus goes three times to encourage the disciples to stay awake and to stay alert and to be engaged in spiritual battle.
And at the end of that, here comes Judas with the mob of several hundred men carrying torches and lanterns, expecting Jesus to run and hide from them.
The torches and lanterns would have been helpful for them to be able to see not only their walk to the garden, but to be able to capture him if they have to go hunt him down. They've got clubs, they've got swords, you've got Jewish leaders, you've got Roman leaders who agree on essentially nothing except their opposition to Jesus.
And so they go and they arrest him. The apostles of Jesus then flee and run away. Jesus is bound and he is then taken to begin his trials.
[6:29] We looked at this last week, but let me just give you a quick overview to remind you. I want this portion of the life of Jesus to be so ingrained in you that you never forget it because it will help you the rest of your life as you read the Gospels.

So when Jesus goes to trial, he's going to go through six trials. Three and three. The first out of three trials are Jewish trials. They are religious in nature.
And the charge against him is the charge of blasphemy, claiming to be the son of God. Those three trials begin with the first trial.
We looked at it last Sunday. The first trial is in front of Annas. Annas is the former high priest. He's still the most powerful religious man in the land.
His sons followed him as high priest. The current high priest is Caiaphas, who married Annas' daughter. So Caiaphas is his son-in-law. And this first trial is more of a preliminary hearing.
[7:36] It's going to set off a number of ways that the leaders disobey their own laws. Because their regard here is not for truth or justice.

It's for their agenda. Their agenda is not to silence Jesus. It's to destroy Jesus. So they're going to take the law and stay as much in the lane as they can to hold some kind of pretense of keeping the law.
Though they will deviate outside of what they are allowed to do numerous times. Because again, their goal isn't justice. It's execution. Jesus will go first in front of Annas.
This first trial takes place right around midnight then on Thursday night. It's recorded for us in John 18. At the end of that first trial in front of Annas, they're going to retie the hands of Jesus.
He will be bound again and send him to his second trial, which will be in front of Caiaphas and some members of the Sanhedrin. That is recorded for us in Mark 14.
[9:00] And we looked at most of this last week as it starts here in verse 53 and runs down to verse 65. Peter is listening.

Remember, Jesus has made the prophetic word that Peter will soon deny Christ. Which seems impossible in the moment as you're just reading it because Peter and the other 11 were just with Jesus in the upper room and in the garden.
Peter's the one who draws his sword and swings for the head of a man named Malchus. You could bring some accusation against Peter, but one of the charges you would not expect to have against him is cowardice.
He's a bit brash and arrogant on this night. He is saying that others may fall away, but he never will. He sleeps instead of praise. He takes out a sword and swings for the fences.
He's done some things he should not do, but denying Christ right now feels impossible. Let's pick it up in verse 56.
[10:18] We're in that second trial. For many bore false witness against him, but their testimony did not agree. In other words, there's all kinds of made-up stories that are being brought against Jesus.

They're just taking everything they can, throwing it all against the wall, and hoping something sticks. Verse 57 says, Some stood up and bore false witness against him, saying, We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another not made with hands.

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Let me explain to you what's going on here. Matthew 26 tells us that the leaders were looking for witnesses. Even if people gave false testimony.
The witnesses they have here don't even agree with each other. That's what happens when people aren't speaking the truth. They're just trying to fulfill their agenda.
There's a couple of witnesses who step forward and say that this man, Jesus, threatened to destroy the temple.
[11:36] Now that's not true. We know that's not true. Jesus has said several times, If you destroy the temple on the third day, I will rebuild it.

Jesus speaking of his own body. If you put him to death, which is going to happen on the third day, he's going to rise again. But even if you're going to take his words and twist them, even then, Jesus never said he would destroy the temple.
The only thing he said about the temple is that he would rebuild it on the third day. And so their testimonies are untrue. They are contradictory.
The way that they have pursued the testimonies is illegal. Verse 59, Yet even about this, their testimony did not agree. And the high priest stood up in the midst and asked Jesus, Have you no answer to make?
What is it these men testify against you? Now the high priest is Caiaphas. Historians tell us that the average length of time someone spent as a high priest was four years, though Caiaphas had been in that position for many years longer than that.
[12:57] Now when you and I consider the term high priest, we probably think of a righteous man. We think of a spiritual man. If a priest is supposed to do the work of God, if the high priest is supposed to be the leader of that, we think of a high priest as a kind of devoted religious man.

That's not how Caiaphas is at all. Caiaphas rather is a politician, a ruthless politician. As a Sadducee, the Sadducees denied the supernatural.
Sadducees didn't believe in the resurrection. And at this point, Caiaphas is the high priest, has no interest in truth, has no interest in honesty, just trying to get this mockery of a trial finished so they can have some semblance of following the law so they can accomplish their predetermined agenda of putting Jesus to death.
Verse 61, speaking of Jesus, but he remained silent and made no answer. This reminds us of the Old Testament, Isaiah 53, speaking prophetically 700 years before the birth of Christ.
Verse 7, he was oppressed and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth. Like a lamb that is led to the slaughter and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth.
[14:40] Caiaphas is getting frustrated. So he says that according to our text, verse 61 again, the high priest asked him, are you the Christ?

Are you the son of the blessed? Matthew 26 informs us here, at this point, Caiaphas puts Jesus under oath. I adjure you by the living God.
This is really amazing. Caiaphas calling down on the most stringent, most significant oath for truth possible while the trial he is conducting is unlawful.
Caiaphas is asking Jesus two questions. The two questions he needs answered and able to carry out the plan to put him to death.
Do you claim to be the Messiah? Do you claim to be the son of God? That's what Caiaphas says to Jesus. Are you the Christ?
[15:50] Are you the anointed? Are you the chosen one? Are you the Messiah? Are you the Christ, the son of the blessed? Are you the Messiah, the son of God?

Now, everything in this moment hinges on his answer to these two questions. Remember, the charge is blasphemy.
If you know part of the end of the story, don't be confused here. Jesus is going to be eventually put to death on a cross for the charge of treason.
But let me remind you, as we looked at last week, this charge gets changed. In the three Jewish trials, their charge is blasphemy, claiming to be the Messiah.
But by law, they're not able to put him to death at the end of the third trial. They have to go across here to get Rome's approval, which gets the second set of three trials.
[16:48] The Roman trials are political trials. Rome will not put a man to death for blasphemy because they really don't care at all about the Jewish people's idea behind a Messiah or a prophet.

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Because Rome won't put a man to death for blasphemy, the leaders who will convict him of being guilty of blasphemy, when you come over here to the Roman trials, are going to change that charge to treason, claiming to be the king of the Jews.
But forgetting that illegality for just a moment, let's go back over here to the Jewish trials. The question now is, are you the Messiah?
Are you the Son of God? This is the question of who Christ is and their purpose in asking the question is to get him on record saying, that is who I am, which they will then convict him of blasphemy.
And Jesus answered, I am. He goes further. Verse 62, Jesus here borrows from Daniel 7 and Psalm 110, affirms not only is he the Messiah, he is the one who will return in power and will judge all the earth.
[18:31] In other words, Jesus here, even in his trial, affirms who he is and is warning even those who seek his death that if they deny who he is, it will not be the last time they see him.

They will stand before him in judgment. Verse 63, the high priest tore his garments and said, what further witnesses do we need?
You have heard his blasphemy. What is your decision? In their culture, tearing the garment was a sign of grief.
This was Caiaphas tearing his garment, saying I'm grieving at the blasphemy that I've heard. And they all condemned him as deserving death.
Verse 65, and some began to spit on him and to cover his face and to strike him, saying to him, prophesy. And the guards received him with blows.
[19:44] So what they do is Caiaphas pronounces a guilty verdict on him. They begin to spit on him, the ultimate sign of disrespect and hatred.

They put some kind of a blindfold over him. And then they begin this game where they begin to strike him and say, if you're really a prophet, tell us who it was that struck you.
This is blatant disregard for their own law. This is blatant hatred for Christ. And as we read this in Mark 14, let me just remind you of what Jesus said in Mark 10, verse 33, when he said to his apostles, see, we are going up to Jerusalem.
The Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and the scribes, and they will condemn him to death and deliver him over to the Gentiles, and they will mock him and spit on him and flog him and kill him.
And after three days, he will rise. At this point, we have finished trial two.
[21:02] The first trial is in front of Annas, the former high priest. Second trial, in front of Caiaphas and some of the Sanhedrin, Caiaphas, the current high priest. Now, turn over to Luke 22.

What happens next is the third trial. In between trial two and trial three, a few hours will pass.
They need two convictions of guilt in order to put a man to death. So, they're going to dismiss and go home to pretend as though they're keeping at least some part of their law.
They're going to reconvene. It's somewhere around 5 a.m. The Sanhedrin is going to gather there with Caiaphas, the high priest.
And in Luke 22, verse 66, we pick up this third trial.
[22:17] When the day came, the assembly of the elders and the people gathered together, both chief priests and scribes. Remember, the Sanhedrin is made up of 70 members plus the high priest, makes it 71.

verse 67. If you are the Christ, tell us.
Jesus says, if I tell you, you will not believe. And if I ask you, you will not answer. But from now on, the Son of Man shall be seated at the right hand of the power of God.
It's hard for us in our world today, in our culture today, to fully grasp exactly what Jesus just said. At this point, Jesus has been awake for about 24 hours.
He's been falsely accused, drug around the area, threatened in the garden, bound, spit on, physically struck, thrown into a holding cell for a couple of hours, brought back up now for his third trial, and with these men who have been trying to find a way to put him to death for the last six weeks at least, in a formal sense, in that moment, Jesus says to them, let me tell you who I am.
[24:03] I am the Son of Man, meaning he is the biblical fulfillment of the one who is prophesied to be Messiah, and when this is all over, I will be seated at the right hand of the Father.

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In other words, he tells them, you're in charge of nothing. He's saying, as I told you a few hours ago, I will come again.
I am the judge. Jesus is not only not cowering to their display of power and authority, he reminds them he alone has power and authority.
Verse 70, they ask, are you the Son of God then? And he said to them, you say that I am.
Verse 71, then they said, what further testimony do we need? We have heard it ourselves from his own lips.
[25:11] So what's happened? He was arrested in the garden. Around midnight, he is taken first to the house of Annas, the former high priest, the one who Jesus broke up his robbery and thievery there a couple of days ago at the temple.

He's then taken from Annas to the place where Caiaphas and Sanhedrin would gather. They are going to break numerous laws find him guilty of blasphemy claiming to be the Son of God.
They're going to break for a couple of hours. They're going to reconvene. At this third trial, they're going to find him guilty of blasphemy again and say, we are finished.
He claims to be the Son of God. He has said so under oath. He is guilty. It was illegal for Annas to interrogate Jesus alone, but he did that.
You could not hold a trial on a Sabbath holiday or preparation day, but they did that. Proceedings take place at the high priest's home and not in the temple. The guilty verdict was supposed to have 24 hours in between.
[26:39] They've ignored that. The evidence against the accused cannot be introduced by the presiding official. They have ignored that. They were supposed to vote youngest to oldest.

They have ignored that. Trials will be held during the daytime. They have ignored that. And in this mock charade of justice, they find him guilty.
The charge is blasphemy. What they want at this point is to put Jesus to death. But they can't. Because Rome has not given them the authority to do so. Rome has to sign off on it. As I mentioned before, there may be an occasion where Rome isn't paying attention and they could get by with it, but not now.
Not in the time where hundreds of thousands of people have come into town for the feast.
Incidentally, if Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin could have pulled this off, if they could have put him to death on their own terms, the Old Testament method of killing a false prophet was by stoning.
[28:06] That's how he would have been killed. But centuries before this even takes place, the Old Testament prophesies that the Messiah will die not by being stoned, but by being lifted up.

before crucifixion even is a thing, hundreds of years earlier, the biblical prophets speak of the Messiah dying by being raised up as you would be on crucifixion.
If Caiaphas had his way, Jesus would have been killed then, and it would have been by being stoned to death. But they have to get the permission of Rome.
They hate this. It's another reminder that they don't have freedom, and incidentally, the major reason why the Jewish leaders despised Jesus is what they wanted more than anything was a Messiah who would help them defeat Rome.
Jesus came to help you conquer sin, to provide salvation. Jesus came to save the people not from military things and taxation.
[29:36] He came to deliver them from hell. They couldn't care less. give us somebody who will just give us authority and power and money.

That's what they wanted. And ironically, the very things that they desired, freedom from Rome, now is the very thing that they hate the most because now they've got to take Jesus and march him over from here to Rome to get Rome's blessing to put him to death.
Never mind the fact that what the Jewish leaders have found him guilty of will be of no mind to the Roman leaders. But again, this isn't about silencing a man.
This is about their desire to destroy him. So these men are responsible for all of their disobedience and yet Jesus is in control.
Listen to the words of John 10 verse 17. For this reason the Father loves me because I lay down my life that I may take it up again.
[31:05] No one takes it from me but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and I have authority to take it up again.

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Here, Jesus has been in front of three different trials. These men trying to intimidate Jesus to complete their plan to put him to death and they are held responsible for their sin and held responsible for their acts of disobedience as they are doing exactly what their sinful hearts desire to do.
And yet, even with all of that, Jesus has already made clear that nobody takes his life from him. He lays it down. And if he did not lay it down, it could never have been taken from him.
Jesus does not die a political victim. He dies as a substitutionary atonement for our sin. And so, at the end of the third trial, trial one in front of Annas, trial two, Caiaphas and the members of the Sanhedrin, trial three, a second trial with Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin, they find him guilty of blasphemy, claiming to be the Son of God.
They're now going to take him over to Rome, where we'll pick up next time and begin a series of three trials here. But the question I want to press home to you this morning is not simply a question of do you understand and the verdict that was given to Jesus 2,000 years ago.
[33:04] I want to press in on you this morning and ask you what is your verdict on Jesus today? The question 2,000 years ago is still the same question that we need to consider today.

Who do you say Jesus is? Interestingly enough, there are many today who want to say Jesus was just a teacher, he was a prophet, he was a good man.
Understand clearly, Jesus was not convicted of blasphemy because he claimed to be a teacher. He was convicted of blasphemy because he said he was the very son of God.
So my question to you is who do you believe Jesus is? if you would say that you believe that Jesus was a good noble man who taught good noble things and that's all that he was, just understand that's not who Jesus said he was nor is it even who his most, the people who hated him most, those opponents of his, that's not what they convicted him of either.
Nobody in these trials said he was merely a teacher. If he's not just a teacher, if he's not just a man who preached, if he wasn't just a man who was nice to people and loved kids, if that's not who he was, then you really have two choices.
[35:10] You can say he is an absolute phony, a liar, someone who knew he was not the Messiah but just claimed to be.

Just so happened the evidence that he was the Messiah is so strong that you could ask a few different people who were dead and raised back to life who might tell you something different.
And if you say, well those are just his friends, no, no, it's the people who hated him most that saw those miracles and decided we must get rid of this guy. or you could say he really is who he said he was and as he said that there would be an empty tomb, there was an empty tomb.
and if that's true, if that's true, then we have reason to believe every word that came out of his mouth, including when he said I am the way and the truth and the life and no body comes to the Father except through him.
which means the single most important thing about any of us today is what we believe about Jesus.
[36:48] And if he's who he said he was and if the tomb is empty, then the most significant thing in your heart today is do you believe him?

Do you trust him? Do you love him? Are you following him? If the answer is no, the good news for you is that God in his amazing grace has brought you to this place this morning in his kindness he gave you breath to live today and has brought you to this sanctuary where you have heard songs about the cross of Jesus, you've heard a testimony about salvation, you have had scripture read to you about the death of Jesus and explained to you why you should believe in him.
If you don't know him as savior today could literally be the day that changes your eternity. And I want to plead with you this day to not take lightly what you've heard but to recognize that God in his grace sent forth his son who lived a sinless life, who died in our place, who was raised back to life, who ascended to heaven and one day is coming again.
And those who have trusted in his name are his forever and those who have rejected his truth will find salvation in no other name.
This very day call upon the name of the Lord and be saved. And if you would say that you believe these things, if you would say his grace has changed your life, then let's live changed lives.
[39:35] As God's people, let's walk and live in such a way that the world would hear and see a difference and nobody among us would be impressed with us because of how noble we are, but they would hear from our lips, any good within us can be boiled down to one precious truth, the grace of Jesus Christ changed our life.

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Let that be true of each who claim the name of Jesus. Our Father and our God, we thank you today for your word and pray that as we have sought to better understand the life of your son and the trials of your son, that it would spring from up within us a heart of worship that would believe and obey.
We pray that in Christ's name. Amen. Tonight is a great opportunity for us as we will gather back for worship at five and continue our study through 1 Thessalonians.
our Passion Student Choir will be leading us in our evening worship. We'll have about 100 or so students on the platform leading us. We also will be taking the Lord's Supper together at the end of our service.
And so, just a wonderful time for us tonight to gather back together as we take the Lord's Supper to remind ourselves of the sacrifice of Jesus that even this morning we have considered.
[41:08] It will be a great way to end the Lord's Day. Be back at five o'clock tonight. Join with us in worship. I love you church family. God bless you. You're dismissed. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

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