

Church

Sunday school lesson

BEFORE THE COUNCIL

(Luke 22:54-71)

"Art thou the Christ? tell us. And he said unto them, If I tell you, ye will not believe." (Luke 22:67)

Today's lesson has its background in the one we studied last week. Jesus and His disciples were in the Garden of Gethsemane late at night when Judas, the betrayer, led a group, including the high priest, to the place to arrest Jesus. Those who arrested Jesus too Him first to Annas, father-in-law of the high priest Caiaphas.

Annas was the former high priest who had been removed from office by the Roman Government, and had been replaced by Caiaphas. In the eyes of the Jews, Annas was still a high priest, or, at least, he remained

a very powerful man in their government and religion. This explains why Jesus was taken to the home of Annas first, and afterwards was taken to the home of Caiaphas.

PETER'S PROBLEM

(Luke 22:54-62)

To study the Scriptures is to study God working in the world to redeem a lost mankind. God works through people, and the Scriptures reveal the good and the bad in their characters; the weaknesses and the strengths. Indeed, God uses imperfect people to accomplish His perfect will. So it was with Peter, particularly in the early years of his Christian life.

We relate to him easily. He was a person who, at times, was quick in temper, oftentimes quick to speak and

commit himself without full knowledge, yet a man of strength and the one upon whom Christ would endow with heavy responsibility for the kingdom's on-going. On the night of Christ's arrest Peter followed Jesus and the arresting group to Caiaphas' home, and milled with others a round of fire in the courtyard.

Jesus had said earlier that before the cock crowed Peter would deny Him three times. This happened. Three different people recognized Peter in the courtyard, accusing him of being one of Jesus' disciples. Each time Peter denied it saying, "I know Him not." We do not understand Peter's action fully. No doubt that he was fearful for his life, yet there may have been other considerations as well.

Perhaps he felt that if he remained

free from arrest he would have an opportunity to rescue Jesus from His captors. Afterwards, the Scriptures tell us that he was penitent: he went out and wept bitterly. On this night we see a picture of Peter's weakness but there are other pictures of Peter in later years.

He would be imprisoned and beaten for the sake of Christ—he would withstand the rigors of being ostracized by his own people. He would know hunger and pain for his witnessing—of hiding to avoid arrest and finally being put to death. Yes, during the three years in which Peter followed Jesus there were times when Jesus rebuked him for his impetuosity. Yet, one day a few months earlier, Jesus would proclaim, "Thou art Peter, and upon this

rock I will build—church."

UNOFFICIAL JUSTICE OFFICE JUSTICE

(Luke 22:63-71)

"And the men that held Jesus mocked Him and smote Him." It was probably after midnight when the crowd brought Jesus to the high priest's house, but dawn was a few hours away. It was not legal to condemn a man at night. Jesus' humiliation and pain had begun. The men who held Him, while waiting for the high priest and the council, mocked Him and slapped Him on the face. Verse 65 mentions that they blasphemously spoke against Him.

When daybreak arrived the chief priest, scribes and church elders had Him brought before their council for questioning. It was a legal proceed-

ing, but a dishonest court, stacked with false witnesses. Some wise sage once exclaimed, "Oh, the atrocities which have been perpetrated in the name of God."

Jesus' trail and death would fall squarely in that category. Standing before the council Jesus was asked directly, "Art thou the Son of God?" Jesus affirmed that He was. Matthew's Gospel records the decision of the council following this. "He is guilty of death. His crime—He hath spoken blasphemy." (Lesson based on the International Sunday School Lessons)

Area church news

Methodist women meet

United Methodist Women of Perquimans-Chowan will hold their annual sub-district meeting Thursday, March 26 at 10 a.m. at Center Hill-Evans Church at Tyner.

The Perquimans-Chowan Sub-District includes Anderson, Bethany, Cedar Grove, Center Hill, Edenton, Epworth, Hertford, New Hope, Oak Grove and Woodland United Methodist Churches and is headed by Mrs. Gladys White of Tyner.

Presidents from local church units will give annual reports at this time and a program will be presented by district officers under the direction of Mrs. Helen Bryan of Gates, district vice-president.

Lunch will be served by the host unit.

Mrs. Rebecca Rhodes of Columbia is president of the Elizabeth City District of United Methodist Women which includes 60 Churches divided into seven sub-districts including Cur-Cam, Washington-Tyrrell, Dare-Outer Banks, Gates, Hertford-Bertie, Pasquotank and Perquimans-Chowan.

Jennings honored

The Iota Nu Zeta Chapter of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority Incorporated will honor, Soror Doris M. Jennings, as the 1987 Iota Nu Zeta Woman of the Year, during a special ceremony, Sunday, March 29, 1987 at Mt. Lebanon A.M.E. Zion Church, Elizabeth City, N.C. During the church morning worship service at 11:00 a.m. Soror Gladys F. Grames, Vice-Presi-

dent and president and president elect for North Carolina Association of Educators will be the guest speaker. Soror Jennings was selected by the Iota Nu Zeta Chapter Sorors because of Meritorious services rendered in the Sorority, Albemarle Conference Director of Christian Education, services in the local churches, professional organizations and the community.

Soror Jennings is an instructor at Perquimans County Union School, Winfall, N.C.

Concert set

The Emmanuel Pentecostal Church located on Highway 17, 3 miles south of Hertford, will present Sister Cynthia Stallings in concert (Saturday), April 4th at 7:00 p.m. The public is invited to attend.

First Baptist schedule

The First Baptist Church Sunday School starts at 9:45 a.m. Morning worship starts at 11:00 a.m. The Rev. Howard Manley will be preaching for the Missionaries Hour and the senior choir will be singing under the direction of Mrs. Barbara Shannon, organist. The Rev. J.H. London is pastor. The public is invited to attend.

Program set

The Senior Usher Board of New Bethel Baptist Missionary Church will sponsor a program on the 5th Sunday in March at 5:00 p.m. The Jolly Gospel Singers of Roper, N.C. will furnish the music. Please come and help make this program a success.



photo by Gina Jepson

Pictured above are students of the Perquimans County Headstart class from Union School. Members of the class are seen as they hop to raise money for Easter Seals. The students hopped for approximately 2 minutes, and raised \$87.00. Three of the students raised over \$10.00 for the project, and one student raised over \$25.00.

"THE MOMENT OF TRUTH"

Pastor Daniel E. Leroy
Bagley Swamp Wesleyan Church

Did I ever tell you about the soapbox car my cousin and I, and a friend named Alton, used to have? It wasn't one of those fancy, streamlined jobs. It was just a wood frame with four lawnmower wheels and a big square crate for the body. It used to have a steering wheel but we tore that up. So we steered it with a rope tied to each end of the front axle. It had a seat back for the driver to lean against and a place for a couple of people to jump on over the rear axle.

It was fun for awhile, but we got tired of pushing that thing around on flat ground. So we took it up past the Railroad YMCA in our town, Russell, KY., to the street that ran behind Stevens' Hardware.

Now this street was good and steep. It was a kind of dead-end street, only a couple of blocks long there was one minor obstacle: a brick building and a high curb at the bottom of the hill. But that was going to be no problem for us young Fireball Roberts'. We planned to cut right, then back left real quick and go down the alley behind the City Jail.

Now my cousin John is normally a bright guy... but on this particular day he insisted that he was going to be 'the first' to ride this brakeless wonder down Thunder Road (as if we were going to do this more than once, right?).

John got behind the wheel and Alton and I gave him a running push and jumped on! I distinctly remember three things about that ride. First, I remember the First Christian Church flying by way too fast! Second, I remember my cousin John screaming, 'SSTOPI!' at the top of his lungs. And third, I remember... the moment of truth.

Do you know how there are sometimes when you can take in volumes of facts — most of them extremely unpleasant — in just a second of time? Well, I had one of those 'This Is Your Life... What There Was Of It' kind of feelings.

I realized we were never going to make that turn — never, ever.

And I realized that John had already started trying to turn that thing and it was flying back and forth all over the place!

And I realized that I was too young to die! Especially this way. We hit that curb full blast, car parts and little boys flying in every direction. I was the only one who made the alley. When I finally rolled to a stop I was laying against the back wall of the jail — and I still had the back of the car seat in my hands!

While this was hardly a life-changing experience for me (except in the fact that I never rode a soapbox car down that hill again!), it did introduce me to what it felt like to go over the edge, to reach that point where, no matter what I did, there were certain things that were going to happen and it was all out of my control.

In the Bible, I meet people who had these kinds of experiences. People like Joseph being thrown into the pit by his brothers, the three Hebrew boys being thrown into the blazing furnace, Daniel plopping down into the middle of a den of hungry lions. And on the street I meet people who have gone over the edge — taken there by circumstances beyond their control. People like the farmer who is forced to sell his land and his home and his equipment because of the collapse of the farming economy. Or the young widow with children. Or the family that has been torn apart by unfaithfulness of one of the marriage partners. Or the little child who has discovered that the one person in all the world she should be able to trust seems to live to molest her. Or the elderly couple whose life savings is now gone, depleted by the long illness of one of them.

Over the edge. And some never recover. Their circumstances destroy them. But there are some who seem to have an inner buoyancy, an ability to bounce back. What is their secret? It is that while they have faced that moment of truth that there were things happening they could not control, they found a greater truth in the Presence of the One who is Lord, the One who is Master of every situation. His name is Emmanuel, 'the God who is with us.'

He says, 'I am the Lord, the god of all mankind. Is anything too hard for me?' (Jeremiah 32:27 NIV)

Cards of Thanks

I would like to thank everyone for the cards, visits, food, prayers and all acts of kindness shown me during my recent stay in the hospital and since my return home. May God bless each of you.

Mrs. Walton (Elizabeth H.) Lane

The family of the late Mrs. Mary L. Wiggins would like to express their sincere thanks to all their friends, for the many cards, letters, flowers, visits and gifts received during their time of bereavement.

The Wiggins Family

I want to thank you for cards, visits, flowers, all acts of kindness especially your prayers.

To the Doctors, Nurse's for their kind services while I was a patient in Chowan Hospital, also to the people remembering me here in the Nursing home Unit C.

Again I say thanks with a prayer.
May God Bless You
Pink Hurdle

The family of the late Roy Seymour Chappell would like to thank all the friends, relatives, and neighbors for their expressions of sympathy and kindness during the death of their loved one. We thank you for the cards, flowers, prayers, food, visits, memorials, and all acts of kindness shown to us during our bereavement.

May God bless each of you.
Doris, Larry, Jerry & Family

We would like to express our thanks to the Bethel Fire Department and the Bethel Ruritan Club for sponsoring the pig picking benefit in our behalf on Saturday, February 21.

Also to the many people that bought tickets and those who worked many hours, we say thanks. We say a special thanks to the many people that donated the pigs, cornbread ingredients and the other items and time that were given.

May God bless you all as we seek your continued prayers in our behalf,
Eric and Gladys Kirby

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