

I. **Ice breaker.** *Getting to know each other questions.* (10 minutes)

In the genre of film, what would you say makes the best kind of courtroom/legal drama?
What is your personal favorite courtroom drama film?

II. **Read today's scriptures** out loud, slowly, either in unison or using a designated reader and move into scripture quiet reflection. (3 minutes) **Mark 14:53-65**

⁵³ They took Jesus to the high priest, and all the chief priests, the elders and the teachers of the law came together. ⁵⁴ Peter followed him at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest. There he sat with the guards and warmed himself at the fire. ⁵⁵ The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were looking for evidence against Jesus so that they could put him to death, but they did not find any. ⁵⁶ Many testified falsely against him, but their statements did not agree. ⁵⁷ Then some stood up and gave this false testimony against him: ⁵⁸ "We heard him say, 'I will destroy this temple made with human hands and in three days will build another, not made with hands.'" ⁵⁹ Yet even then their testimony did not agree. ⁶⁰ Then the high priest stood up before them and asked Jesus, "Are you not going to answer? What is this testimony that these men are bringing against you?" ⁶¹ But Jesus remained silent and gave no answer. Again the high priest asked him, "Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?" ⁶² "I am," said Jesus. "And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven." ⁶³ The high priest tore his clothes. "Why do we need any more witnesses?" he asked. ⁶⁴ "You have heard the blasphemy. What do you think?" They all condemned him as worthy of death. ⁶⁵ Then some began to spit at him; they blindfolded him, struck him with their fists, and said, "Prophecy!" And the guards took him and beat him.

III. **Scripture quiet reflection:** (5-10 minutes)

This is a time to personally reflect on this week's scripture. Have a paper and pen available.

1. Read. Read through the passage silently.

2. Reflect. Notice any words or phrases that particularly draw your attention and stand out to you. How do these words/phrases speak directly to you and your present situation? Write your insights.

3. Respond. As God has spoken to you in the Scripture, respond back to God in prayer. What do you want to say to God? What else does God want to say to you?

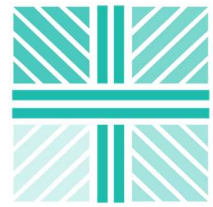
IV. **Sermon and Scripture Application Discussion.** (20-30 minutes)

A. As you reflectively engaged the Scriptures, what stood out to you from these passages?

B. Re-read verses 55-59 and note the rampant false testimonies against Jesus.

⁵⁵ The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were looking for evidence against Jesus so that they could put him to death, **but they did not find any.** ⁵⁶ Many **testified falsely** against him, **but their statements did not agree.** ⁵⁷ Then some stood up and gave this **false testimony** against him: ... " ⁵⁹ **Yet even then their testimony did not agree.** -----⁵⁸ "We heard him say, 'I will destroy this temple made with human hands and in three days will build another, not made with hands.'" "

- Jesus response to the false testimonies and accusation was silence. "But Jesus remained silent and gave no answer." Jesus did not defend himself. What effect did His silence have on the High Priest?
- Has there been a time in your life when you have had lies spoken against you or false accusations? How did you feel emotionally? How did you respond internally and how did you respond externally?



- C. Read Isaiah 53:7 out loud. Jesus response of silence to His accusers is a fulfilment of what was prophesied in Isaiah. How does this prophesy, fulfilled by Jesus, underscore the importance of a purposeful plan by God to redeem the world's sin and sorrow through His son?
- D. When Jesus would not answer the false accusations of the chief priest, he seemed frustrated and asked Jesus: "Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?" Jesus' answer is the first time in the gospel of Mark that Jesus publicly declares His identity.
- How did Jesus' answer lead to His condemnation, arrest, and crucifixion?
 - What is the meaning of Jesus saying: "*And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on clouds of heaven.*"
- E. The supreme irony is that those who sat in judgment over Jesus in Jerusalem are going to find out that one day they will stand before Jesus, who then will be their eternal judge (KF). We also can become accusers of God when life does not meet our expectations and we respond with superiority. We put God on trial when we decide to sit on the judgment seat over others.
- Are you looking critically at any individual or group of people who don't believe the way you do? Is there anyone you feel superior to?
 - Is there anyone who has wronged you or falsely accused you, that you have refused to forgive?

Read this quote by Pastor Tim Keller. How does his comment about Jesus *bearing judgement* bring you hope and healing today? Pray for one another.

Jesus Christ says, "I deserve to be the Judge and you deserve to be in the dock; I have substituted myself for you." Sin is substituting yourself for God, but salvation is God substituting himself for us. Sin is taking upon ourselves prerogatives only God deserves, but salvation is God being willing to come down and take upon himself penalties we deserve. Jesus says, "I am the Judge who's going to deal with evil, but here's how I'm going to deal with evil. I am coming not to bring judgment, but to bear judgment. I'm coming not to smite you with the rod, but to receive the [blow] you deserve. I, who deserve to go free, will be condemned by justice so you, who deserve to be condemned by justice, can go free."
