

April 6, 2025 (Unit 27, Session 1)

Jesus Was Put on Trial

(Matthew 26-27)

All four Gospel accounts of Jesus' trial revealed the innocence of the Son of Man amid the injustice of the court's proceedings. From the plotting of the chief priests to the scoffing of those in the crowd, each detail revealed the reality of the Savior's choice to step forward as the substitute for our sins.

Why did this court case unfold in the manner that it did, with the religious leaders taking their troubles to the Roman courts? How do we see God at work amid Christ's suffering? The answers to this lay in the Old Testament prophecies and in Christ's fulfillment of all they entailed.

The unjust treatment of the innocent Son of Man cannot be understated throughout these accounts. The Scriptures report some people—Pilate, Herod, and Judas—testifying to Christ's innocence, all the while conspiring against Him and allowing the unfair verdict to proceed. Even still, Jesus' righteousness remained apparent as He continued on, allowing God's will to be done through His death for the sake of our eternal life. We truly see the Son obeying the Father to the point of death, as an innocent lamb led closer and closer to the slaughter.

Throughout these events in the Scriptures, we read that Judas and Herod, as well as Pilate and his wife, each acknowledged Jesus' innocence. The Bible reveals, too, that the religious leaders' only hope of execution was found through crafting inaccurate accusations of Christ's wrongdoings through the Roman court. Despite the falseness of their fabrications, Jesus kept His composure through it all with eyes set on entering into His glory.

Led by a mob mentality that spurred on their scoffing, the people cried out that His blood would be not only on themselves, but their children as well (Matthew 27:25). In these moments, they failed to see the depth of the injustice they thrust upon the only sinless One.

Explain to kids that the mankind's sinfulness led to Christ's sacrifice and that this paradox establishes the gospel's great news—that only the perfect sacrifice of God's own Son could lead to our salvation. Despite our unworthiness, Christ remains worthy and invites us into His promise of everlasting life.

April 13, 2025 (Unit 27, Session 2)

Jesus Was Crucified

(Matthew 27)

Here in the New Testament crucifixion accounts, we read of Christ taking to the cross on our behalf. In this place where Jesus was stripped of His dignity, we find ourselves clothed in His righteousness by faith.

Why did the omnipotent Jesus choose the cross? How did the suffering of Jesus lead to life everlasting for us? It was through the undeserved disgrace He endured that we would receive God's unwarranted grace and the gift of new life.

In the events leading up to His crucifixion, the King of glory faced criminal charges based on His claim to kingship. We read that the scoffers in the crowd and rulers of the day failed to truly realize His eternal reigning power that transcended the politics of their day. Though He was truly the all-powerful Son of God, He was unwilling to save Himself, that He might save us instead through suffering on our behalf. He refused to bow down to the hateful whims of the world, even despite the physical torture He was forced to endure. How heartbreaking to consider the insults hurled at the only truly innocent One, even from the mouths of the criminals who hung at His side on the cross.

In the aftermath of such excruciating punishment—and at the hands of so many of His own people, at that—the Son of Man was laid to rest in a garden tomb, thus fulfilling the burial prophecy of Isaiah 53:9. The ultimate price was paid by the God who keeps His promises, from the old covenant now into the new.

Teach your kids that on Calvary's hill as darkness fell upon the earth, we got to experience the life that could only come from the death of God's own Son. He who knew no sin experienced the depths of separation from the Father so that we would not have to endure such darkness. Christ took on the feeling of forsakenness so that we would never have to know what life is like without Him; this is our invitation to everlasting life that is only received by faith alone.

Jesus Was Raised

(Matthew 27-28)

Amidst the darkness of the crucifixion story, the promise of new life in Jesus sprang forth. Here in these passages, the truth of Christ's victory became known first to His closest followers and then was spread throughout the rest of the world.

With what power was Jesus raised from the grave? How did these events tie into the story of the gospel or into our own lives? Every word of the Scriptures works in harmony to point to the reality of Christ's death and resurrection. Through His victory over sin and death, those who believe in His name find everlasting life through Him, God's Son.

Despite the security of the closely guarded tomb, Christ still rose again from the grave. Though the chief priests conspired to stop the truth of His resurrection from circulating, the truths of Christ's enduring power still resounded. The guards in their earthly strength, as well as the priests in their worldly power, stood no chance against the unstoppable might of the one, true Son of God.

The Spirit of God that raised Christ from the dead was not just a once-and-done deal. In fact, that same Spirit is alive inside of those who profess faith in Jesus even still today. Remind kids that the miraculous power at work in the Son is still working within those who call upon His name for salvation from sin. God was pleased with His Son who reigns as King over all creation; He has invited us to enter into a relationship with Him, all because of the work that Christ did on our behalf.

Just as the angels reminded the women at the empty tomb, Christ did all that He said He would do, exactly as the Old Testament proclaimed the Messiah would. His truth remains, and His Word endures. Although the chief priests tried to spread false news, Christ's truth remains active and living, still alive today. Despite the mourning, weeping, and confusion of our human experiences, the good news is still ours to proclaim and cling to with hope. Christ is risen, and He invites us into the victory He has secured.