

The Gospel of John

Chapter 18:12-27

December 7, 1997

- **The Gospel of John Outline:**

- Chapter 1 Our Lord is the Word, the Light and the Life
- Chapter 2 The Lord of the Wedding Feast; Zeal for the purity of the temple
- Chapter 3 Spiritual Birth, Belief and Salvation vs. Unbelief and Condemnation
- Chapter 4 The Ministry in Samaria, The Harvest, The Faith of the Nobleman
- Chapter 5 Paralytic man healed on the Sabbath, Unity of The Father and Son
- Chapter 6 The Bread of Life
- Chapter 7 The public debates about Jesus during the Feast of Tabernacles
- Chapter 8 Public debates: Woman caught in adultery; The Son makes you free; Abraham's true children
- Chapter 9 Jesus heals a man born blind.
- Chapter 10 Jesus is the Door and the True Shepherd
- Chapter 11 Our Lord is the Resurrection and the Life
- Chapter 12 Jesus Anointed and Worshipped as King, God softens some and hardens some, Public ministry ends
- Chapter 13 Jesus Loves His Disciples, Judas Betrays The Master
- Chapter 14 The Way, The Truth and The Life
- Chapter 15 Jesus is the True Vine
- Chapter 16 The Spirit will guide into all truth
- Chapter 17 The Glory of God, and the Unity and Perseverance of Believers
- Chapter 18 The Arrest of Jesus and the Denial of Peter

- **Review and Introduction**

Having completed His instruction to the disciples, Jesus ends his time with them in prayer. Immediately they proceeded to the garden where they were later confronted by a large group of soldiers, officers of the temple and Judas. This section begins the trial of our Lord before a crooked court and the denial of Him by Peter. When attempting to harmonize the four Gospels it is important to recall that John does not claim to record all of the details but instead he chooses those events which give the sense of the chronology but more importantly he records those events which most clearly give testimony to the deity of Christ.

Exposition of John 18:12-27

12 Then the detachment of troops and the captain and the officers of the Jews arrested Jesus and bound Him.¹³ And they led Him away to Annas first, for he was the father-in-law of Caiaphas who was high priest that year.¹⁴ Now it was Caiaphas who advised the Jews that it was expedient that one man should die for the people.

- Although at first the soldiers fell down in awe of Jesus now they arrest Him and bind Him. Apparently, their response to His defenseless actions was short-lived.
- John's is the only gospel to record the portion of the trial before Annas. Although the High Priest normally served until death, Annas, who served from A.D. 6 to 15, was deposed by the Roman procurator Valerius Gratus and between 15 and 18 four of his sons were appointed to the office. Then Caiaphas, Annas' son-in-law, was appointed and he held the office from 18 to 36 A.D. However, there are indications that even though others held the office, Annas continued to be an authoritative elder statesman and it is understandable how he could still be referred to as the high priest simultaneously with Caiaphas.
- John reminds us that Caiaphas was the one who unwittingly prophesied about the death of Christ in John 11:50. Again, we see God's sovereignty extends to all things even the unrighteous deeds of men.

15 And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple. Now that disciple was known to the high priest, and went with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest.¹⁶ But Peter stood at the door outside. Then the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out and spoke to her who kept the door, and brought Peter in.

- John does not give us the name of the other disciple who accompanies Peter to the palace but there is evidence to suggest that the unnamed disciple is John himself. Although John refers to himself as the disciple whom Jesus loved, there is a pattern of not referring to himself by name. Although John was a fisherman and unlikely to be acquainted with the high priest, there is a possible tie to the palace. John's (and James') mother, Salome was the sister of Mary, Jesus' mother. Salome would have had the same relationship then to Elizabeth who was a cousin to them. Elizabeth's husband was Zechariah who was a priest. It is possible (although some tenuous evidence) that John had visited the temple and became known via his family connection.
- John (the unnamed disciple) enters the palace while Peter stays behind and later John returns to escort in Peter who was warming himself by a fire in the courtyard.

17 Then the servant girl who kept the door said to Peter, "You are not also one of this Man's disciples, are you?" He said, "I am not."¹⁸ Now the servants and officers who had made a fire of coals stood there, for it was cold, and they warmed themselves. And Peter stood with them and warmed himself.

- Although there are some minor differences to this account between the four gospels, the four do not contradict, they simply include different details. All of them record that Peter's first denial came by way of a question from a servant girl however, only John records that she tended a gate at the palace.
- In just the short period of time from Jesus' discussion with Peter hours before, and Peter's bold assault on the servant Malchus' ear, Peter now cowers at the interrogation of a young girl.

19 The high priest then asked Jesus about His disciples and His doctrine.²⁰ Jesus answered him, "I spoke openly to the world. I always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where the Jews always meet, and in secret I have said nothing."²¹ "Why do you ask Me? Ask those who have heard Me what I said to them. Indeed they know what I said."

- We can see that the basis on which the leaders wanted to pursue a conviction of Jesus was tied to His teaching; the first thing that Annas questions Him about was His doctrine.
- Jesus had nothing to hide. Even though He spoke in parables so that those whose hard hearts prevented them from hearing, all of His teaching was declared publicly. This is not to say that He did not teach behind closed doors. But it is true that Jesus did not have a public message and a different message or agenda privately.
- We get no indication that charges have been formally brought against Him. Upon review of the entire court proceedings, we can see numerous infractions of their own civil code which dictated the steps of due process.

22 And when He had said these things, one of the officers who stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, "Do You answer the high priest like that?"²³ Jesus answered him, "If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why do you strike Me?"²⁴ Then Annas sent Him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.

- Again, this is evidence that these proceedings are not in accordance with the standards ascribed to by the Jews. Jesus' answer was not in the least disrespectful or untrue. However, His answer did bring to light the foolishness of the interrogation due to the fact that any number of people could attest to His teaching. In response to Jesus' charge, Annas sends Him on to Caiaphas.

25 Now Simon Peter stood and warmed himself. Therefore they said to him, "You are not also one of His disciples, are you?" He denied it and said, "I am not!"²⁶ One of the servants of the high priest, a relative of him whose ear Peter cut off, said, "Did I not see you in the garden with Him?"²⁷ Peter then denied again; and immediately a rooster crowed. NKJV

- Peter's second and third denial come while warming himself around the fire. John records this event for perhaps two reasons. The first is to demonstrate again the divinity of Christ by showing the fulfillment of His prophecy regarding Peter. Secondly, John probably recorded this series of denials to mark a turning point in Peter's life.
- It is very easy for us to be hard on Peter but I think the life of Peter is quite instructional for us. God, while we are still sinners and haters of Him, grants us new life, includes us with His Son and begins His process of sanctification. Our salvation not only has implications for our eternal destiny but it is also central to the conduct of our earthly lives. We are both sanctified and going through sanctification. We have been set apart and destined for our future glory with the Son of God. We are also however, until that time being molded and improved as we are conformed to the image of Christ.
- The work of sanctification is the work of God. Just as God will renew our flesh and give us heavenly bodies like Christ's, so too He is the one who grants us fruitful increase, faithfulness and Christian maturity. Notice how God transforms Peter in Acts 3 & 4 where Peter heals a lame man and then is accused by the same men Jesus encounters here. God grants Peter boldness, wisdom, insight and fruitfulness.
- Just as we wouldn't think that it will be our responsibility to conform our bodies to that of Christ's, we also should not think that it is our responsibility to conform lives to the image of Christ's either. Sanctification is God's work and He accomplishes it perfectly in His time. If He began a work of sanctification, He will faithfully complete it.