

# Lent 3

## Jesus' Trials



**Key Scriptures:** Matthew 26:36-75

**Big Idea:** Jesus accepted His trials, so that we can be saved.

### Teaching Points:

+ Jesus was betrayed, arrested, and deserted.

Just as Jesus foresaw, Judas betrayed Him (Matthew 26:24). The kiss of Judas was a wicked demonstration of his betrayal but unnecessary, for Jesus identified Himself (John 18:5). When the soldiers seized Jesus, Peter unsheathed his sword and cut off the ear of the high priest's servant. Jesus rebuked Peter, then touched the man and healed him. (Luke 22:51)

Peter was determined to fight but didn't realize there would be no fighting with swords. Jesus would fight alone. The fight was for our salvation, and the weapon was not a sword, but the cross. Jesus was being led like a lamb to the slaughter (Is. 53:7) that Scriptures would be fulfilled. When the disciples saw Jesus wasn't resisting His arrest, their hope for a restored kingdom was crushed and they ran away.

+ Jesus suffered and stood trial.

Jesus was innocent; He was without sin. The rulers joined together and brought people to testify against Jesus, but the testimonies did not agree because they were all lies. The high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and his teaching. Jesus suggested that the high priest ask those who had heard him. (John 18:21) One of the officers then struck Jesus. The irony of Jesus' remark is that Peter, who had heard Jesus teaching and could have come to his defense, stood in the courtyard, denying him.

The chief priests directly asked Jesus, "Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?" Jesus answered, "I Am" (Mk 14:61-62). The high priest, knowing that Jesus was claiming to be God -equal with the Father- tore his clothes and accused Jesus of blasphemy. The rulers did not realize everything Jesus said was absolutely true.

### Gospel Connection:

How does today's Bible story fit into God's greater plan of redemption?

Jesus did not call down legions of angels or defend himself. This fulfilled the Scriptures (see Matthew 26:56). Isaiah 53:11 prophesied, "He shall bear their iniquities." The arrest of Jesus was linked to his death, when he bore our sin. When we read of His arrest, we see His willingness to die in our place. This is the greatest demonstration of love in history.

Though Jesus did not defend himself, John records a fascinating glimpse at His authority and power. When Jesus answered the officials, saying, "I am He," the officials drew back and fell to the ground. Something caused them to fall back. Whether it was a momentary wave of shock or simply the command of His voice, we can't help but notice that Jesus' words match those God used to describe Himself to Moses when stating, "I Am who I Am." (Ex. 3:14) These men should have fallen to their faces in worship instead of being forced to the ground by the King of Kings in this momentary display of His power.

## Object Lesson

### Replay the Arrest (Grades 3-5)

#### Supplies:

- + Bible for the class
- + plastic sword and other props, e.g., sheets and towels for costumes with rope belts (Every child does not need a costume but even a few for the key roles can add to the effect and help the children enter into character.)

Use this exercise to draw attention to Jesus' words, "I am he" (John 18:5).

First, read together Matthew 26:36-56 and John 18:1-12 to assemble all the details of Jesus' arrest. (In today's bonus object lesson you will harmonize all the gospel accounts of Jesus' arrest, so if you do this now you will have a jump on that exercise.)

Next divide the roles among your students: disciples, officials, Jesus, and Judas. Walk through the arrest and rehearse. When you get to the part where Jesus says "I am he," the officials and guards should fall to the ground. Have Jesus say these words in a deeper tone, with authority. Don't worry about memorizing lines. Feed the actors the lines as they go.

Conclude by asking the following questions:

- Did you know that Jesus knocked down the officials with his words?
- What do you think is significant about the words "I am he"? (*"I Am" is the name God called himself in his appearance to Moses from out of the burning bush [Exodus 3:14].*)
- Did Jesus resist arrest? (*No, he told Peter to put away his sword.*)
- Why did Jesus allow himself to be arrested without a fight? (*Jesus willingly offered himself up to be sacrificed on the cross.*)

### Have You Ever Lied? (Grades K-2)

#### Supplies:

- + whiteboard and dry erase markers

Present the following three scenarios and ask the class what they might do to stay out of trouble:

- Your younger brother (or sister) grabs a toy that you are playing with so you slap his hand. He starts crying at the top of his lungs. Your mom hears the cries and says, "What happened?" What do you think you would say to her? (Write their responses on the board. Some may tell the truth but most will offer up half-truths or downright lies. If they don't give sinful responses change the question to ask them what they might say to stay out of trouble.)
- You are playing outside in the mud and come in for a drink. Little do you realize mud popped off the cracks in your shoes even though you wiped them on the mat before you came in. About two hours later your dad asks the whole family, "Who tracked mud through the house?" What do you think you would say? (The most likely answer is, "Not me, I rubbed my shoes on the mat when I came in." Remind the children that dad can match the shape of the mud on the floor with the treads in their shoes.)
- Your mom is baking cookies and leaves the room for a few minutes. You just can't resist and grab one of the warm cookies and eat it quickly. When she returns she asks, "Did you eat any of my cookies?" What do you think you would say?

Help the children see just how easy it is for us to lie and be guilty of the same sin Peter committed.

Remember to take time and

# Pray

## Lent Meaning/Description:

Today is the third week of our remembrance time of Lent.

This specific part of the story of Jesus' last days can leave us feeling sad, because Jesus took suffered a lot for our salvation.

We should remember this act of love with so much gratefulness! Grateful to have such a loving God that paid a huge price so that we can be with Him. Thank You, Jesus!