

Title: ARREST, TRIAL, AND FAILED APPEAL: PERVERTED JUSTICE, JOHN 11:28-38  
(Chatham, NJ; 04/17/11, AM) [E – Topical]

Theme: The arrest, trial, and failed appeal of Jesus demonstrate that Jesus was innocent of all charges and that the world operates generally on power politics rather than on genuine justice.

Purpose: To expose these things as the frauds they were and to show that many people still adhere to such false notions of justice.

Introduction:

1. What was going on outside the circle of Jesus and the disciples?
2. How did the rest of humanity react to Jesus?
3. How about those in power? In the seat of governments?
4. This climax of Jesus' life and work reveals the true nature of human sinfulness.
5. Even in the seats of power (religious and secular) sin has corrupted us.
6. See if you don't see our world here in microcosm.

#### I. The Betrayal and Arrest.

- A. A leak in the attorney general's office
  1. Or something like it
  2. Judas leaked information as to Jesus' whereabouts.
  3. He did it to profit; people do this for money or power all the time.
  4. Betrayal is one of the most insidious sins because it involves people you thought you could trust.
  5. Judas betrayed him with a symbol of love: a kiss, Mt. 26:48-49.
- B. Collateral damage – an innocent bystander hurt.
  1. The servant's ear cut off, Mt. 26:52.
  2. Jesus heals him, Luke 22:51.
  3. The crowd came with clubs at night, Mt. 26:55-56.
  4. Why not during the day for all to see?
- C. Political expediency drives the arrest.
  1. First, as to why they did not arrest him during the day, they couldn't because the people in power feared the crowds and because they knew they didn't have a legitimate reason to charge him.
  2. Second, the high priest accesses the situation with a cold-hearted and cynical pragmatism, John 11:49-50. "Someone has to die." (also 18:14)
  3. People's lives are merely pawns and tools manipulated to maintain power.
  4. Those of us who see how the game is played are not surprised by this, but the bald use of human life for their own sake is still shocking.

#### II. The Trial – Both Hitler and Stalin utilized show trials to create the appearance of legitimacy.

- A. Not enough for an indictment.
  1. False witnesses, Mt. 26:59-61, couldn't gather enough evidence.
  2. Their testimonies did not stand close scrutiny, Mk. 15:55-59.
  3. Destroying the temple and rebuilding it was hardly grounds for a legal indictment even if it were a preposterous claim.
  4. The charge that was used to enter the sentence of death was nothing more than claiming to be the Messiah.
- B. Jesus had spoken openly.
  1. This was not some clandestine plot to overthrow the government (actually it was, but not in the way they thought).

2. See John 18:19-23. Jesus had nothing to hide, and none of his words were meant to be sequestered away like some hidden code to be opened later by some secret society.
3. In fact, he told his disciples that they would one day shout them from the rooftops.
4. The trial was a sham; there wasn't any evidence to hand down an indictment.
5. The apostle Paul experienced the same hypocrisy from his own people.

III. The Appeal to a Higher Court (Like many appeals this wasn't meant to get justice but to get the ruling they wanted.)

A. Jesus sent to Pilate.

1. When he first asked them the charge, they insinuate that they are correct without answering the question directly, John 18:30.
2. Yet Pilate finds nothing to charge him with, John 18:38.
3. He sought to release him, Jn. 19:12.
4. Even when the crowd cries out for him to be crucified, Pilate asks, "What evil has he done?" (Mt. 27:23)

B. Mob rule over true justice

1. Pilate knew that jealousy had driven the Jewish leaders to have Jesus arrested, Mt. 27:18.
2. When the choice between Jesus and Barabbas is presented, the mob has been whipped into a frenzy. They refuse to be placated with justice; they want what they want.
3. Be very wary of protestors who seek their way by intimidation. Most have no reasonable and justifiable pretext; that is why they intimidate.
4. There are a lot of people in this world who seek their way by threats of violence, and by angrily shouting their demands.
5. Mob rule does not want to go through the normal process of going through the courts or other legitimate channels.
6. They threaten violence because it is their default means of getting their way.
7. In this case Pilate does what is expedient: he gives in to them.
8. Perhaps he doesn't think this life is worth the aggravation of true justice.

Conclusion:

1. Betrayal, arrest, and show trial demonstrate the worst of what we are.
2. Jesus could not be indicted legitimately so mob rule took over.
3. People didn't want justice; they wanted Jesus out of the way.
4. Their plan backfired for God used it against them.
5. This innocent victim came back to haunt them in a way they could never have imagined.