

## JESUS GIVES HIS LIFE

*Mark 14:53–72; Mark 15:1–41; Psalm 38:20–22; Isaiah 53:2–3*

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After being betrayed by one of His disciples, Jesus was arrested and put on trial. His crime? Claiming to be the Son of God. He was tried first by the high priest, who wanted Jesus to defend Himself against His accusers. But Jesus stayed silent.

Meanwhile, Peter hovered around, waiting to see what would happen. Afraid for his own life, and not wanting to be connected to Jesus, Peter repeatedly denied knowing Him.

When Jesus was tried before Pilate, He was again pressed to defend Himself, but to no effect. Then there were the soldiers who mocked and humiliated Jesus. Can't you just

picture them, egging each other on and casting lots for His clothing? And even still, Jesus refused to go on the defense (vv.16–20).

At the end of His life, in excruciating pain, Jesus cried out to His Father (Mark 15:37). A centurion saw the way Jesus died, and said, "Truly this man was the Son of God!" (v.39). For those who still doubted, perhaps the darkened sky and torn curtain within the temple forced them to look again (vv.33, 37).

Jesus was a real man who walked this earth. His rejection was real. He felt the pain of separation from God the Father. He took on our shame and punishment so we don't have to carry it anymore. And He did this with meekness and humility, surrendering His earthly reputation for His eternal purpose (Hebrews 12:2).

In revisiting Jesus's death, we can learn a lot about how we ought to live. I'm reminded that becoming more like Jesus isn't about being impressive, attractive, popular, or rich. We don't have to be loud, boastful, or universally liked. Our Savior sure wasn't. Scripture says it was envy that made the chief priests hate Jesus; they were jealous of His power and influence (v.10). Pilate listened to them because he longed to please the crowd and protect his own image and position before Rome.

So often we're like those priests, the soldiers, Peter, and Pilate; we seek to protect our image and reputation at the expense of boldly knowing Jesus. Living this way is in direct opposition to the message and power of the cross.

*Jesus, help us let go of worrying about how we're perceived by others. Give us a hunger to know You and the power of Your resurrection. Help us reject what this world deems important and teach us to follow humbly after Your example instead.*