

Series - On Your Mark!

Date/s - 4 November 2018

Topic - The Trial of Christ (Mark 14:53 – 15:15)

Speaker/s - Pastor Ernie Song

Welcome [15 min]

You may want to look up the following websites for *icebreakers* suitable for your cell.

www.thesource4ym.com/games/

www.christianitytoday.com/smallgroups/articles/icebreakersbeyond.html < go to LEAD, click on ICEBREAKERS >

Worship [15 min]

You may select songs like “Glorious One”, “I Have A Song”, “Worthy Of It All”, “How Great You Are”, or “Shekinah Glory”.

Spiritual Objectives

At the end of the cell discussion, cell members will:

1. Understand and feel the depth of rejection Jesus felt
2. Look to Jesus when we face trials of our own
3. Respond in a Christ-like manner when unfairly treated.

Word [45 min]

We are coming to the last stretch of Jesus’ life on earth. In the last few chapters of Mark, Jesus faces a series of heart-breaking rejections from both friends and foes. Although Jesus is fully God, He still feels the agonising pain of rejection from the disciples He loves and the Jews who hate Him, as He is also fully man, just like us. From Mark’s passage in Pastor Ernie’s sermon, Jesus is grievously rejected by three groups of people.

1. The Disciples Reject Him (Mark 14:50)

The disciples have been following Jesus closely for three years. ***Why then do they reject their Master? Because they are spiritually weak and they do not even realise it.*** Jesus endures the ultimate rejection when His own disciples reject Him. Despite declaring they will never desert Him, they all flee at the first sign of trouble. Peter even denies Jesus, not once but thrice! And Judas betrays Jesus for a few silver coins! Nothing exposes fleshly pride and self-love like a crisis!

God in His grace allows the disciples to be sifted like wheat to refine their faith. In their pride, they leave an open door for Satan to set a foot in. This results in a demonic stronghold that blows up when they are tested. All the disciples underestimate the power of the flesh and the devil. While Peter recognises his failure and repents, Judas regrets his sin and kills himself.

2. The Jews Reject Him (Mark 14:53-65)

Jesus is a Jewish rabbi who teaches from the Torah. ***Why then do the Jewish religious leaders reject Him? Because His spiritual authority outweighs the leaders’ physical authority.*** Jesus hence becomes a threat to their Temple system. Also, unlike them, Jesus befriends the outcasts of society – the very people the religious leaders reject. Jesus has little respect for traditions made by men that depart from the living Word of God.

As a result, the religious leaders persecute Him through a series of mock trials. First, they force Him through

the secret Jewish trials led by the corrupt former high priest Annas, the current high priest Caiaphas (Annas' son-in-law) and the Sanhedrin (a council of biased Jewish leaders). Needless to say, they convict Jesus of a capital crime despite a complete lack of evidence.

3. The Gentiles Reject Him (Mark 15:1-5)

On the same night, they push Jesus through the hastily-assembled Roman civil trials involving Pontius Pilate (the prefect of Judea) and Herod Antipas (the governor of Judea). To their credit, the Roman rulers find no evidence against Jesus. **Why then do the Gentiles reject Him? Because they cave in to the demands of the Jewish people.** Pilate knows Jesus is innocent, but he chooses his career over doing the right thing. He is afraid to lose his position if he does not concede to the Jews. Instead of appealing to justice, the gentile rulers appease the masses for political and selfish reasons.

Jesus' illegitimate trials show how everyone involved (including the disciples) chooses to save their own skin and betrays Jesus, rather than stands up for Him. Despite His innocence, Jesus remains silent and "humbles Himself by becoming obedient to death – even death on a cross!" (Philippians 2:8)

Lessons from the Trials of Jesus

1. Do not let sin become a demonic stronghold in your life (Proverbs 4:23)
2. Be humble. Humility is key to faithfulness (1 Peter 5:5-8).

Final exhortation: *Always look to Jesus in every trial we face!*

"Looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God." (Hebrews 12:2)

Discussion Questions

1. **Pastor Ernie recalled a couple of incidents in his life where he felt rejected by people he knew. Can you share situations in your own life where you have felt the pain of rejection in the past – or perhaps even in the present?** [15 min]
2. **Read Mark 14:53 – 15:15. After sharing our individual experience with rejection, let's turn our attention to Jesus and His disciples in this Scripture. Use your imagination to place yourself into the following scenario and respond as honestly as you can: You are one of the disciples and you watch Jesus arrested and taken away. What will you do?** [15 min]
3. **Read 1 Peter 2:20-23 which is another account on the rejection of Jesus Christ. This Scripture describes Jesus' attitude towards unjust treatment, giving us an example to follow in our own suffering at the hands of others. How will you respond in light of this teaching when you next face your 'persecutor,' be it a coworker, a family member, a friend, etc.?** [15 min]

Works [10 min]

Let's pray:

1. Every RiverLifer will look unto Jesus in times of persecution or trials.

Announcements**1. PASIR RIS CHURCHES COMBINED PRAYER MEETING**

Fri, 09 Nov | 8-10pm | Victory Chapel

2. BAPTISM SERVICE

Sun, 11 Nov | 2:30-5pm | Victory Chapel

29 RiverLifers will be getting baptised. Come and show them your support!

3. THE WAR ROOM

Fri, 16 Nov, 8-10pm, Worship Centre

A place we contend for faith of those dear to us

Church Vision Statement:

"A vibrant family where sons and daughters mature and reveal the Father's glory from generation to generation."