

The Worst Trial Ever

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[0:00] We'll read Mark chapter 15 verses 53 to 65. This is the night that Jesus was arrested. And we'll read as he came before the Sanhedrin.

They took Jesus to the high priest, and all the chief priests and elders and teachers of the law came together. Peter followed him at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest.

There he sat with the guards and warmed himself at the fire. The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were looking for evidence against Jesus so they could put him to death, but they did not find any.

Many testified falsely against him, but their statements did not agree. Then some stood up and gave this false testimony against him. We heard him say, I will destroy this man-made temple in three days and will build another.

Not made by man. Yet even their testimonies did not agree. Then the high priest stood up before them and asked Jesus, Are you not going to answer?

[1:10] What is this testimony that these men are bringing against you? But Jesus remained silent and gave no answer. Again the high priest asked him, Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?

I am, said Jesus. And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven.

The high priest tore his clothes. Why do we need any more witnesses? He asked. You have heard the blasphemy. What do you think? They all condemned him as worthy of death.

Then some began to spit at him. They blindfolded him, struck him with their fists, and said, Prophecy! And the guards took him and beat him.

Our brother Ben Carlson will come and preach the word to us. Well, we live in a country where, historically speaking, the rights of every citizen, including the rights of even suspected criminals, are upheld.

[2:15] For instance, the Sixth Commandment to the United States Constitution guarantees the rights of criminal defendants. It states, In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial by an impartial jury of the state and district wherein the crime shall have been committed, which district shall have been previously ascertained by law, and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation, to be confronted with the witnesses against him, to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor, and to have the assistance of counsel for his defense.

And so one website sums up these rights that even the accused have by saying, Criminals have the right to a public trial without unnecessary delay, the right to a lawyer, the right to an impartial jury, and the right to know who your accusers are and the nature of the charges and evidence against you.

We in the United States, generally speaking, enjoy this freedom, but there are many people throughout the world, even now, and certainly throughout the history of the age, who have not had this privilege, this privilege to defend themselves before a council or a tribunal.

One such case is the trial that we've just heard about in Mark chapter 14. We'll see in this one particular case that this defendant is given no rights at all.

Tonight we will see about the most unfair, biased, and downright wicked trial that has ever taken place in the history of the judicial system. And all this happened in a courtroom where justice should have been upheld.

[4:07] If anyone was to uphold justice, to acquit the righteous, and to condemn the wicked, it was the people of Israel. It was the people who had the law of God.

It was the people who knew right from wrong. But as we'll see, this is not what occurred. Yes, Jesus' trial was speedy, but it was all but fair. He had no lawyer defending him. He had no impartial judge ruling over his case. The witnesses speaking out against him were all spewing forth lies. Even the jury was corrupt. He wasn't even informed why he had been arrested in the first place. And more than that, the verdict reached was absolutely shameful. An innocent man, rather the sinless son of God, was condemned to death that night. And so I'd like to see how unfair this trial actually was.

[5:04] I've got five points to show you from this text this evening. We'll see just how bad this trial is as we look at the judges, the impartial judges.

We'll see how bad this trial is as we look at the false testimony being born against Jesus Christ. We'll look at how bad this trial was because of the innocence of the defendant on trial. We'll see how bad this trial was because of the verdict that was reached. And we'll see how bad and wicked this trial was because of the shameful treatment that this defendant faced after the verdict was pronounced.

But before we look at the text, let us think about what is going on in the life of Jesus Christ at this moment in time. Remember, Jesus has just entered into Jerusalem, His triumphal entry into Jerusalem Jerusalem, where people are worshiping Him and bowing down to Him and are praising Him, saying, Hosanna, Hosanna in the highest.

He's receiving praise for many people. It's Holy Week in Jerusalem at this point in time. The Passover is about to begin. And Jews from all over the world are now coming into Jerusalem to celebrate this annual festival and feast.

[6:28] And this poses some problems for the religious officials of Israel, does it not? Remember, these people hated Jesus Christ. They wanted to put Him to death.

And all these people are streaming in and they're hearing news about the Messiah, about the Savior. Here is Jesus Christ, the King of Israel. Is it true? Is it really true that the Messiah is here? And so, these religious officials have to act fast. They know that people are flocking towards Jesus Christ, wanting to know these true answers. And so, they have to do something.

Pressure is mounting upon them to get rid of this Jesus, get rid of this false, fake, deceiver. And so, they meet. And they meet here in this text at night.

They act quickly. Remember, Judas betrays Jesus Christ for 30 pieces of silver. the arrest is made by a crowd who was sent by the high priests and the scribes.

[7:31] And they take Him to, first they take Him to Annas, who was the former high priest at that point in time. And then they send Him off to the high priest Caiaphas. And they hold a trial in the middle of the night to bring about a quick and condemning conviction before a riot would occur.

And so, this is what's happening. Jesus is all by Himself at this moment in time. His disciples have just scattered. Yes, He has Peter following Him and most likely John is there too, but they're at a great distance.

And Peter is even mingling and sitting with Jesus' very own enemies. So, Jesus enters into this place all by Himself. His friends, His disciples are gone.

But more than that now, the religious bigwigs of Israel have all gathered together against Jesus Christ. The chief priest and the elders and the scribes came together as verse 53 says.

You know, these are the intellectuals of Israel. These are the powerful ones, the influential ones of Israel. Could you imagine the biggest and brightest minds of America getting together to condemn you to death?

[8:49] And you're all by yourself. And there's nobody by your side any longer. And this is what Jesus, our Savior, is facing. Tremendous pressure to give in.

Tremendous pressure to say what He should not say. Yet He speaks the truth as we'll see. So that's the situation that Jesus is facing.

Let us now see how wicked and how wrong this trial is of our Savior. First, this trial is the worst trial of all time because of the partial and prejudiced judges and jury members that presided over this case.

Verse 55 says, Now the chief priests and the whole council or the Sanhedrin were seeking testimony against Jesus to put Him to death but they found none.

Normally, in trials, the judges should be impartial, correct? They should not have any biases towards the defendant, towards the accused.

[10:03] They should judge rightly. But in this case, the judges were wanting to put Jesus Christ to death even before the trial had begun. And this is totally a violation of the law of God.

Leviticus 19:15 says about judges, You shall do no injustice in judgment. You shall not be partial to the poor nor defer to the great but you are to judge your neighbor fairly.

That's what the law says. And the Sanhedrin, this council made up of the religious leaders of Israel, they claimed to know the law. They claimed to follow the law.

And they claimed to be fair judges. But that was anything but the case. They were not partial. They were unjust. They were not men of the truth.

Because as I said, before the trial began, they wanted to put Jesus Christ to death. Even in Mark 14:1, It was now two days before the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread and the chief priests and the scribes were seeking how to arrest him by stealth and kill him.

[11:17] For they said, not during the feast lest there be an uproar from the people. This is a constant thing through the ministry of Jesus Christ. That these men are trying to find a way to arrest Jesus and put him to death.

And yet, they want to act as the judges over Jesus as well. And so we see this is wicked indeed. That judges are going to judge unfairly.

But not only did they have intentions to put Jesus to death even before the trial, they were actively seeking out false witnesses! to testify against Jesus.

And that's what verse 55 goes on to say. They were seeking testimony against Jesus to put him to death by trying to find witnesses to speak out against him.

Now, if you didn't know, the Sanhedrin or the council was a body made up of these religious leaders of Israel who actually had authority to convene together and to judge cases and to even pronounce the death penalty upon people.

[12:32] Now, they couldn't execute the death penalty at this point in time because Rome had taken over. And so the execution belonged to Rome. So, of course, we know the story. Jesus is then handed off to Pontius Pilate and Pilate brings down the axe upon Christ.

But they had real authority. This was something that they did. They had to rule over the people, religious matters and even civil matters. And so this is the makeup of this group who are coming against Jesus Christ.

The religious leaders had kept their eyes on Jesus for years now, trying in every way to trap him and put him to death and finally their plan worked. Finally, they had Jesus in their sinful grasp.

As I said, the smartest, most powerful, most intellectual and most influential people of Israel were all coming against Jesus to put him to death, seeking testimony against him.

So that's first. They're partial judges. They're biased judges. They've got a motivation and a desire. They've got something they want to do to Jesus Christ even before the trial begins.

[13:40] Secondly, this was the worst trial of all time because of the phony charges and the total lack of evidence brought against the defendant. We see that in verses 56 to 59.

For many bore false witness against him, but their testimony did not agree. And some stood up and bore false witness against him, saying, We have 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.

Yet even about this, their testimony did not agree. Usually when witnesses take the stand, they're called to swear in, swear an oath, right?

And it used to be that they actually had to put their hands on Bibles and swear an oath. And it would go something like this, I swear by almighty God that the evidence I shall give shall be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

And if that person was caught lying, he'd be charged with perjury. And this was a felony. This was a felony. It could be punishable up to five years in prison with fines.

[14:52] And it's still the case. Perjury is a felony. False witness, bearing false witness under oath is a crime. But it was much more a crime in the nation of Israel.

There are much stiffer penalties placed upon false witnesses in the Old Testament. Deuteronomy 19:15-21 tells us A single witness shall not suffice against a person for any crime or for any wrong in connection with any offense that he has committed.

Only on the evidence of two witnesses or of three witnesses shall charge be established. Now here is where the penalty comes in for false witnesses. If a malicious witness arises to accuse a person of wrongdoing, then both the parties to the dispute shall appear before the Lord, both the priest and the judges who are in office in those days.

The judges shall inquire diligently, and if the witness is a false witness and has accused his brother falsely, then you shall do to him as he had meant to do to his brother.

So you shall purge the evil from your midst, and the rest shall hear in fear, and shall never again commit any such evil among you. Your eye shall not pity, it shall be life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.

[16:16] This was the penalty for bearing false witness in court against another brother. If you came and bore false witness because you wanted to put a man to death, the law said you're going to be put to death, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, life for life.

And so the jailhouse in Jerusalem that night should have been full, full of criminals put on death row. Witness after witness after witness came against Jesus Christ but they were all proven false. And so if these judges were truly just judges they would have enforced these rules. Death to those who spoke maliciously against Jesus Christ. But that wasn't the case, was it?

These false witnesses were encouraged to speak lies against Christ. and there was no penalty against them after the trial had occurred.

But we see the inconsistency of their witness and even in one specific matter their testimonies could not agree, they were not identical, they were not consistent.

[17:30] We have that in verse 58. 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.

Did Jesus really say that? Did Jesus say the words that these false witnesses brought up? No. Jesus didn't actually say those words.

We can find what Jesus actually said in John chapter 2. And we see the air of these false witnesses. They did two wrong things. They misquoted Jesus. Jesus. But more importantly, they misunderstood Jesus as well.

What Jesus actually said is found in John 2. Verse 19, Jesus answered them, destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up.

So they misquoted Jesus here. Jesus said I will destroy this temple and I will build it up in three days. But Jesus actually said y'all, you people, my southern accent, y'all destroy this temple and I will raise it up in three days.

[18:53] They misquoted Jesus about that. Jesus said nothing about a temple made with hands and a temple made without hands. I'm not sure where they got that from. And Jesus didn't say I will build this temple.

He actually uses the word I will raise up this temple, which is one of the most frequently used words to describe the resurrection. I will raise up, not build physically, not erect a physical structure, but I will raise up something different.

But they misunderstood what Jesus was talking about. He wasn't talking about a physical temple in Jerusalem. He was talking about the temple of His body. He wasn't talking about destroying a physical temple and then three days later a physical temple would be erected.

He's talking about you, unbelieving Jews, will kill my body, but in three days I will raise my body from the dead. This will be the sign to you, my very resurrection.

And so they're trying to show Jesus being some sort of rebel towards the Jewish nation. He's going to destroy this temple. He's going to bring it down to the ground, but that's not what Jesus is saying at all.

[20:09] He's talking about His body. He's talking about His resurrection. And so we see the falsity of these people's claims because they can't even get Jesus' words right, let alone understand what Jesus is actually saying.

But it's interesting to think about who wasn't called to the stand.

Right? All these false witnesses are called to speak out against Jesus Christ. Why weren't any other people called to the stand that actually saw and experienced miracles done by Jesus Christ? That would have been helpful, right? If this was a just trial, it would have been helpful for other people to have been called as witnesses on the behalf of Jesus Christ. No disciples of Jesus were called to the stand.

I know Peter was there and probably John was there too, but that probably wouldn't have worked out so well for them. How about Nicodemus? Nicodemus was part of the Sanhedrin.

[21:12] He probably wasn't there that night. Why wasn't he called to the stand? He actually defended Jesus Christ once when they were trying to claim that he wasn't a prophet. He said, doesn't your law show that this man actually needs to be tried fairly?

What about Lazarus? Why didn't they call Lazarus to the stand, to the witness box? He had just been raised from the dead. But of course, the scribes and the Pharisees wanted to put Lazarus to death as well.

What about the blind man in Siloam? Why wasn't he called to the stand? Oh, wait, they kicked him out of the synagogue and excommunicated him from the people of God. What about the thousands who saw Jesus' miracles of multiplying the bread and the fish?

Why didn't we call any of those people to the stand and testify that what Jesus was doing was true? What about the garrison demoniac who had a legion of demons cast out of him?

It would have been pretty important to hear from him, wouldn't it have been? He would have had something to say about Jesus that would have been actually true and substantial. Once again, we see the biases of these judges.

[22:24] They didn't care whatsoever about the truth. They loved a lie, they believed a lie, they thought Jesus was a fake and a phony, so they didn't care who would come up and testify against him.

But a bad trial indeed because of the false witnesses. Thirdly, this was the worst trial of all time because of the complete innocence and impeccable claims of the defendant.

Jesus was totally and truly innocent. The high priest turns to him and says, what do you have to say for yourself? How do you answer these witnesses? And Jesus remains silent.

Why does Jesus have to answer the false claims of these witnesses? Their testimony already condemns them, and so Jesus doesn't have to say a word.

They've condemned themselves. And so he refuses to testify to these false claims. There's no need to say anything. But he's asked another question, and he's forced to say something.

[23:27] And I'm sure at this point in time the high priest was getting pretty impatient. You think about these false witnesses coming up, and all their testimonies are contradicting one another.

I'm sure he was pretty furious. And so he goes right to the jugular with this last question. The high priest asked Jesus, are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?

Now this was the question that they wanted answered all along. This is the question that was being asked of Jesus Christ throughout his earthly ministry. And many times Jesus would speak in parables or figurative language or shadowy language that people couldn't really get a true grasp on. He would be asked if he was the Christ and he wouldn't answer them straight up. But now Jesus is adjured by the living God to speak the truth.

I believe Matthew says that this is what the high priest says, I adjure you by the living God. I put you under solemn oath before God to tell me the truth. Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?

[24:38] And Jesus is just following Old Testament law. He's being obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Leviticus 5.1 states, if anyone sins and that he hears a public adjuration to testify, and though he is a witness, whether he has seen or come to know the matter yet does not speak, he shall bear his iniquity.

Jesus here is being the true witness. You got all these false witnesses who are lying, but Jesus is now sworn in. Jesus, come to the witness box. Tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One.

And he follows orders. He speaks the truth. He gives the good confession. He says, yes, I am. I am the Christ. This is my position.

This is what I've sent to do. I am the King of Israel. And he is the Son of the Blessed One. This is his relationship with the Father. He is the divine Son of God.

He is at the favored right hand of the Father. He makes this confession before these wicked men. But he doesn't just say who he is, but then he explains what he's about to do.

[25:53] It's interesting what Jesus says here. He says, and you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of power and coming with the clouds of heaven. Where does Jesus, where does he get that from?

Was this fresh? Was this new to the high priest's ears? Had he ever heard this before? He had. Jesus is quoting the Old Testament. He's quoting Daniel chapter 7, verse 13, which says, I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven, one like a Son of Man was coming.

And he came up to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. And to him was given dominion, glory, and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and men of every language might serve him.

His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which will not pass away. And his kingdom is one which will not be destroyed. Jesus is saying, yes, I am the Son of Man in Daniel chapter 7.

That though you are acting as my judge, and though you will condemn me to death, there will be a day where I will be seated at the right hand of God.

[27 : 13] There will be a day where I will be your judge. There will be a day where you will see me as king, that you will no longer rebel against me. He will be seen as king and judge at God's favored right hand.

at his ascension. Remember, he came with clouds. The clouds of heaven took him up. And he came to that very favored position of God the Father.

The ancient of days presented him with a kingdom, an everlasting kingdom that would know no end. And we know much more than that. There will be a day when Jesus Christ comes back again with the clouds of heaven.

And he'll be coming on a white horse with a sword coming out of his mouth, with king of kings and lord of lords written upon him. And truly, this prophecy will be fulfilled on that day.

And so Jesus speaks the truth. He's completely innocent. He speaks the faithful, makes the faithful confession. Jesus' judges should have known this.

[28 : 18] should have known that he was the Son of Man, should have known he was the Christ, should have known he was the Blessed One. They were looking forward to this. There was an expectation in the hearts of the people at this point in time that the Messiah was coming, he was near, he was close, and he was right there in their midst.

And yet they missed it. Fourthly, this was the worst trial of all time because of the preposterous verdict reached by the jury.

Verses 63-64. You know, in court, judges were to acquit the innocent and condemn the guilty. That was their job. To be a faithful judge, that's what you would do.

But instead, the high priest in Sanhedrin did the exact opposite. They fulfilled Proverbs 17-15. He who justifies the wicked and he who condemns the righteous are both alike an abomination to the Lord.

These judges were an abomination to the Lord. They had just put the death penalty upon the sinless Son of God. And so what's the reaction?

[29 : 28] Jesus has just confessed this wonderful, divine, majestic confession to the high priest. What's the reaction? What's the response coming from this council?

Well, first, we have the high priest's reaction. What does he do? He tears his garments in utter abhorrence of what Jesus Christ has just said. And then he cries out, what further witnesses do we need?

He closes the book on the case. There's nothing else that needs to happen. No more further proceedings. The case is over. We've got Jesus and what he said.

And we can convict him of death. And so he shows his disgust towards what Jesus has just said by the reaction by him tearing his clothes.

And now he turns to the Sanhedrin and says, what is your decision now? What are you going to rule? And of course, what do they say? He's deserving of death.

[30 : 33] The high priest convicts Jesus of committing blasphemy. Blasphemy is basically speaking ill of the name of God. Think about it as poking holes in the name of God.

The name of God is a bucket full of water, of his glory. And blasphemy is poking holes in that bucket and seeing that glory drain out of that bucket.

Jesus has just said, I'm the Christ, the son of the blessed one. I'm going to be seated at the right hand of power. He's saying, I am equal in power and glory and might with the Father.

And of course, for Jews, that was blasphemy. Nobody could do that, let alone a deceiver like they thought Jesus was. How could a man say that he's going to be at the right hand of God, at the

favorable position of God?

How could a man claim such things? Jesus. And so he was charged with blasphemy. The Sanhedrin charged him worthy of death. You are deserving of death, as they said.

[31:41] A wicked, wicked verdict. The sinless son of God condemned that night. But lastly, this was the worst trial of all time because of the pernicious treatment received by the defendant.

The ill treatment that he received at the hand of these people. 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 many blows. He was spit on. He was blindfolded. He was punched. He was slapped.

He was mocked. Prophecy. Having his face covered. Other accounts say that they were saying, tell us who hit you. Because if he is the Christ, he would be able to see even through something covering his face.

Luke tells us he was blasphemed against. Very, very wicked actions done by these people. Adding injury upon injury after Jesus Christ has just been condemned.

[32:50] condemned. And so we see the wickedness of this trial, do we not? Do we not see that almost every Old Testament law was broken that night when Jesus was condemned?

That these people were not acting as just judges as they were called to do? This was the highest position anybody in the nation of Israel could obtain to be a judge over the people of God.

And yet they failed miserably in terms of condemning Jesus Christ to death. And so what do we learn from this? We learn two things.

We see the natural hatred that man has in his heart for Jesus Christ. I think more importantly we see the divine love of Jesus Christ for his people to be able to endure all of this for a specific salvific reason.

First we see the natural hatred that man has in his heart for Jesus Christ. Men hold biased views concerning Christ, do they not?

[33:54] Just like the Sanhedrin, just like the chief priest, they come to Jesus Christ with certain assumptions about who he is. And we know that the natural man is at war with God.

He doesn't think very kindly of his Savior. He comes to him thinking that he's false, that he's foolish, that he's a deceiver, that he certainly can't be a Savior of my sins.

Man comes with presuppositions as he looks to Jesus. Jesus for these people didn't meet the eyeball test.

And we give eyeball tests to people, right? We look over people and we make judgments about them even in the first five to ten seconds meeting them. But Jesus didn't meet the eyeball test to the Sanhedrin.

He didn't meet their standards. He wasn't according to the Messiah that they were expecting. And so they casted him off without even hearing from him, hearing anything that would make them consider if he was really, truly the Messiah.

[35:02] We can do this to Jesus Christ. We can look at Jesus Christ and say, well, I think the Savior, I think my Savior should be this, that, and another thing.

And since Jesus doesn't meet those standards, well, then I'm not going to believe in him. We've got to throw those aside. We've got to see what the scriptures say about Jesus Christ and not what our feelings and our emotions and our desires and our own expectations would think a Savior would be. They thought that Jesus, this Messiah, would come and reign and rule over them politically and destroy any political opposition, destroy Rome and exalt the nation again.

But this isn't why Jesus came. Jesus came to save us from our sins. He came as a humble servant and they weren't looking for that. They were looking for a conquering king.

But Jesus hadn't come to do that yet. He'd come to give his life for ransom for many. Men are also willfully ignorant of Jesus.

[36:08] Men also make up lies about Jesus. Men also pronounce unfair judgments about Jesus. This is in the heart of every man.

Every sinner thinks this way about Christ. We have to be willing to admit that and to accept that. If it wasn't for the grace of God, I would condemn Jesus the same way the Sanhedrin did.

I would find every excuse not to believe in the Messiah. Every excuse. I would call false witnesses against Christ. I would pronounce unfair judgments to Christ.

But the fact is, that's foolish, is it not? You can't condemn Jesus Christ. You can't judge the sinless Son of God.

Where is Jesus now? He's at the right hand of power. Sitting there. Where sinful men cannot touch Him any longer. He's the judge.

[37 : 13] It doesn't matter what you think. It doesn't matter what you say. It doesn't matter if you spit upon Him and mock Him now. Jesus is in glory. He's untouchable. He's the king.

And He's your king. And He's your judge. Whether you like it or not. And we have to come to accept this. We must come bow the knee to this Christ now.

Because it's futile. Resistance is futile. And the Sanhedrin came to know that at the resurrection of Christ. But secondly and more importantly we see the divine love of Jesus Christ for His people. Jesus was patient to endure ridicule, scorn, and condemnation by His very own people to save us. Think about what Jesus went through that night.

Did Jesus have to go through all of that? No. Could He have brought down His hand of judgment and condemnation upon those people that night? Yeah.

[38 : 17] Could He have brought down fire and brimstone from heaven that would melt and burn up those people who judged Him that night? Absolutely. But look how low our Savior humbled Himself for us.

Willing to even be spit upon and mocked and slapped. willing to be condemned by His own people? The people He came to save, the nation at large, rejects Him?

Oh, see the humility of our Savior. See the love of our Savior to be condemned for us. Because this happened for a reason.

We think, oh, it's a terrible crime this happened to Jesus. But we have to remember the Scriptures had to be fulfilled. This was necessary. Because His condemnation this night led to His death on the cross.

He had to be condemned there so that He would be condemned by His Heavenly Father just a day later. And so this was necessary. It was necessary to save us from our sins.

[39 : 24] He stood in our place that night. He was the innocent one condemned so that we, who are not the innocent ones, could be fully and freely forgiven of our sins.

Jesus was faithful to speak the truth in the most difficult of situations in order to save us too. He made the good confession. He was faithful.

Oh, what a tough and difficult circumstance, situation our Savior was facing that night. To deny His calling. To deny why He came to this earth.

He could have been silent and not said anything and gotten off. And they would have had nothing to charge Him with. But He spoke. He spoke boldly in the face of His enemies for us.

He spoke that which once again led Him to His death on the cross for us. He was the faithful witness. Revelation 1.5 calls Him the faithful witness.

[40 : 27] He was the faithful witness. Probably referring back to this very moment. And He did it for us. And so, take these two encouragements home with you this evening.

Have encouragement to believe that what Jesus says is always true. If Jesus is able to speak truthfully and faithfully in the most difficult of circumstances, believe that what Jesus says now is absolutely true.

Jesus doesn't lie. Jesus doesn't have hidden motives or agendas in His Word when He gives us His promises. Jesus is in a place of peace and rest.

If He is able to speak the truth in this difficult circumstance with all of Satan's enemies coming against Him, He is certainly able to speak the truth now in glory.

Believe His promises concerning you. He's faithful. He's true. He never lies. He never smudges the truth. He is the faithful Savior.

[41 : 27] And secondly, have encouragement and confidence to speak the truth because our Savior reigns in heaven above. We can be very scared in this world about speaking the truth of our faith to people for standing for Jesus Christ in this wicked and godless generation.

We have a lot of pressure ourselves in the workplace to stand for Christ. And our friendships and relationships we have with the world to stand for Christ. Even with unbelieving spouses or unbelieving children to stand for Jesus Christ.

Look at Jesus. Jesus stood firm and strong and immovable. And Jesus is reigning in heaven now.

Jesus has returned to heaven victorious. He's been given crowns upon crowns upon crowns. This is what He deserves.

And Jesus overcame the world. Jesus conquered the world. And so He gives us the power. He gives us the strength. He gives us the ability to speak truthfully to unbelieving men.

[42:34] No matter what happens, even if we're condemned like Jesus Christ, we have a Savior who reigns. He's not condemned any longer. He reigns over this world.

He is judge over this world. We get confidence from this. Encouragement to speak the truth. To not shave off the hard, difficult edges of the gospel.

The sharp edges that should penetrate the hearts of men. But we cower back and we're scared because we don't want to offend anybody. And we don't want people to think badly of us. Look to Christ.

Look where He is now. Look what He spoke here. And gain encouragement to be a faithful witness yourself. Let's pray. Heavenly Father, we do thank You for the faithful confession of Jesus Christ.

He said that He was the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One. We thank You that He is the Son of Man who is seated at Your right hand. We thank You, O Lord, that one day He will come back with the clouds of heaven.

[43:36] Help us to look forward to that day. Help us, Lord, not to fear the face of men. Jesus Christ didn't. Jesus Christ feared You, O Lord.

Help us to fear You. Help us to speak the truth. Give us, Lord, the grace to be lights in this dark and sinful world.

Lord, help us to see that Jesus was condemned for us, miserable sinners, by the worst trial of all time. And yet it was all necessary in order for our sins to be removed.

We thank You. Thank You, Lord Jesus, for Your patience. Thank You for Your endurance. Thank You, Lord, that You went to the cross for us in weakness and in humility, but now You reign in power and glory.

Give us hope for the future. Give us eyes fixed upon where You are. Help us, Lord, we ask in Jesus' name. Amen.