

CONCERNING THE WAY

December 29, 2009

LESSON 86: THE GOSPEL OF JOHN



Chapter 17 – Christ the Intercessor

This entire chapter is a prayer to the Father by Jesus. We assume that it happens along the way from the upper room to the Mt. of Olives where Jesus will be arrested in the next chapter, but we don't know for sure. It's important to see that for Jesus, prayer was a priority. In the other gospels we learn that Jesus often got up early in the morning to pray before beginning the activities of the day. Early in His ministry Jesus taught His disciples to pray, and we call it the Lord's Prayer. That one was intended to be a model for us to follow, but this prayer is the real Lord's Prayer. This prayer reveals the heart of God.

Some commentators have called John 17 one of the most wonderful chapters in the Bible - as an example of the communication between the Father and Son, an example of Jesus' present work as our great High Priest, and as an example of the things believers should mention in prayer. In this prayer, Jesus first prays for Himself, then for His disciples, and finally for those who will be His followers in the years to come.

John 17:1-2 When Jesus had finished saying these things, he looked upward to heaven and said, "Father, the time has come. Glorify your Son, so that your Son may glorify you — (2) just as you have given him authority over all humanity, so that he may give eternal life to everyone you have given him.

Jesus also looked upward before His prayer in John 11:41, so this is certainly appropriate for us to do so when we pray.

Jesus knew what was about to happen to Him. He knew it would be horrific, but that it was necessary - it had been planned and agreed on in eons past between the persons of the Trinity. Jesus would have to die so that mankind could be saved, He could be glorified, and then in so doing He would glorify the Father because of His resurrection and this wonderful plan to save humanity. This is another claim of divinity by Jesus - no mortal man could be given the same glory that the Father has. He receives the same glory for this plan that the Father did in initiating it.

Jesus isn't being selfish in asking the Father to glorify Him, He is asking for the Father's will to be carried out, and that would ultimately bring glory to the Father. This request for glorification included sustaining Jesus in suffering, accepting His sacrifice, resurrecting Him, and restoring Him to His former glory. We should also ask for things that will bring glory to God. This is, in fact, the believer's prime goal - to bring glory to God (1 Corinthians 10:31, Ephesians 1:12,14).

Notice that the Father gave Jesus authority over all humanity, but only gives eternal life to those the Father gives Him. This is another great statement of the sovereignty of God over who is saved. The security of the believer depends on the Father's faithfulness to answer the prayers of His Son. I think we can count on Him to do that, don't you?

"It was the hour for fulfilling and accomplishing many prophecies, types and symbols which for hundreds and thousands of years had pointed forward to it. It was the hour when events took

place which the history of the entire universe can supply no parallel: when the Serpent was permitted to bruise the heel of the woman's Seed." Arthur W. Pink

John 17:3 Now this is eternal life — that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you sent.

This may be a parenthetical comment by John inserted here, but it tells us what eternal life is - it's not just life unending, but it also has to do with the quality of life, which comes from being in relationship with the Father, the one true God. This is Christ's definition of salvation.

"What is involved in knowing Christ? And what is involved in gaining a deeper knowledge of Him? First, knowing Christ involves knowing something about Him. . . . Second, knowing Christ involves intimacy of relationship. . . . Third, knowing Christ means a growing knowledge." R. Kent Hughes

John 17:4-5 I glorified you on earth by completing the work you gave me to do. (5) And now, Father, glorify me at your side with the glory I had with you before the world was created.

What was the work the Father gave the son to do? It was to be the Savior of the world, through His sacrificial death (John 3:16-17). Jesus is speaking as if it has already happened. It is a sure thing - as good as done.

I hope we can say the same as Jesus did when we come to the end of our lives, that we have completed the work that God gave us to do. If you're wondering what that work may be for you, here's a few verses that let us know what God wants us to do: Micah 6:8, Matthew 28:19-20, Hebrews 13:15-16, James 1:27.

You'd really have to be a fool to not see the deity of Christ in the Bible - I just can't understand how anyone can say Jesus never claimed to be God. Here we see that He was at the side of the Father before the world was created! He laid aside His glory to become a man and receive even more glory as the God-man. And now Jesus knows He is going to return there to the Father's side and to His former glory.

John 17:6 "I have revealed your name to the men you gave me out of the world. They belonged to you, and you gave them to me, and they have obeyed your word.

These men He is referring to is the eleven faithful disciples. Jesus revealed the Father to them. Notice that they already belonged to the Father, and He gave them to the Son. These men were chosen by God long before. "They obeyed your word" doesn't mean absolute obedience. As we have seen, the disciples were less than perfect, but they had the right commitment. Their faith in Jesus was a trust in His union with the Father (17:8). It means a general obedience to the Word of God, and belief in His revelation to them.

John 17:7-8 Now they understand that everything you have given me comes from you, (8) because I have given them the words you have given me. They accepted them and really understand that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me.

Here Jesus is saying that the disciples now really do understand who He is, that He is the Messiah sent from God the Father, and everything Jesus does or says comes from Him. Of course, they still don't have everything figured out, they will still be learning what the plan is as we go along in the

rest of this book and then into the book of Acts.

John 17:9-10 I am praying on behalf of them. I am not praying on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those you have given me, because they belong to you. (10) Everything I have belongs to you, and everything you have belongs to me, and I have been glorified by them.

Jesus didn't pray on behalf of the world here (although He did at other times), but just those whom the Father had given Him. That's because He's going to be praying for the disciples' (and all believers) preservation and sanctification. The world is not going to be preserved in its rebellion or sanctified in its unbelief. Here we see again the equality of Jesus with the Father. How did the disciples glorify Jesus? By their belief and obedience to Him. And that's how we glorify Jesus, too.

John 17:11 I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them safe in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one just as we are one.

Beginning in this verse, the Lord makes five wonderful petitions for His disciples. They are: (1) security in salvation (John 17:11); (2) victory over Satan's temptations (John 17:15); (3) sanctification through the Word (John 17:17); (4) unity with God and each other (John 17:21); and (5) ultimate glorification with God in heaven (John 17:24). The Father had already promised the Son that not one whom He had given the Son would be lost (John 6:37-39), and we are now given even more assurance through this prayer.

Jesus is praying that these eleven men will be unified in spirit just as He and the Father are. And from the accounts we have in the gospels and in Acts, that's what happened, they stuck together in heart and mind. It wasn't until the disciples were gone that divisions in the church began happening.

Keep in mind that Jesus never prayed that everyone who calls themselves Christian would come together in one organization, no matter what they believe. He never asked us to give up our biblical beliefs and tolerate false teachings for the sake of oneness with each other.

John 17:12-13 When I was with them I kept them safe and watched over them in your name that you have given me. Not one of them was lost except the one destined for destruction, so that the scripture could be fulfilled. (13) But now I am coming to you, and I am saying these things in the world, so they may experience my joy completed in themselves.

The "one destined for destruction" was Judas, of course. It is translated "son of perdition" in some versions. The only other place this phrase is used in the Bible is about the Antichrist (2 Thessalonians 2:3), which leads some to believe that the future Antichrist will be a reappearance of Judas Iscariot.

The scripture Jesus refers to as being fulfilled is Psalm 41:9, which He explicitly quoted in John 13:18. By the way, the word "joy" in the Bible does not mean laughing and jumping up and down, but it means acceptance and contentment. It can be expressed emotionally by laughing and jumping up and down, of course, but that is not the meaning of the word joy. Real joy comes from a relationship with Jesus Christ. He is the source of joy.

John 17:14-16 I have given them your word, and the world has hated them, because they do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. (15) I am not asking you to take them out of the world, but that you keep them safe from the evil one. (16) They do not belong to the world just as I do not belong to the world.

Now the disciples have a different destination. They will continue to live in the world, but it is not their home. This applies to us as believers also. The world may hate us because we have the truth and belong to God. Today, just the fact that we believe that absolute truth exists is enough to bring hate and persecution on us from the world. We have to live in the world for now, but we're only passing through, as the old song says.

As believers share Jesus Christ, "Everything in the world—the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes, and the boasting of what he has and does" (1 John 2:16) loses its attractiveness. A believer's commitment shows the world's values to be trash or dung (Philemon 3:8). So the world hates that we expose its values to be phony (John 3:20).

"The spiritual dimensions to this prayer of Jesus are consistent and overwhelming. By contrast, we spend much more time today praying about our health, our projects, our decisions, our finances, our family, and even our games than we do praying about the danger of the evil one. Materialists at heart, we often discern only very, very dimly the spiritual struggle of which Paul (for instance) was so deeply aware (Ephesians 6:10)." D. A. Carson

"Clearly, our Savior was praying that His followers be kept from evil. That is, we are to be insulated from the world rather than isolated from it. When you insulate a wire, you wrap it so that when it touches other wires, the power or current of the wire won't be affected. Anything that drains our power lessens and endangers our testimony. It is possible to live in the world without taking part in its activities and values." Charles U. Wagner

John 17:17-19 Set them apart in the truth; your word is truth. (18) Just as you sent me into the world, so I sent them into the world. (19) And I set myself apart on their behalf, so that they too may be truly set apart.

"Set them apart" is translated in other versions as "sanctify them" or "consecrate them". The Greek word here, "hagiazō", means being dedicated or set apart. This is the actual meaning of being sanctified or "holy" - it is to be set apart as special or unique in God's eyes, consecrated for service to Him. In the Old Testament it usually had the idea of making someone or something sacred, usually by the burning of a sacrifice. It does not mean to purify as to purify from sin. Jesus purified Himself even though He had no sin.

And they are set apart in "the truth". Jesus has grounded them in the truth, and they will be dedicated to that truth as they carry on the mission that Jesus sent them out into the world to do. Jesus is giving kind of a prayer of consecration for the disciples here, like He was commissioning them for the work He had called them to do. It is the same way the prophets and priests were set apart for service to God in the OT (Jeremiah 1:5, Exodus 40:13, Leviticus 8:30, 2 Chronicles 5:11).

Sanctification is basically two stages. At the moment we trust in Jesus Christ, we are sanctified (set apart, made holy) for God, once and for all. This is our position in Christ, and it is entirely the work of God. The disciples had already gone through that stage, so that isn't what Jesus is asking for here. The second stage is a day by day walk with God, separating from sin and becoming more like Jesus. This is a process and doesn't happen overnight. This is also a work of God, He who

began a good work in you will be faithful to complete it (Philippians 1:6).

But then Jesus speaks of Himself being set apart for the disciples, and this is a different meaning, more like a sacrificial lamb is consecrated (Deuteronomy 15:19). Jesus is dedicating Himself to do the will of the Father, which includes going to the cross on their behalf, and also ours.

John 17:20-21 "I am not praying only on their behalf, but also on behalf of those who believe in me through their testimony, (21) that they will all be one, just as you, Father, are in me and I am in you. I pray that they will be in us, so that the world will believe that you sent me.

Verse 20 tells us that this prayer is not only for the disciples, but also for all those that have believed in Christ down through history. In the Church Age all Christians have come to Christ directly or indirectly through the apostles' witness. We believe because of the testimony of the disciples, through the gospels, the book of Acts, all the epistles they wrote.

And it is the will of God that we will all be one in Him. When people believe in Jesus, they automatically become part of God's family, called the Body of Christ. We ARE all united (whether we like it or not) in Christ. If we remain in Christ, that gives the world a convincing witness to the truth of Jesus Christ. If the world can see that we believers love each other and are unified in our message, then they will be more likely to believe us. However, that has sometimes been a problem for the Church in history. We have displayed the love of Christ by leading the world in bringing help to the poor and needy, building schools and hospitals and so on, but we have not been so successful at being unified. We tend to fight each other more than we fight with the world.

However, Jesus is not praying for oneness with each other here. He is asking that we might experience the same oneness with God that Jesus experienced!

John 17:22-23 The glory you gave to me I have given to them, that they may be one just as we are one — (23) I in them and you in me — that they may be completely one, so that the world will know that you sent me, and you have loved them just as you have loved me.

Jesus keeps stressing the oneness that we have with each other, just as there is a oneness with God between the Father and Son. We do not always display that unity very well, but the fact is that we are one in Christ. When you see believers working together in love showing the love of Christ, amazing transformations can take place in the world. That's how people see God's love, through us!

John 17:24 "Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, so that they can see my glory that you gave me because you loved me before the creation of the world.

The Son of God wants us to be with Him. Think about that. Isn't it amazing? In this life, being with Jesus means spending time studying the Bible and in prayer. But someday that will change when we see Him face to face and get to actually be with Him in person! All other loves—marital love, parental love, brotherly love, love of country, any kind of love—have their source in the love between all the Persons of the Godhead.

John 17:25-26 Righteous Father, even if the world does not know you, I know you, and these men know that you sent me. (26) I made known your name to them, and I will continue to make it known, so that the love you have loved me with may be in them, and I may be in them."

Jesus will continue to work in the disciples through the Holy Spirit, teaching them about the Father, as He does with us today! Jesus' request for believers are: preservation (John 17:11), sanctification (v. 17), unity (vv. 11, 21-22), and participation in Jesus' glory (v. 24). This prayer is sure to be answered (11:42; 1 John 5:14)!

Someday all believers will be in perfect union with Christ in heaven, but there is a present spiritual union between Christ and the believer. In this chapter we see some of the results of that union that we have right now, which we often do not see or recognize:

- The believer has the same life as Christ (verse 2)
- The believer has the same security as Christ (verse 11)
- The believer has the same separation as Christ (verse 14)
- The believer has the same sending into the world as Christ (verse 18)
- The believer has the same union as Christ (verse 21)
- The believer has the same glory as Christ (verse 22)
- The believer has the same love as Christ (verse 23)

These are things that are ours, in Christ, right now!

Chapter 18 – Christ the Prisoner

In this chapter we have the arrest and trial of Jesus. I'm going to use all four gospels to give you the full picture of what happened that night. It's important to remember as we go through this that Jesus was in full control of what was happening to Him at all times. His fate was not up for grabs, and not in the hands of Satan and evil men. Jesus could have prevented all these things and escaped at any moment. But He didn't. This is what He came to do, voluntarily go to the cross to die for our sins.

John 18:1 When he had said these things, Jesus went out with his disciples across the Kidron Valley. There was an orchard there, and he and his disciples went into it.

So Jesus and the disciples leave the city of Jerusalem, cross the Kidron Valley, and come to an olive orchard. Matthew tells us that this was the Garden of Gethsemane (Matthew 26:36). There are still olive groves on the Mount of Olives today, and you still cross the Kidron Valley from Jerusalem to get to it.

"There is a strong poetic imagery even in the physical surroundings of moving toward the Garden of Gethsemane. . . . A drain ran from the temple altar down to the Kidron ravine to take away the blood of sacrifice. Since it was the Passover, more than 200,000 lambs would be slain in the next day. When Jesus and His band crossed the Kidron, it was red with the blood of the lambs prepared for sacrifice. Within a few hours, the blood of the Lamb of God would flow." R. Kent Hughes

Mark 14:32-36 Then they went to a place called Gethsemane, and Jesus said to his disciples, "Sit here while I pray." (33) He took Peter, James, and John with him, and became very troubled and distressed. (34) He said to them, "My soul is deeply grieved, even to the point of death. Remain here and stay alert." (35) Going a little farther, he threw himself to the ground and prayed that if it were possible the hour would pass from him. (36) He said, "Abba, Father, all things are possible for you. Take this cup away from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will."

We see Jesus' humanness here. Was He afraid of the torture He knew was coming? I doubt if He was so much distressed by the prospect of physical suffering. He was already feeling the unimaginable grief of having the weight of the world's sin and rebellion against God laid on Him, and knowing He would have to bear it in Himself. Did He want to go through that? Of course not. But He would do the Father's will.

Mark 14:37-42 Then he came and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, "Simon, are you sleeping? Couldn't you stay awake for one hour? (38) Stay awake and pray that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." (39) He went away again and prayed the same thing. (40) When he came again he found them sleeping; they could not keep their eyes open. And they did not know what to tell him. (41) He came a third time and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting? Enough of that! The hour has come. Look, the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. (42) Get up, let us go. Look! My betrayer is approaching!"

Is there any greater truth that we all know, than "the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak"? We are all familiar with that, especially as we grow older!

John 18:2-3 (Now Judas, the one who betrayed him, knew the place too, because Jesus had met there many times with his disciples.) (3) So Judas obtained a squad of soldiers and some officers of the chief priests and Pharisees. They came to the orchard with lanterns and torches and weapons.

This was a Roman "cohort", normally a force of 600 men, but it could have been less for this mission. Some question whether these were actually Roman soldiers or if they were temple guards. But in any case, they came prepared for a fight. You're going to see all through this that the Chief priests and Pharisees made a bungled mess out of this whole thing. Nothing they did made any sense, and there was no justice involved. They could have easily arrested Jesus many times, but they didn't. But all of these things happened to fulfill many prophecies that had been written hundreds of years earlier.

John 18:4-9 Then Jesus, because he knew everything that was going to happen to him, came and asked them, "Who are you looking for?" (5) They replied, "Jesus the Nazarene." He told them, "I am he." (Now Judas, the one who betrayed him, was standing there with them.) (6) So when Jesus said to them, "I am he," they retreated and fell to the ground. (7) Then Jesus asked them again, "Who are you looking for?" And they said, "Jesus the Nazarene." (8) Jesus replied, "I told you that I am he. If you are looking for me, let these men go." (9) He said this to fulfill the word he had spoken, "I have not lost a single one of those whom you gave me."

Jesus knew everything that was about to happen, but He still asked them who they were looking for

to get them to admit their guilt. And when He said "I am He", He didn't really say that, He said "I AM". There is no "He" in the original Greek. This is another statement of divinity by Jesus. He showed them who was in charge.

Why did they retreat and fall to the ground? Did He reveal power that literally knocked them down? It's possible, we don't know. I think that His goodness and maybe even a glimpse of His glory and majesty was revealed briefly when He said "I AM", and they were just stunned with that glimpse.

They were expecting a criminal that might try to get away or fight them, not this good and confident man who strode right up to them. God is reminding all of the people then and who have read this account since that, even though it looks like the powers of darkness are in control here, Jesus holds ultimate power over His enemies, and He is allowing this to happen to Him.

Matthew 26:48-50 (Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, "The one I kiss is the man. Arrest him!") (49) Immediately he went up to Jesus and said, "Greetings, Rabbi," and kissed him. (50) Jesus said to him, "Friend, do what you are here to do." Then they came and took hold of Jesus and arrested him.

John skips this part, but Judas rubbed in his betrayal even more by the act of kissing Jesus, which was a common way for a disciple to greet his master.

John 18:10-11 Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, pulled it out and struck the high priest's slave, cutting off his right ear. (Now the slave's name was Malchus.) (11) But Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword back into its sheath! Am I not to drink the cup that the Father has given me?"

This part is mentioned in all three of the other gospels, but John, who speaks as an eyewitness to what was happening, says that the disciple who struck the slave was Peter, and what the slave's name was. It has been mentioned by more than a few that it's obvious Peter was aiming for the head, and either he just missed or the servant ducked just in time. The Greek word for sword and knife is the same, so this may have just been Peter's fishing knife instead of a sword.

The "cup" is the cup of suffering that Jesus asked the Father to take from Him in prayer, but accepted as His will. This is an example for us to follow. Though God doesn't call us to endure the kind of suffering Jesus did, He does give us our own cups that we must drink from. We shouldn't be afraid of that cup or try to run away from it, but accept it as God's will, as Jesus did. Luke, ever the careful historian, is the only one that tells us that Jesus healed the man:

Luke 22:51 But Jesus said, "Enough of this!" And he touched the man's ear and healed him.

Matthew describes how Jesus rebukes both Peter and the crowd for their actions:

Matthew 26:52-56 Then Jesus said to him, "Put your sword back in its place! For all who take hold of the sword will die by the sword. (53) Or do you think that I cannot call on my Father, and that he would send me more than twelve legions of angels right now? (54) How then would the scriptures that say it must happen this way be fulfilled?" (55) At that moment Jesus said to the crowd, "Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest me like you would an outlaw? Day after day I sat teaching in the temple courts, yet you did not arrest me. (56) But this has happened so that the scriptures of the prophets

would be fulfilled." Then all the disciples left him and fled.

Twelve legions would be about 72,000 angels, since a Roman legion was about 6,000 soldiers.

John 18:12 Then the squad of soldiers with their commanding officer and the officers of the Jewish leaders arrested Jesus and tied him up.

There will be a series of five “trials” that Jesus will be subjected to. They were not true legal proceedings, but illegal hearings in which the accused had no rights or representation.

TRIAL #1 - Annas

John 18:13-14 They brought him first to Annas, for he was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was high priest that year. (14) (Now it was Caiaphas who had advised the Jewish leaders that it was to their advantage that one man die for the people.)

Annas had been high priest from A.D. 6 to A.D. 15 (according to the historian Josephus). His five sons all eventually became high priests. This family was known for its greed, wealth, and power in Roman-controlled Israel of that time. The Jewish Talmud even has a curse on this family - “Woe to the family of Annas!” He is called “high priest” still, even though he wasn’t any more, apparently like we continue to call the leaders of our country “president” even when they have left office.

The fact that Jesus was brought to Annas first would tell us that Annas still held the real power over the Jews in Israel, even though he was no longer technically the high priest. Caiaphas was the one who had uttered a prophecy (John 11:50) to the Jewish leaders that it would be best if Jesus would die for the people.

John 18:15-16 Simon Peter and another disciple followed them as they brought Jesus to Annas. (Now the other disciple was acquainted with the high priest, and he went with Jesus into the high priest's courtyard.) (16) But Simon Peter was left standing outside by the door. So the other disciple who was acquainted with the high priest came out and spoke to the slave girl who watched the door, and brought Peter inside.

The “other disciple” is believed by most scholars to be John, because John never names himself in this book, but always names other disciples when speaking of a specific one. We don’t know how John might have been acquainted with Annas, although there is some evidence that there were priestly connections in John’s family. So Peter and John did not run away like the other disciples, but followed the crowd as they were taking Jesus, and went right in to the high priest’s courtyard.

John 18:17-18 The girl who was the doorkeeper said to Peter, "You're not one of this man's disciples too, are you?" He replied, "I am not." (18) (Now the slaves and the guards were standing around a charcoal fire they had made, warming themselves because it was cold. Peter also was standing with them, warming himself.)

Here’s the first time Peter denies Jesus. It’s strange behavior for a guy who just tried to defend Jesus by trying to kill a servant, and then who, instead of running away and hiding, chose to follow as closely as he could to find out what was going on. A strange mixture of bravery and cowardice in the same person!

John 18:19-24 While this was happening, the high priest questioned Jesus about his

disciples and about his teaching. (20) Jesus replied, "I have spoken publicly to the world. I always taught in the synagogues and in the temple courts, where all the Jewish people assemble together. I have said nothing in secret. (21) Why do you ask me? Ask those who heard what I said. They know what I said." (22) When Jesus had said this, one of the high priest's officers who stood nearby struck him on the face and said, "Is that the way you answer the high priest?" (23) Jesus replied, "If I have said something wrong, confirm what is wrong. But if I spoke correctly, why strike me?" (24) Then Annas sent him, still tied up, to Caiaphas the high priest.

This wasn't a formal trial, there were no witnesses brought to testify against Jesus. Annas seems to be more concerned about how influential Jesus had become and how large a following He had gathered. It was against the Law to strike a prisoner, but obviously by this time they didn't care about the Law. Jesus pointed them back to the Law by what He said, which just condemned them even further.

TRIAL #2 - Caiaphas

Matthew 26:57-63 Now the ones who had arrested Jesus led him to Caiaphas, the high priest, in whose house the experts in the law and the elders had gathered. (58) But Peter was following him from a distance, all the way to the high priest's courtyard. After going in, he sat with the guards to see the outcome. (59) The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were trying to find false testimony against Jesus so that they could put him to death. (60) But they did not find anything, though many false witnesses came forward. Finally two came forward (61) and declared, "This man said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God and rebuild it in three days.'" (62) So the high priest stood up and said to him, "Have you no answer? What is this that they are testifying against you?" (63) But Jesus was silent. The high priest said to him, "I charge you under oath by the living God, tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God."

Now Jesus is taken in front of the Sanhedrin, in the house of Caiaphas the high priest, Annas' son-in-law. You can tell that this is more of a real trial, as all the Jewish leaders are there, and there are witnesses that are questioned. But it is still illegal - it's taking place in Caiaphas' home, for heaven's sake!

It seems that Caiaphas, at least, knew His scriptures, like Psalm 2, which described the Messiah as being the son of God. So the Jewish leaders didn't miss the prophecies, they just rejected Jesus as being the fulfillment of them.

Matthew 26:64 Jesus said to him, "You have said it yourself. But I tell you, from now on you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power and coming on the clouds of heaven."

Jesus is alluding to Psalm 110:1, so He was claiming that He shares authority with God in heaven. The expression "right hand of the Power" was a common way of referring to God in 1st century Judaism, out of reverence for the divine name. You would never hear a Jew say "God did this", or "we must obey God."

Matthew 26:65-68 Then the high priest tore his clothes and declared, "He has blasphemed! Why do we still need witnesses? Now you have heard the blasphemy! (66) What is your verdict?" They answered, "He is guilty and deserves death." (67) Then

they spat in his face and struck him with their fists. And some slapped him, (68) saying, "Prophecy for us, you Christ! Who hit you?"

We know that Jesus had supporters in the Sanhedrin, including Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea. They would have surely opposed this travesty if they had been there. So, It's likely that those who were favorable towards Him were not present at this illegal trial (probably not even told), which would have been one reason they didn't hold it at the temple, but secretly at a home.

Jesus is getting the idea of the Son of Man from Daniel 7, which these Jewish leaders knew, and that's why they accused Him of blasphemy. They knew He was claiming deity.

John 18:25-27 Meanwhile Simon Peter was standing in the courtyard warming himself. They said to him, "You aren't one of his disciples too, are you?" Peter denied it: "I am not!" (26) One of the high priest's slaves, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, said, "Did I not see you in the orchard with him?" (27) Then Peter denied it again, and immediately a rooster crowed.

Here's the second and third time that Peter denies Jesus, fulfilling the Lord's prophecy. Before you're too hard on Peter, think about it. It's always easier to take a stand for Jesus when you have friends around to back you up. But when you're by yourself, it's much easier to keep your mouth shut, or just deny Jesus, isn't it? Luke adds a little more detail to what happened:

Luke 22:61-62 Then the Lord turned and looked straight at Peter, and Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said to him, "Before a rooster crows today, you will deny me three times." (62) And he went outside and wept bitterly.

Luke shows us that Peter didn't realize at the time that he was fulfilling Jesus prophecy about Him (the word of the Lord), and when he did, he felt real remorse that he done this. We see later on that Jesus forgave Peter for what he did, and He will do the same for us if we have denied Him and have repented of it.

Matthew 27:1-2 When it was early in the morning, all the chief priests and the elders of the people plotted against Jesus to execute him. (2) They tied him up, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate the governor.

Some scholars use these verses to claim yet another trial, which would make six in all. They say that the Sanhedrin went to the temple here and plotted how to make Jesus' death legal. Next Jesus is taken to Pilate, the Roman governor, and we see in Matthew's account what happened to Judas:

Matthew 27:3-10 Now when Judas, who had betrayed him, saw that Jesus had been condemned, he regretted what he had done and returned the thirty silver coins to the chief priests and the elders, (4) saying, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood!" But they said, "What is that to us? You take care of it yourself!" (5) So Judas threw the silver coins into the temple and left. Then he went out and hanged himself. (6) The chief priests took the silver and said, "It is not lawful to put this into the temple treasury, since it is blood money." (7) After consulting together they bought the Potter's Field with it, as a burial place for foreigners. (8) For this reason that field has been called the "Field of Blood" to this day. (9) Then what was spoken by Jeremiah the

prophet was fulfilled: "They took the thirty silver coins, the price of the one whose price had been set by the people of Israel, (10) and they gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord commanded me."

This exact quote is not found in Jeremiah, but the idea is found in Jeremiah 18:2-6, 19:1-13, and 32:6-15. The thirty pieces of silver is prophesied in Zechariah 11:12-13.

We'll continue with trial #3 with Pilate