

REVEALED

An Exposition of the Book of Mark



Responding Under Trial

Mark 14:53-72

Main Idea

Though Jesus is faithful under trial, we, like Peter, are not.

Overview

- **The False Charges Against Jesus**

- The Council, the Sanhedrin, is seeking to put Jesus to death (cf. 3:6; 11:18; 12:12; 14:2)
- Though they were seeking testimony to seal the fate of Jesus, the text tells us “*they found none*” (v. 55, 56)
- But in order to charge Jesus with a crime, two or more witnesses had to produce corresponding testimony (cf. Dt. 19:15)
- Then they try to use Jesus’ own words against him (vv. 58-59), but they distort Jesus words so they do not stand up, even in a prejudiced court
- Jesus does not answer to the false charges calling to mind the prophecy of Isaiah 53:7
- Mark clearly wants us to see that as hard as they tried no eyewitness testimony, or even rumors or hearsay, could be produced against Jesus that would declare him guilty
- This Jesus is sinless, he has done no wrong.

- **The True Confession by Christ**

- The high priest asks Jesus a straightforward question, “Are you the Christ, the Son of God?”
- Up to this point, Jesus has been very careful to protect his identity. He was not deceiving people, but wanted a chance to correct misconceptions about the true work of the Christ
- But now for the first time, Jesus publically and explicitly proclaims he is the Christ, the Son of God

- **How Will You Respond to the True Confession of Christ?**

- Religious Unbelief
 - The religious leaders refuse to consider the option that Jesus may in fact be who he said he is. His mind is already made up; they responds to Jesus with religious unbelief, trusting in themselves rather than in Christ
 - They recognize that if they cede to the fact that Jesus is who he said he is, then their lives must change dramatically
 - They insist that Jesus isn’t Messiah because they don’t want him to be the Messiah
- Repentant Belief
 - While Jesus confesses under immense pressure and gives his life for others, Peter crumbles under the weakest pressure and lies to save himself
 - We are tempted to stand in judgment over Peter, but we should stand next to him, identifying with him
 - All of us deny Christ, even those who bear the name Christian

- Our denials may more subtle – timid silence, lies, or refusing to repent of sin and see Jesus as Lord – but in one form or another, we all deny Christ
- Peter had confessed Jesus was the Christ (8:31) and intended to follow Christ’s command, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.”
- Whereas the religious leaders celebrated their continual unbelief of Jesus, Peter was broken over his temporary denial because he did trust in Jesus
- The difference between the religious leaders and Peter was not that one sinned and the other didn’t; it was one genuinely repented of their sin and the others didn’t

Questions

Discussion Starter: From OJ Simpson to Casey Anthony to Bill Clinton, to the numerous courtroom shows on TV, it seems as though our nation is consumed by and infatuated with trials? Why?

Transition: In Mark 14:53-72, we see one of, if not the, most significant trial in all of history.

1. In verse 55, we see the religious leaders are seeking to put Jesus to death? Why are they doing this? How do we live like the religious leaders?
2. Two times Mark tells us there is no evidence against Jesus. Why is this significant, and how does it show Jesus is our substitute?
3. What does Jesus confess in verse 62 and why is this considered blasphemous?
4. Why does the author place the trial of Peter right after the trial of Jesus (i.e. to show Jesus is faithful, and Peter is not; we are like Peter)?
5. How do we see Peter’s sin progressing? How does this speak about the dangers of sin in our life?
6. One preacher said, “Sin is the suicidal action of the human will. To do wrong destroys the power to do right...No man can do a wrong act, and be as sound in his will, and as spiritually strong, after it as he was before it.” Do you agree, why or why not?
7. In verse 72, we see Peter broken and weeping over his sin – in other words he is repentant. What is repentance and why is it so important?
8. How is repentance different from regret or remorse?
9. Does repentance somehow earn God’s favor? Does repentance mean we will stop sinning?