

JESUS: THE SERVANT AT WORK

VOLUME THREE

STUDY FOURTEEN

Rush to Judgment

Mark 14:55–65

We can hardly imagine that the only perfect individual who ever lived was mistreated like this. He was hated and despised, hit in His face until it was purple and swollen with great welts. He endured judgment that only proved the guilt of those who were judging Him, the One “who knew no sin.”

—Pastor Charles R. Swindoll

Jesus' sweat falling like drops of blood. His loud cries and profound anguish. The crushing of His soul as He relinquished His will to the Father's will. We recognize these descriptions as Jesus' agony in Gethsemane.

The nails that pierced His hands and feet. The wreath of thorns that pressed on His brow. His outstretched arms on that cross between two thieves. These scenes recall Christ's suffering on Calvary.

Gethsemane and Calvary are familiar sights to us. But we scratch our heads when we try to trace Jesus' journey from the garden to Golgotha. How many trials did He face? Were the trials legal? Was He found guilty of any crime? Was there only one charge or two brought against Him? How did the legal officials handle the case against Jesus the Messiah?

As we follow the steps of the remarkable Servant of God, we'll look for biblical answers to these questions about the trials that led to Jesus' crucifixion. In the passage for this *Searching the Scriptures* Bible study, the travesty of justice in these trials will shock us. As we watch Him suffer, the Holy Spirit will touch our hearts with the depths of Christ's love for us, and we'll marvel at the wonder of God's grace.



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SEARCHING
THE
SCRIPTURES
BIBLE STUDIES

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PREPARE YOUR HEART

May you have the power to understand, as all God's people should, how wide, how long, how high, and how deep his love is. (Ephesians 3:18)

In prayer, personalize Paul's request for the Ephesian believers. As you turn to the Scriptures, ask God to help you understand the width, the length, the height, and the depth of His love for you.



TURN TO THE SCRIPTURES

With each scene in Mark's gospel, we see Jesus, the Suffering Servant, giving Himself for us. He was betrayed by one of His own (Mark 14:10–11). Armed soldiers arrested Him as if He were a criminal. "Then all his disciples deserted him and ran away" (14:50). Even Peter, one of Jesus' most loyal followers, said three times that he did not know Him (14:66–72).

But this was just the beginning of Jesus' *passion*—the period of His suffering between His arrest and His death. Use the following chart to trace the timeline of Jesus' journey of pain. No single gospel writer includes every event, so the chart surveys all the gospel accounts to give a complete overview.

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Gethsemane to Golgotha		
Event	Scriptures	Approx. Time
Prayer and agony in Gethsemane	Matthew 26:36–46; Mark 14:32–42; Luke 22:39–46; John 18:1	1:00 a.m.
Betrayal by Judas and arrest of Jesus	Matthew 26:47–56; Mark 14:43–46; Luke 22:47–53; John 18:2–12	1:30 a.m.
Irregular, unauthorized interrogation at Annas' residence— Trial One	John 18:12–23	2:00 a.m.
Illegal trial at Caiaphas' residence— Trial Two	Matthew 26:57–68; Mark 14:53–65; Luke 22:54, 63–65; John 18:24	3:00 a.m.
Formal but illegal meeting of the Sanhedrin to confirm capital sentence— Trial Three	Mark 15:1; Luke 22:66–71	6:00 a.m.
First interrogation by Pilate at his residence— Trial Four	Matthew 27:1–2, 11–14; Mark 15:1–5; Luke 23:1–7; John 18:28–38	6:30 a.m.
Audience before Herod— Trial Five	Luke 23:8–12	7:00 a.m.
Final judgment by Pilate— Trial Six	Matthew 27:15–26; Mark 15:6–15; Luke 23:13–25; John 18:39–40	7:30 a.m.
Scourging in the Praetorium, mocking by soldiers, and public condemnation	Matthew 27:26–31; Mark 15:15–20; John 19:1–16	8:00 a.m.
Walk to Golgotha and nailing to the cross	Matthew 27:32–35; Mark 15:21–24; Luke 23:26–33; John 19:17–18	9:00 a.m.
Events at the cross	Matthew 27:36–45; Mark 15:25–33; Luke 23:34–44; John 19:19–27	9:00 a.m.–noon
Darkness over the land	Matthew 27:45; Mark 15:33; Luke 23:44–45	Noon
Jesus' final words, death, and earthquake	Matthew 27:46–56; Mark 15:34–41; Luke 23:45–49; John 19:28–30	3:00 p.m.

Chart adapted from Charles R. Swindoll, *Insights on Matthew 16–28*, Swindoll's Living Insights New Testament Commentary, vol. 1B (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House, 2020), 271. Copyright © 2026 by Charles R. Swindoll, Inc. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers. All rights reserved.

According to this chart, how many hours did it take to reach Jesus' judgment? What stands out to you about the events as they unfold?

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Note that Jesus endured six trials, all of them illegal and unjust. For more details about the trials and the injustices, refer to the chart “The Trials of Jesus” at the end of this study. You can use the chart as a map to orient you as you read the Scriptures.

Mark didn’t mention the first trial at Annas’ house, where the soldiers initially brought Jesus (John 18:13). Annas was the patriarch of a family line of high priests, including his son-in-law Caiaphas. Although no longer in office, Annas held the reins of control and likely was the mafia-like kingpin of the money changers and merchants racket at the temple. John details his interrogation of Jesus in [John 18:12–23](#). Afterward, Annas sent Jesus to Caiaphas’ house, which was possibly nearby. In the center was a courtyard where Peter’s denials took place ([Mark 14:53–54, 66–72](#)).



Observation: Jesus’ Illegal Trial at Caiaphas’ Residence

Carefully observe Jesus’ trial before Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin in [Mark 14:55–59](#).¹ How convenient that these men were all awake and assembled at three o’clock in the morning! Obviously, the trial was prearranged and the verdict already decided.

What were the chief priests and the council trying to discover? What false accusations did the witnesses who spoke against Jesus bring? What comment about these accusations did Mark add?

Read [14:60–61](#) in various translations. What initial question did the high priest ask, and how did Jesus respond? What’s significant about the question the high priest asked?

Observe [14:62–64](#), paying close attention to Jesus’ words. What courage! What key details do you observe in these verses?

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Picture these religious officials, these guardians of morality, turning into a pack of animals brutally beating Jesus. Describe the scene in [Mark 14:65](#).



Interpretation: The Rush to Judgment

Let's look closer at Jesus' responses. When Caiaphas asked Jesus for His answer to the charges, He kept silent. How do you explain Jesus' silence?

Isn't that remarkable? He had us in mind in the midst of the torture. Do you notice there's no fighting back? You know why? All the struggle is resolved at Gethsemane. "Father, let the cup pass from Me. But not My will, but Yours be done." —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

Caiaphas finally asked Jesus directly, "Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?" Notice that, instead of just saying yes, Jesus answered from Scripture: "I AM. And you will see the Son of Man seated in the place of power at God's right hand and coming on the clouds of heaven" (Mark 14:61–62).

Compare Jesus' words with [Exodus 3:14](#); [Psalm 110:1](#); and [Daniel 7:13](#). Consult Pastor Chuck's commentary [Insights on Mark](#) or look up the comments on Mark 14:62 in [Constable's Notes](#) at [netbible.org](#). What's the meaning and significance of Jesus' response to Caiaphas?

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For more information about this council, explore the interesting article “Sanhedrin,” especially the last section titled “*The Sanhedrin in the NT*,” in the *Encyclopedia of the Bible* at biblegateway.com. Why do you think the Sanhedrin broke its own code of justice to condemn Jesus?

When you look at Jesus’ ordeal theologically, it was not a tragedy but the climactic fulfillment of Jesus’ mission. Unlike you and me who come to live a full and satisfying life, Jesus never came to live. He came to die.
—Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Correlation: God’s Love on Display

Compare *Isaiah 53* with *Mark 14:55–65*. How does Isaiah’s description of the Suffering Servant resemble Jesus’ suffering in Mark’s gospel? Summarize Paul’s remarks in *Romans 8:31–39* on the love of God revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.

There’s a divine paradox in these events. God used human injustice to accomplish His justice for the world—to satisfy the sin debt that we could never pay. Compare our passage with *John 10:11–18* and *Hebrews 12:1–3*. What do these passages teach us about why Jesus suffered and died for us?

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Application: Thank God for the Depths of His Love and Grace!

We can get accustomed to the passion of Christ, focusing on it only during Good Friday and Easter services. Think of some ways you can continue to ponder the depths of God's love and celebrate His grace. What does His willingness to suffer mean to you?

Reflect on all that Jesus endured on your behalf and how He was unjustly accused, mistreated, beaten, and unfairly declared guilty. Express your gratitude to God for His profound love and amazing grace.

No wonder He said to His disciples at the Last Supper, "I want you to remember My death. I want you to remember it until I, in fact, come back on the clouds. Remember My body bruised for you and My blood given for you."
—Pastor Chuck Swindoll

What love! What grace! Now all that we are and all that we have, we offer to Him as an expression of our gratitude and love.



A FINAL PRAYER

Heavenly Father, thank You for Your Son, Jesus Christ! In Him You have made me as righteous as He is. Thank You for Your love and Your grace. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

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The Trials of Jesus						
Trial	Officiating Authority	Scripture	Accusations	Legality	Type	Result
1	Annas, former high priest AD 6–15	John 18:12–23	No specific charges brought	Illegal: • No jurisdiction • Held at night • No charges • No witnesses • Abused during trial	Jewish and religious	Declared “guilty” of irreverence and sent to Caiaphas
2	Caiaphas, high priest AD 18–36, and the Sanhedrin	Matthew 26:57–68; Mark 14:53–65; John 18:24	Claimed to be the Messiah, the Son of God, which they deemed blasphemy	Illegal: • Held at night • False witnesses • No formal charge • Abused during trial	Jewish and religious	Declared “guilty” of blasphemy and held for sentencing until morning
3	Sanhedrin	Mark 15:1; Luke 22:66–71	Claimed to be the Son of God	Illegal: • Accusation changed • No witnesses • Improper vote	Jewish and religious	Sentenced to be turned over to the Romans for execution
4	Pilate, governor of Judea AD 26–36	Matthew 27:11–14; Mark 15:2–5; Luke 23:1–7; John 18:28–38	Charged with treason and sedition against Rome	Illegal: • Found “not guilty,” yet kept in custody • No defense representation • Abused during trial	Roman and civil	Declared “not guilty” and pawned off on Herod Antipas to find a loophole
5	Herod Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee 4 BC–AD 39	Luke 23:8–12	No specific charges brought; questioned at length by Herod	Illegal: • No jurisdiction • No specific charges • Abused during trial	Roman and civil	Mistreated, mocked, falsely accused, and returned to Pilate without a decision made

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The Trials of Jesus <i>continued</i>						
Trial	Officiating Authority	Scripture	Accusations	Legality	Type	Result
6	Pilate	Matthew 27:15–26; Mark 15:6–15; Luke 23:13–25; John 18:39–19:16	Same charges as in trial 4	Illegal: Declared “not guilty,” yet condemned	Roman and civil	Declared “not guilty” but sentenced to be crucified to mollify the angry mob, while a man guilty of murder, treason, and sedition went free

Chart adapted from Charles R. Swindoll, *Insights on Mark*, Swindoll’s Living Insights New Testament Commentary, vol. 2 (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House, 2016), 368. Copyright © 2026 by Charles R. Swindoll, Inc. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers. All rights reserved.

ENDNOTE

1. To learn more about Pastor Chuck Swindoll’s *Searching the Scriptures* Bible-study method, go to the web page “[How Does Pastor Chuck Swindoll Study the Bible?](#)” at [insight.org](#).

For the 2027 broadcasts, this *Searching the Scriptures* Bible study was developed by Mirlenda Noëlliste in collaboration with Bryce Klabunde, vice president of *Searching the Scriptures* Ministries, based upon the original outlines, charts, and transcripts of Charles R. Swindoll’s messages. Copyright © 2011, 2026 by Charles R. Swindoll, Inc. All rights are reserved worldwide. Duplication of copyrighted material for commercial use is strictly prohibited.

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