

## ON TRIAL

### John 18: 1 - 27

If you read a daily newspaper or listen to the news, you may have trouble understanding how God is working all things out according to his purposes. All things? Even the murder of innocent children? Or the widespread sale and social acceptance of hard drugs? Certainly some acts are so evil, so vile, that it seems there is no way God can bring good from them. But when we study the crucifixion of Jesus, we begin to understand how God can use all things for his glory. The torturous execution of an innocent man (especially this man, the Son of God) is certainly representative of the evil in this world. Yet through that murder, God accomplished the salvation of humankind.

1. How do you typically react to the daily news stories you hear or see?  
With detachment? Apathy? Despair?
2. What action did Judas take?  
What does the mention of "weapons" (verse 3) indicate about Judas's expectations about the encounter? But how did Jesus react?
3. What curious occurrence took place in verse 6?  
How do you interpret this?  
What specifically happened?  
What truth about Jesus might John have been emphasizing?
4. How did Peter try to handle the tense situation?  
What does this reveal about his understanding and trust in Jesus?  
How did Jesus respond to Peter's act?
5. What tense situations are you facing right now?  
How are you tempted to take matters into your own hands?  
What would it mean for you to trust Jesus completely in these matters?

### READ John 18: 12-27

6. Trace Peter's actions in these verses.  
What do you think motivated his repeated denials?  
What is significant about Peter's attitude here (review John 13: 37-38)?
7. What did the high priest quiz Jesus about?  
Why did Jesus resist giving extended answers to the questions?  
Why did the officer strike Jesus?  
How did Jesus's response highlight the illegality of this trial?

8. In what ways, both obvious and subtle, do you deny Christ?  
What situations make you susceptible to denying him?
  
9. Can you foresee a future situation in which you might be tempted to deny your Lord?  
What steps can you take now to plan to avoid it or form a different reaction?

### **SENTENCED TO DIE**

#### **john 18: 28 – 19:16**

Pilate was a pitiful example of a man who was afraid of losing his position by doing the right thing. He was caught between his fear of offending the Jews and his fear of condemning an innocent man who claimed to be the Son of God. From our vantage point, it is easy to condemn Pilate's actions. But how often do we compromise what we know is right in order to save our own reputation or our position?

10. Have you ever been falsely accused of doing wrong?  
How did you react?

#### **Read John 18:28 – 40**

11. How was the hypocrisy of the Jewish leaders evidenced?  
What was faulty about the logic they used when accusing Jesus?
  
12. What adjectives describe Pilate's attitudes as he dealt with the Jewish leaders?  
with Jesus?
  
13. What do you think Pilate was trying to tell Jesus with his rhetorical question in verse 38?
  
14. Select adjectives to describe Jesus.  
Did he try to defend himself?  
Why or why not (verse 36)?
  
15. What insight into his mission did Jesus give?
  
16. What difficult or even desperate situations do you face?  
How does (or should) your relationship with God affect your response?

#### **Read John 19:1-16**

17. Identify the different ways Jesus suffered or was humiliated.  
This suffering was predicted at various times in the Old Testament.  
What irony do you find in the Jewish religious leaders' fulfilling prophecy in this way?

18. Describe the stages of Pilate's struggle with his own conscience.  
What did he personally want to do?  
But what was more important to him?
19. What startling concession did the chief priests make (verse 15)?  
For them, why was it such a degrading compromise?  
What was their real motivation?
20. Was Jesus afraid of Pilate?  
Why or why not (verse 11)?  
How can Jesus perspective help you face your own fears?

*These questions are from JOHN: An eyewitness account of the Son of God by Whitney T Kuniholm (The Fisherman Bible Study Guides)*