

**Gospel of Matthew 26 “Beyond a Reasonable Doubt”**  
**Matthew 16:57-68**  
**June 16, 2024**

**Matthew 26:57-68**

57 Then those who had seized Jesus led him to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders had gathered. 58 And Peter was following him at a distance, as far as the courtyard of the high priest, and going inside he sat with the guards to see the end. 59 Now the chief priests and the whole council[h] were seeking false testimony against Jesus that they might put him to death, 60 but they found none, though many false witnesses came forward. At last two came forward 61 and said, “This man said, ‘I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to rebuild it in three days.’” 62 And the high priest stood up and said, “Have you no answer to make? What is it that these men testify against you?”[i] 63 But Jesus remained silent. And the high priest said to him, “I adjure you by the living God, tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God.” 64 Jesus said to him, “You have said so. But I tell you, from now on you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven.” 65 Then the high priest tore his robes and said, “He has uttered blasphemy. What further witnesses do we need? You have now heard his blasphemy. 66 What is your judgment?” They answered, “He deserves death.” 67 Then they spit in his face and struck him. And some slapped him, 68 saying, “Prophecy to us, you Christ! Who is it that struck you?”

The Hebrew legal system.

**Matthew 26:61**

“This man said, ‘I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to rebuild it in three days.’”

**John 2:18-21**

18 So the Jews said to him, “What sign do you show us for doing these things?”  
19 Jesus answered them, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.”  
20 The Jews then said, “It has taken forty-six years to build this temple,[c] and will you raise it up in three days?” 21 But he was speaking about the temple of his body.

Jesus remained silent.

**Isaiah 53:7**

He was oppressed, and he was afflicted,  
yet he opened not his mouth;  
like a lamb that is led to the slaughter,  
and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent,  
so he opened not his mouth.

You have options.

1 Peter 2:22-23

22 He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. 23 When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly.

Matthew 26:64-65

64 Jesus said to him, "You have said so. But I tell you, from now on you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven."

Daniel 7:13-14

13 "I saw in the night visions,  
and behold, with the clouds of heaven  
there came one like a son of man,  
and he came to the Ancient of Days  
and was presented before him.  
14 And to him was given dominion  
and glory and a kingdom,  
that all peoples, nations, and languages  
should serve him;  
his dominion is an everlasting dominion,  
which shall not pass away,  
and his kingdom one  
that shall not be destroyed.

The Sanhedrin response is the response of the normal and average person.

Hedging a Bet.

G.K. Chesterton Quote

"No modern critic in his five wits thinks that the preacher of the Sermon on the Mount was a horrible half-witted imbecile that might be scrawling stars on the walls of a cell. No atheist or blasphemer believes that the author of the Parable of the Prodigal Son was a monster with one mad idea like a Cyclops with one eye. Upon any possible historical criticism, he must be put higher in the scale of human beings than that. Yet by all analogy we have really to put him there or else in the highest place of all."

C.S. Lewis Quote

"We may note in passing that He was never regarded as a mere moral teacher. He did not produce that effect on any of the people who actually met him. He produced mainly three effects — Hatred — Terror — Adoration. There was no trace of people expressing mild approval."

Moving towards the right response.

**Life Group Discussion Questions**

- What did God say to you through His Word during our Sunday gathering?
- Have you ever experienced a trial? Have you ever waited for a judge to rule on something you were involved in? Share some of those details.
- What is the tone of Jesus' trial? Why were the religious leaders looking for evidence against Jesus? Why do you think Jesus brought about such opposition?
- Jesus remains silent in the middle of hostility. What do you think was guiding him?
- What often happens in you when you become defensive? How does Jesus reveal that we have more options in the midst of a trial than we think?
- It seems that Jesus could have remained silent and the case against him would have fallen apart. What does it say about Jesus that he spoke up? Jesus makes clear his name but didn't "clear his name." How can we apply this idea to our lives?
- Discuss the C.S. Lewis' comments that hatred, terror, or adoration are the only proper responses to Jesus. How does this fit with the cultural response to Jesus?
- If adoration aligns with the proper Christian response, then what does adoration look like for you?
- How could your Life Group encourage you through this Scripture over the coming week?