

**Morning Star Church**  
**Devotional Guide**  
**ONE, Week 3, One Question [Caiaphas' House]**  
**March 14-19**

**Message Synopsis:** Pastor Mike continued our series, *ONE*, on Christ's last day on Earth. This week, he told us about the beginning of the mock trials held against Jesus. From those three trials, held by Jewish leaders, comes *one question* from the high priest, Caiaphas: *Are you the Son of God?* Along our spiritual journey with God, we have encounters when we change our ideas about His Son, Jesus Christ. Many others did the same in His day.

*As soon as it was day, the assembly of the elders of the people gathered together, both chief priests and scribes; and they led Him into their council (the Sanhedrin), and they said, If You are the Christ (the Messiah), tell us. But He said to them, If I tell you, you will not believe (trust in, cleave to, and rely on what I say), And if I question you, you will not answer. But hereafter (from this time on), the Son of Man shall be seated at the right hand of the power of God. And they all said, You are the Son of God, then? And He said to them, It is just as you say; I AM.*

(Luke 22:66-70, Amplified Bible)

**Day 1: Who is This Man?**

1. From the moment Jesus came into the world until the day He left it, everyone who encountered Him struggled to answer the simple question, "Who is this Man?" When He was born, Mary "treasured the truths she saw in her heart." Nevertheless, she could only "ponder them" (Luke 2:19). His own kinsmen from Nazareth rejected Him (Luke 4:28-30). John the Baptist began to doubt because of the persecution of Herod (Matthew 11:2-3). His own disciples—who walked with Him everyday—failed to see the significance of His miracles and truly recognize who Jesus was (Mark 4:35-41; Mark 16:14). Is it surprising to you that those closest to Jesus doubted Him?
2. Write out some of the doubts you have had about Jesus in your life. Does your doubt surprise you when you consider all His has done?

**Day 2: The Plot Against Jesus**

1. Even the Jewish religious leaders struggled with who Jesus was. Look at these Scriptures and write beside each what the religious leaders discussed about Jesus:
  - Matthew 2:4-6
  - John 3:1-2
  - Luke 20:20-21
2. Theirs was not a crisis of insight. They understood clearly who Jesus was, but they deliberately rejected Him as their Messiah. It was their jealousy for their political power and popular influence that caused them to begin to plot to put Him to death. They had to hatch and carefully coordinate a plan to be able to eliminate Jesus. Read Matthew 26:4-5, Luke 6:6-11, and Luke 19:45-47. How do you feel about the hypocrisy of these leaders who were commissioned to lead the people to the true knowledge of God?

### Day 3: The Religious Trials Against Jesus

John 18:12-23, Matthew 26:57-68, and Mark 14:53-65

1. There were six trials Jesus endured that night: three were *religious* trials and three were *civil* trials. The religious trials were a process of illegal hearings that were biased and fallacious in every way; they were a travesty to jurisprudence. In the first trial, Jesus was brought before Annas who was the former high priest. He and his family had developed a system of organized corruption surrounding the temple sacrificial system. Jesus was brought to the “godfather” of Jerusalem to answer for public humiliation when he cleared the Temple of Annas’ “robbers” (see Matthew 21:23).
2. In this and subsequent trials, rules of the Jewish *Mishnah* (laws of the court systems of the Sanhedrin) were broken. They were held at night, on the eve of the Sabbath, in secret, in front of an *unofficial* court. Accused persons could not testify against themselves. There was no defense representation. There were no formal charges, and then accusations changed in the proceedings. There were no witnesses and then false witnesses. The high priest actually questioned the accused, and the accused was abused. How do you feel about the fairness of these proceedings? What would happen in a *fair* government if such an abuse happened?

### Day 4: Peter in the Shadows

Mark 14:53-72

1. All four of the Gospels have an account of Peter’s denial of Christ. Scholars tell us that Peter gave John Mark his view Jesus’ for Mark’s gospel, so Mark has unique insight into Peter’s denial. Peter was the disciple who tried to defend Jesus when soldiers came for Him in the Garden (see John 18:1-11). Respond to this statement: Peter was willing to kill for Jesus, but He was not willing to die for Him.
1. When you look closely at Jesus’ trials, as witnessed by Peter, you see a downward progression of fear from Peter. There is first a following of Jesus, but now at a distance (Mark 14:54). Then there is a bold and flat out denial of Jesus (Mark 14:66-70), and then a reversion into profanity to punctuate the denial (Luke 22:60-61). All of us have been by this fire of compromise at some time in our spiritual journey. What are the denials in your life? Have we followed at a distance? Have we lurked in the shadows of silence? Have we boldly cursed your knowledge of Jesus? Read Peter’s words after grace restored him in 1 Peter 1:6-8. How do you feel about this example of gracious recovery?

### Day 5: In Caiaphas’ House

Read Luke 22:66-70.

1. Jesus was standing before Caiaphas and the religious leaders (Sanhedrin) at the third and final religious trial. They wanted to know if He was The Messiah, and Jesus pointed out three truths to them:
  - In verse 67, He says, “My answer would not change your mind about Me, would it?”
  - In verse 68, He says, “If I fulfilled all of the Messianic prophecies, you would refuse to tell the truth that I was the Messiah.”
  - And in verse 69, He says, “It doesn’t matter if you reject Me; the mission will still be accomplished.”
2. Then comes the one question—the question that every person on earth will have to answer one day about Jesus: “**Are you the Son of God?**” (verse 70) Jesus’ answer to them was an answer that every Jew would recognize. It was the Name that God responded to Moses with in Exodus 3:14, when Moses asked what God’s name was: “I AM THAT I AM!” What does this declaration mean to you?

**Morning Star Church**  
**Small Group Discussion Guide**  
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**Group Icebreaker**

Share with your group a time when you were so proud to be a part of your family, a team, or a group of friends. What made you proud to be identified with them? If you are comfortable, share with your group about a time you were *embarrassed* to be a part of your family, a team, or a group of friends. Why were you embarrassed to be identified with them?

1. Pastor Mike talked about being excited about the 24 young people who made public their decision to be identified as followers of Jesus Christ during this past week's confirmation banquet. Mike said being with their family and friends at church was "probably the easiest place where they will publically acknowledge their faith in Christ." Share with your group the easiest place to acknowledge your faith journey with Christ. Also, tell your group the place where it is the hardest to acknowledge your faith walk with Christ.
2. In his message, Pastor Mike showed us a tube of toothpaste and talked about when pressure is applied to the tube what comes out is toothpaste, as advertised. Pressure reveals our true identity. How would you define your true identity under pressure?
3. There were three illustrations in the message about how pressure revealed each person's true identity. What did we learn about the identity each of these people under pressure?
  - a. Judas (Mark 14:43-49)
  - b. Peter (Mark 14:66-72)
  - c. Jesus (Luke 22:66-70)
4. Discuss with your group the implications of this quote from Brennan Manning: "The greatest single cause of atheism in the world today is Christians, who acknowledge Jesus with their lips and walk out the door and deny Him by their lifestyle. That is what an unbelieving world simply finds unbelievable."

**Prayer Requests**