

THE GOSPEL OF

JOHN

QUESTIONS

STUDENT LESSON

Open it

1. Are you an early bird or a night owl?

Daily Devotions

Day 1 — Today's Theme: Explore It

Read John 18:28–40.

2. Who are the main people mentioned in this passage? Write in the verse associated with each person.
3. Where are each of these people located? Include the verse where you found this info.
4. What time of year is this happening? What time of day is this happening? Which verses clearly state the times?
5. What is the main point of John 18:28–32 (hint v. 32)?
6. In John 18:33–40, Pilate asks Jesus four main questions. What are those four questions? Include the verses where you find the questions.
7. What are the two questions Pilate asks the Jews in verses 29 and 39?
8. Based on the passage, what is each person's role?

Day 2 — Today's Theme: Three Religious Trials

Read John 18:28 (with reference to John 18:12-14, Matt. 26:57-68 and Matt. 27:1-2 and Luke 22:66-71).

Did you know Jesus was on trial six times?¹ Can you imagine defending yourself six times in the middle of the night or very early in the morning? There were three religious trials (before Jewish leaders) and three civil trials (before Roman leaders). Today we will try to understand a bit about the religious leaders and those trials. Tomorrow we will look at the Roman or civil trials.

There were three Jewish trials. The “characters” or key people in each trial were Annas, Caiaphas, and the Sanhedrin. Annas headed up a small inner circle of high priests and interestingly enough is the father-in-law of Caiaphas. What I discovered was, theirs (Annas and Caiaphas’) was apparently one of three wealthy families who controlled the position of high priest.² Annas resided over the first trial of Jesus because he still had some sort of high priest power since he was related to Caiaphas. He basically gave permission to try Jesus because the leaders said Jesus was blasphemous. Blasphemy, according to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, is a) the act of insulting or showing contempt or lack of reverence for God or b) the act of claiming the attributes of a deity.

Jesus was accused of blasphemy because He was claiming to be the Son of God which under Jewish law is punishable by death—death by being stoned. After that accusation was confirmed by Annas as GUILTY, Jesus was moved on to Caiaphas, who was the actual high priest. In Matthew 26:57–68, before Jesus could be brought to the Roman governor He had to be confirmed GUILTY by THE high priest, Caiaphas. In this passage, it tells a few more details of that religious trial. When morning came (very early Friday morning sometime between 1am and 5am, so really the middle of the night,) the Sanhedrin—70 members of the highest council of the Jews plus Caiaphas— declared Jesus GUILTY of blasphemy. In v. 59 it tells how desperately they were seeking to find false testimony,³ anything that could prove Jesus was guilty. They had a lot of trouble proving this because no one could agree (Matt. 26:59–61). Finally, they found two false witnesses that agreed (v. 61) and in vv. 63–67, they proceeded to pronounce their judgment (Matt. 27:1–2) of GUILTY by the Sanhedrin. This Sanhedrin declared Jesus GUILTY of blasphemy and moved to have Him tried in the Roman civil trials immediately with Herod and Pilate.

9. What would it look like if you had to answer questions with clear answers in the middle of the night, like between 1am and 5am?

10. All three Jewish levels of leadership made sure Jesus was GUILTY even if it meant providing false testimony. Read Luke 22:70 and Matthew 26:63 and surrounding verses to help you answer this next question: Why do you think Jesus remained silent and didn't defend Himself?

¹ The Ryrie Study Bible, NASB. The Lockman Foundation, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago, 2012.

² Women's Study Bible, ESV. Andreas J. Köstenberger, Crossway, 2020.

³ There were other rules the Sanhedrin “forgot” that night as well. 1) A trial could not take place **at night** or during the time of an **important festival**...ummm, hello...Passover? 2) The death penalty could not be passed immediately if a person was found guilty, they had to **wait overnight** to pass sentence. 3) All trials had to take place in the Hall of Hewn Stones, the official place of trials located in the temple. 4) Two or three witnesses were needed and they had to agree on every detail. Anyone giving false evidence would receive the same punishment as the person on trial.

11. Jesus didn't do anything wrong yet was accused and proclaimed **GUILTY** of blasphemy because He claimed to be the Son of God. I picture the chaos and desperation of the leadership going on in the room. What do you think you would have done if you were on that "middle of the night" quorum of the Sanhedrin?

12. I'm sure you've been falsely accused. What was that like for you? What feelings does that bring up in you that Jesus experienced this false accusation just like you have so you could be saved?

Day 3 — Today's Theme: Civil Trials by the Romans

Read John 18:28–37.

Three Roman Trials: Pilate—not guilty; (Luke 23:6–12) Herod—not guilty; (John 18:38–19:6) Pilate—Not guilty but turned Jesus over to the Jews!

Many people are looking for the truth. Where is the best source for finding the truth? Your own mind? Parents? Teachers? Pastors? Books? Google? Siri? How do you find the truth about something? Do you ask questions, or do you just believe what you are told? Do you trust the experts? YouTube? Research? How do you discern if a source is credible?

We can't believe everything we hear. Just because it's on the internet doesn't make it true. Just because our teacher said it's true doesn't mean it is. Even if our pastor says something is true it might not be. The Internet, teachers and pastors are fallible. They make mistakes. They may have faulty reasoning. It's important to ask questions. When we do, we need to know how to find trusted and credible sources. We need to know how to ask good questions, not questions that just get us the answer we are looking for. The questions should be based on bringing more depth, more knowledge, helping find the real answers, helping find the truth in the situation. Asking questions about the circumstances of the situation, what was happening around that time, defining terms, comparing stories, similarities, differences, finding credible witnesses. Asking good questions and sifting through the various answers is hard work. It can actually be exhausting. Notice the Jewish Council didn't ask very many questions—only the ones they wanted so they could get the answers they wanted to hear. They weren't seeking the truth. They were seeking to put Jesus to death. But did Pilate and Herod have the right idea by asking questions based on their curiosity?

13. Where or when do you feel like you ask the most questions?

14. What circumstances STOP you from asking questions?

15. How do you go about finding the answers to difficult questions?

16. What questions would you ask Jesus if you were hanging out with him today?

Day 4 — Today's Theme: What is Truth?

Read John 18:38–40.

Again, we see the contrast between Peter and Jesus. Jesus is under much harder persecution, harder questions from people of higher authority. Peter is still scared and not putting his full trust in Christ that even if something bad happens to him it will be for God's glory.

It's so easy to be quick to judge people and assume that God can't use them because they tripped up. We need to remember that none of us are perfect. Even when we make mistakes, God can use it for His glory. None of the disciples were perfect, yet God used them to do amazing things for Christ. Peter eventually became the leader and spokesman among the disciples and a martyr for Christ. His faith was that strong. Don't let moments of weakness rock your faith. Stay close to God! Stay in the Word! Stay involved in the church!

17. Who is someone you trust to tell you the truth?

18. Where do you get your truth?

19. If you believe Jesus is the Son of God, explain how you know this; use some verses and circumstances that help you remember.

20. If you don't believe Jesus is the Son of God, write down a few questions you have that keep you from believing it.