

length that Jesus' enemies went to in order to insure Jesus' death. Does this surprise you? Of course, these extreme measures indicate that the religious leaders of Jesus' day wanted to ensure that they maintain their status, wealth and influence. Do you think there might be some other reasons? Write your ideas here.

Thursday, March 26

Read John 18:28-40. Pontius Pilate is truly a tragic figure in our scriptures. He is caught between two very powerful forces, either one of them could make his life a living hell on earth. The religious leaders of the age wanted Pilate to put his stamp of approval on killing Jesus and any bad reports they sent to Rome would certainly remove him from his regional throne. Another complication in the whole story is his wife's request that he "have nothing to do with that righteous man" because she suffered greatly in a dream because of him. (Matthew 27:19) Ultimately, Pilate tried to find middle ground, washing his hands of the whole ordeal and simply allowing the Roman death machine dispose of Jesus. What are your thoughts about Pontius Pilate? Write your thoughts here.

Friday, March 27

Read John 18:19-24, 28-40. Pay close attention to verse 32. This parenthetical comment is meant to indicate that even though Jesus was headed to an unimaginable death on the cross, it was all part of God's plan to restore his relationship with humanity; not just those who lived 2000 plus years ago, but for all eternity, including us! What do you think? Was the death of Jesus part of God plan for the redemption of humanity? What kind of God would send His Son to such an end? So much to think about! Write your thoughts here, praying a prayer of thanksgiving to our loving God.

Message Notes March 22, 2026

Christ Challenged! ***The Clash of an Empire and Kingdom****

- I. The Rev. Robert McAfee points out that the plot to kill Jesus was not cooked up _____.
 - A. The high priest Caiaphas and his cohorts had set that plan in motion right after Jesus raised _____ from the dead.
 - B. We might consider a _____ that perhaps someone from the high priest's circle started.
 1. First, sound out _____.
 2. Second, check with priests about _____ for _____.
 3. Arrange for half a dozen _____ to meet with the Sanhedrin legal officer.
 4. Requisition funds from Caiaphas to pay off those "_____."
 5. Send representatives to _____ to point out that he had better _____ Jesus too.
- II. We are looking only at _____ parts of Chapter 18 today.
 - A. But is enough to see clearly the work of Jesus' enemies in making good on their plans to _____ him.
 - B. It is enough to see _____ the work of Jesus' enemies in making good on their plans to _____ him.
 - C. First, we read about how Jesus, after he was arrested was taken to _____' home.
 - D. There was no chance that Jesus was going to receive justice that the hands of _____ and so he is passed onto _____.

*John 18:19-24, 28-40

- E. The exchange between _____ and _____ is well known.
1. That conversation began with Pilate's question, "Are you the _____ of the _____?" (v. 33).
 2. Jesus knew that Pilate wasn't ready to hear the _____ about _____.
 3. So, he didn't respond to Pilate's final question, "What is _____?"

- III. Elsewhere in the gospels, Jesus makes plenty of statements about _____:
- A. That God _____ us.
 - B. That God wants us to be _____ to him.
 - C. That believing in Jesus offers us _____ and _____.
 - D. That _____ kingdom is not like _____ kingdoms.
 - E. That we should love _____ and our _____ as ourselves.
 - F. That God's word is _____.
- IV. Jesus says that everyone who _____ to him "_____ to his _____."
- A. God's willingness to _____ is tied to God's realization about human nature.
 - B. In the clash between the Roman Empire with whom the Jewish Leaders colluded and God's Kingdom, _____ wins!

Daily Devotional Guide

The following is a daily devotional and study guide meant to enhance your understanding of the message and grow as a Christian.

It is offered for your personal reflection or to share with others.

Monday, March 23

A list of what needed to be done by Jesus' enemies was offered by

Rev. Robert McAfee Brown and shared by Pastor Jack. It was not exhaustive but probably more complex than many might think. What other steps do you believe Jesus' enemies might have taken to be successful in destroying Jesus? It's a morbid question to contemplate but one that indicates just how much Jesus' enemies wanted him gone which they believe would secure their futures. O how foolish! Write your reflections here.

Tuesday, March 24

Read John 18:12-24. First, notice that the denial of Jesus by Peter was not addressed at all in Sunday's message, nor will it be from the perspective of Peter being an enemy of Jesus. The former High Priest, Annas, is another matter. Annas was a powerful Jewish High Priest (served A.D. 6–15) who, despite being deposed by Rome, remained the influential "godfather" of a Sadducean priestly dynasty. As father-in-law to the acting High Priest Caiaphas, he maintained control over the Temple and played a key role in the arrest and trial of Jesus. As a Sadducee, Annas was wealthy and very influential. Review your Message Notes to see if you wrote anything down about Annas. One thing is certain; Annas was not afraid to break several Jewish Law I order to expedite Jesus' trial. What is your reaction to these injustices? Do they make you weary of leadership today? Contemplate these questions and write your thoughts here.

Wednesday, March 25

John, in his Gospel, does not write about what transpired at Caiaphas' home. Pastor Jack shared a summation of what Matthew Mark and Luke wrote. Remember, Caiaphas was the one who proclaimed better that one die rather than many die. First of all, the gathering itself was completely illegal under Jewish Law. False witnesses were recruited, prepared and paid off by the religious leaders. That information, heaped upon what we know about what happened in Annas' home, really makes it clear the