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The Way Up to the Cross

The Verdict that Demanded No Evidence

Matthew 26:57–68 (HCSB)

Those who had arrested Jesus led Him away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders had convened.

⁵⁸ Meanwhile, Peter was following Him at a distance right to the high priest’s courtyard. He went in and was sitting with the temple police to see the outcome. ⁵⁹ The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were looking for false testimony against Jesus so they could put Him to death. ⁶⁰ But they could not find any, even though many false witnesses came forward. Finally, two who came forward ⁶¹ stated, “This man said, ‘I can demolish God’s sanctuary and rebuild it in three days.’” ⁶² The high priest then stood up and said to Him, “Don’t You have an answer to what these men are testifying against You?” ⁶³ But Jesus kept silent. Then the high priest said to Him, “By the living God I place You under oath: tell us if You are the Messiah, the Son of God!” ⁶⁴ “You have said it,” Jesus told him. “But I tell you, in the future you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of the Power and coming on the clouds of heaven.” ⁶⁵ Then the high priest tore his robes and said, “He has blasphemed! Why do we still need witnesses? Look, now you’ve heard the blasphemy! ⁶⁶ What is your decision?” They answered, “He deserves death!” ⁶⁷ Then they spit in His face and beat Him; others slapped Him ⁶⁸ and said, “Prophecy to us, Messiah! Who hit You?”

1. THE _____ OF THE TRIAL WAS NEVER IN QUESTION vv 57-61

- The chief priests and the Sanhedrin weren’t concerned with the facts; they were looking to _____ Jesus.
- The trial was not about justice, it was about control.
- Often people’s fears cause them to _____ what they do not understand.

2. THE DEFENSE _____ UNTIL THE RIGHT MOMENT vv 62-63

- The Jews were looking for a _____.

John 1:41 (HCSB)

He first found his own brother Simon and told him, “We have found the Messiah!” (which means “Anointed One”), Jesus clearly declared that He was the Christ.

- Jesus clearly established that He was the Messiah.

Luke 9:20 (HCSB)

“But you,” He asked them, “who do you say that I am?” Peter answered, “God’s Messiah!”

3. JESUS PRESENTED OVERWHELMING _____ THAT HE WAS THE MESSIAH vv 64-68

- Jesus predicts His _____.

Matthew 24:44 (HCSB)

This is why you also must be ready, because the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

- Jesus establishes His position as the Righteous Judge.

2 Timothy 4:8 (HCSB)

There is reserved for me in the future the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me on that day, and not only to me, but to all those who have loved His appearing.

- Jesus’ claim of being who He was brings his _____.

The Next Step:

Recognize that this unjust trial paved the way for your justification.