



Sermon Discussion Guide

The Trial - Tim Knipp

March 22, 2026

Hook - Getting to know one another

- *How is everyone doing this week? Add other questions to get to know one another, especially ones related to the topic in the sermon.*
 - *If you were in a courtroom drama, would you rather be the lawyer, the judge, a witness, or on the jury?*
 - *What's harder: standing alone for what's right, or admitting you were wrong later?*
 - *Why do you think people tend to assume someone is guilty before hearing the full story?*
 - *What makes a "fair" judgment in your opinion?*
 - *Do you think people are generally good at judging truth fairly? Why or why not?*

Book - Scripture

- *Read the scripture passages and discuss to understand **what the text is saying**:*
 - **Mark 14:63-65**
 - **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.



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- **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.
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- What are the religious leaders trying to find against Jesus earlier in the trial (vv. 53–59)?
- How consistent or reliable is the testimony against him?
- Why do you think Jesus remains silent in verse 61?
- What question finally leads to Jesus' decisive statement (verses 60–62)?
- What is Jesus claiming about himself in the moments just before this passage (verse 62)?
- How does the high priest respond, and what verdict is given (verses 63–64)?
- Why is Jesus' truthful statement labeled as blasphemy?
- How does the high priest's reaction reveal more about him than about Jesus?
- What forms of abuse follow the verdict (verse 65)?



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- *How does the high priest's reaction reveal more about him than about Jesus?*
- *Why does Jesus remain composed and resolute while others collapse or act unjustly?*
- *How might this scene show that Jesus is not just a victim, but willingly stepping into something?*
- *If everyone around Jesus is failing—religious leaders, the crowd, what does that reveal about the real problem?*

Look - Connections to our world today

- *This section focuses on implications about **what this text means** about what's wrong in the world, about trusting God, about who God is, etc.*
 - *What do the mocking and violence reveal about how people respond to truth and authority?*
 - *How does Jesus taking Barabbas' place and giving him a chance at new life mean good news for the world around us today? How do you think people might receive that news? Are there accurate ways to help us share it that address the issues people in our Bellingham community might have about it? Are there ways we can interact with culture around us to communicate the Gospel in a way that makes sense to people? (e.g. Tim used movies in his sermon)*

Took - Personal Application

- *This application focuses on **how God is calling us to respond**. This could be personally, as a family, small group, or church. It could be something to believe, to meditate on, to say or do this week.*
 - *How do we sometimes justify wrong actions while thinking we're right (like the leaders)?*
 - *If this passage exposes everyone's guilt, where do you fit into the story?*



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- *What does it mean that Jesus stands condemned while the truly guilty (people like Barabbas—and us) go free?*
- *How does this scene deepen your understanding of the cross—not just as suffering, but substitution?*
- *How should we respond to a Savior who endured injustice in our place?*
- *What would it look like to follow Jesus more faithfully under pressure this week?*
- *Where do you need to move from self-justification to humility and repentance?*
- *If Jesus is declared guilty in a broken human system, but is actually innocent—and we are the ones exposed—how does that reshape your view of grace?*
- *In Sunday's sermon, Tim Knipp shared that religion, practical politics, and the popular masses all judge Jesus as guilty, but that Jesus actually exposes those powers to be on trial.*
 - *Spend a couple of minutes in silence and see if you can think of any ways these things (religion, practical politics, and popular masses) are tempting you away from Jesus.*
 - *Feel free to share what came to mind with the group.*

Time of Prayer