

Disciple's Quest

If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine.

John 8:31

March 29, 2026

Easter 2026

Select Gospel Texts

The Night Before the Cross

Main Idea:

When Jesus cleansed the temple the day after His triumphal entry into Jerusalem, Israel's unbelieving religious leaders were enraged. After seizing him in the Garden of Gethsemane following His betrayal by Judas Iscariot, they took Jesus to the residence of the high priest where the Sanhedrin had been hastily assembled, and put Him on trial. Every aspect of His prosecution was illegal, but it yielded the wicked result they had long desired. Jesus, the Son of God, was outrageously convicted of blasphemy and sentenced to death.

Meanwhile, during the course of the sham trial, Peter, who had only hours earlier sworn that he would die with Jesus, instead collapsed into spiritual failure and denied his Lord three times. By the end of the ordeal, the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross was only hours away.

Outline:

- The wicked conspiracy to murder Jesus
- The illegal trial and prosecution of Jesus
- The crooked conviction and sentencing of Jesus
- Peter's tragic failure and denial of Jesus

Questions for further contemplation and application after the message:

#1 Wicked religious men schemed up the conspiracy that resulted in Jesus' death sentence, and godless men nailed Him to the cross—but whose plan was it according to Acts 2:23-24?

How would you explain God's purpose for the cross to an unbeliever?

#2 Aside from their hard-hearted jealousy, according to today's message, what motivated Caiaphas and the religious authorities of the Jews to ultimately conspire to murder Jesus?

#3 The Sanhedrin was under ordinary circumstances committed to following the prescribed rules for trials, yet they violated them all when prosecuting Jesus. Why were they willing to do this?

#4 When Caiaphas confronted Jesus with the twisted testimony of the false witnesses in Matthew 26:62, He remained silent (v. 63). Why?

#5 In Matthew 26:64, Caiaphas placed Jesus under oath and demanded that He tell them whether He was the Christ, the Son of God. What is the significance of Jesus' answer (v. 65)?

#6 What missteps had Peter taken in the hours leading up to his collapse in Matthew 26:69-74 that set him up for failure?