# Lesson 27 Matthew Chapter 26:36-75 Jesus on Trial

Life in Christ: When did you feel closest to Our Lord this week?

The Agony in the Garden

1. A. Put yourself in the shoes of the “Peter and the two sons of Zebedee.” You have just had a nice evening meal with three cups of wine, think thanksgiving. In the late evening you walk out singing hymns with your friends across the valley to Gethsemane. There you sit down in the dark for about an hour while Jesus goes off to pray. What do you think you would be doing when Jesus came back each time? Consider Jesus’ words, “The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.” Do you find it hard to blame the Apostles for sleeping at this point? Why or why not?

Matthew 26:36-46

36 Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples, “Sit here while I go over there and pray.”

37 He took along Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to feel sorrow and distress.

38 Then he said to them, “My soul is sorrowful even to death. Remain here and keep watch with me.”

39 He advanced a little and fell prostrate in prayer, saying, “My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet, not as I will, but as you will.”

40 When he returned to his disciples he found them asleep. He said to Peter, “So you could not keep watch with me for one hour?

41 Watch and pray that you may not undergo the test. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

42 Withdrawing a second time, he prayed again, “My Father, if it is not possible that this cup pass without my drinking it, your will be done!”

43 Then he returned once more and found them asleep, for they could not keep their eyes open.

44 He left them and withdrew again and prayed a third time, saying the same thing again.

45 Then he returned to his disciples and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? Behold, the hour is at hand when the Son of Man is to be handed over to sinners.

46 Get up, let us go. Look, my betrayer is at hand.”

B In His prayer, Jesus prayed that “if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet, not as I will, but as you will.” Jesus will drink the Cup of Consummation, marking the consummation of the Passover, both literally in drinking wine, and spiritually in the consummation of the Passover sacrifice. When do these two events take place? See John 19:28-30

John 19:28-30

28 After this, aware that everything was now finished, in order that the scripture might be fulfilled, Jesus said, "I thirst."

29 There was a vessel filled with common wine. So they put a sponge soaked in wine on a sprig of hyssop and put it up to his mouth.

30 When Jesus had taken the wine, he said, "It is finished." And bowing his head, he handed over the spirit.

C In the agony of his prayer before the onset of His Passion, we often hear of Jesus sweating blood. Read carefully what Luke’s Gospel really says (the only Gospel to record this). Does Jesus actually sweat blood?

Luke 22:44

44 He was in such agony and he prayed so fervently that his sweat became like drops of blood falling on the ground.

The Betrayal and Arrest of Jesus.

1. A. Jesus is alone with eleven of His Apostles when Judas arrives with an armed mob to arrest Jesus. What evidence do you see in this passage that Jesus is really in control of the situation? What does Jesus really see is taking place? See vs 54

Matthew 26:47-56

47 While he was still speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, arrived, accompanied by a large crowd, with swords and clubs, who had come from the chief priests and the elders of the people.

48 His betrayer had arranged a sign with them, saying, “The man I shall kiss is the one; arrest him.”

49 Immediately he went over to Jesus and said, “Hail, Rabbi!” and he kissed him.

50 Jesus answered him, “Friend, do what you have come for.” Then stepping forward they laid hands on Jesus and arrested him.

51 And behold, one of those who accompanied Jesus put his hand to his sword, drew it, and struck the high priest’s servant, cutting off his ear.

52 Then Jesus said to him, “Put your sword back into its sheath, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword.

53 Do you think that I cannot call upon my Father and he will not provide me at this moment with more than twelve legions of angels?

54 But then how would the scriptures be fulfilled which say that it must come to pass in this way?”

55 At that hour Jesus said to the crowds, “Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs to seize me? Day after day I sat teaching in the temple area, yet you did not arrest me.

56 But all this has come to pass that the writings of the prophets may be fulfilled.” Then all the disciples left him and fled.

C In all the boastful promises from the Apostles, what do Jesus’ closest followers do in vs 56? See Matthew 20:22 and Matthew 26:35.

Matthew 20:22

22 Jesus said in reply, "You do not know what you are asking.10 Can you drink the cup that I am going to drink?" They said to him, "We can."

Matthew 26:35

35 Peter said to him, “Even though I should have to die with you, I will not deny you.” And all the disciples spoke likewise.

Jesus Before the Sanhedrin

1. A. John’s Gospel gives an interesting insight into the proceedings, telling is Caiaphas “was high priest that year.” See John 18:13. The High Priest was to serve for life, but, under Roman rule, the High priest was appointed by the Romans for one year. Consider if the Italian government were to appoint the Pope and he served for only one year. What authority do you think you would see as belonging to the Pope? Infallibility?

Matthew 26:57-

57 Those who had arrested Jesus led him away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled.

58 Peter was following him at a distance as far as the high priest’s courtyard, and going inside he sat down with the servants to see the outcome.

59 The chief priests and the entire Sanhedrin kept trying to obtain false testimony against Jesus in order to put him to death,

60 but they found none, though many false witnesses came forward. Finally two came forward

61 who stated, “This man said, ‘I can destroy the temple of God and within three days rebuild it.’”

62 The high priest rose and addressed him, “Have you no answer? What are these men testifying against you?”

63 But Jesus was silent. Then the high priest said to him, “I order you to tell us under oath before the living God whether you are the Messiah, the Son of God.”

64 Jesus said to him in reply, “You have said so. But I tell you:

From now on you will see ‘the Son of Man

seated at the right hand of the Power’

and ‘coming on the clouds of heaven.’”

65 Then the high priest tore his robes and said, “He has blasphemed! What further need have we of witnesses? You have now heard the blasphemy;

66what is your opinion?” They said in reply, “He deserves to die!”

67 Then they spat in his face and struck him, while some slapped him,

68 saying, “Prophesy for us, Messiah: who is it that struck you?”

John 18:12-13

12 So the band of soldiers, the tribune, and the Jewish guards seized Jesus, bound him,

13 and brought him to Annas first. He was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was high priest that year.

B Two witnesses whose testimony would agree in the trial was necessary to condemn the accused. Why do you think it was so important to Pharisees and Sadducees alike, that Jesus be executed and not merely punished? See Numbers 35:30.

Numbers 35:30

30 "Whenever someone kills another, the evidence of witnesses is required for the execution of the murderer. The evidence of a single witness is not sufficient for putting a person to death.

D We have seen numerous examples in the past of Jesus enjoining His disciples and those He had healed not to reveal who He was. It was known as the Messianic Secret. Now, before the high court of all Israel, He reveals (vs 64) in explicit detail that He is the Promised Messiah, the Son of the Living God, and the fulfillment of the Prophet Daniel’s prophecy for the Messiah. Why do you think Jesus chose this moment to reveal His true identity dramatically and publicly?

Daniel 7:13-14

13 I saw coming with the clouds of heaven

One like a son of man. When he reached the Ancient of Days

and was presented before him,

14He received dominion, splendor, and kingship; all nations, peoples and tongues will serve him.

Peter’s Denial

1. A. Like all the Apostles, Peter spoke bravely, at the arrest of Jesus in Gethsemane, but, Peter, alone, drew his sword to defend Jesus, and, although all fled, Peter followed Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest. We may see Peter’s denials as cowardly. What can you say about the courage of Peter to do the things he did that night?

Matthew 26:31

31 Then Jesus said to them, “This night all of you will have your faith in me shaken, for it is written:

‘I will strike the shepherd,

and the sheep of the flock will be dispersed’;

32 but after I have been raised up, I shall go before you to Galilee.”

33 Peter said to him in reply, “Though all may have their faith in you shaken, mine will never be.”

34 Jesus said to him, “Amen, I say to you, this very night before the cock crows, you will deny me three times.”

35 Peter said to him, “Even though I should have to die with you, I will not deny you.” And all the disciples spoke likewise.

Matthew 26:69:75

69 Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. One of the maids came over to him and said, “You too were with Jesus the Galilean.”

70 But he denied it in front of everyone, saying, “I do not know what you are talking about!”

71 As he went out to the gate, another girl saw him and said to those who were there, “This man was with Jesus the Nazorean.”

72 Again he denied it with an oath, “I do not know the man!”

73 A little later the bystanders came over and said to Peter, “Surely you too are one of them; even your speech gives you away.”

74 At that he began to curse and to swear, “I do not know the man.” And immediately a cock crowed.

75 Then Peter remembered the word that Jesus had spoken: “Before the cock crows you will deny me three times.” He went out and began to weep bitterly.

B Chickens were forbidden in the city of Jerusalem. However, the signal for the changing of the guard at the third watch, 3 AM, was a trumpet blast known as the “gallicinium,” the cock crow. Whether what Peter heard was an actual chicken or the trumpet blast, try to step into Peter’s shoes and describe what emotions and thoughts that sound must have triggered, that he went out and wept bitterly.”

C In John’s Gospel, in a post-Resurrection appearance Jesus forgave Peter three times and gave Him his penance. Jesus is our example; describe what the depth of forgiveness we must make is in comparison to Jesus’ forgiveness.

John 21:16-17

15 When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." He said to him, "Feed my lambs."

16 He then said to him a second time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." He said to him, "Tend my sheep."

17 He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" Peter was distressed that he had said to him a third time, "Do you love me?" and he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." (Jesus) said to him, "Feed my sheep.