

First the Cross, Then the Crown

Proclamation Life Groups; Week of Sunday, October 25, 2015; Steve Thiel

Jesus Christ is the promised Messiah, the Son of God, and the Savior of the world. He is also the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53. In John 18, He suffers the agony of being rejected by Judas, arrested by Roman soldiers and Jewish officers, denied by Peter, falsely condemned by the Sanhedrin, and interrogated by Pontius Pilate. However, He is not a martyr but a voluntary participant, obedient to the Father and willingly putting Himself forward so that He might be pierced for our transgressions and crushed for our iniquities (Isaiah 53:5). In response, He calls us to bear the cross of walking in faithful obedience to Him so that we might wear the crown of His coming Kingdom.

I. Fulfillment in His Deity – Read John 18:1-11 and answer the following questions.

- A. What details (who, what, where, when, and why) are we given about Jesus' betrayal and arrest?
- B. Why do you think the soldiers brought lanterns, torches, and weapons? Were they necessary?
- C. How and why did the crowd react when Jesus identified Himself by saying, "I AM"?
- D. How does Jesus demonstrate His commitment to the cross in these verses (vv.9-11)?

II. Fulfillment in His Dignity – Read John 18:12-28 and answer the following questions

- A. What is the order of events of Jesus' arrest?
- B. Why do you think John bounces between Jesus' arrest and trial and Peter's denial?
- C. How would you compare and contrast the Jewish leader's behavior to Jesus' actions (vv.19-24)?
- D. Peter denies Jesus three times and yet is restored? How is this an encouragement to your faith?

III. Fulfillment in His Destiny – Read John 18:29-32 and answer the following questions

- A. What irony do you find in the Jewish leaders unwillingness to enter the governor's headquarters?
- B. What does Pilate conclude about the accusations brought against Jesus (v.29 and v.38)?
- C. How is 2 Timothy 4:6-8 and 1 Peter 1:13-16 helpful as you think about bearing the cross of faithful obedience that you might wear the crown of righteousness in glory?
- D. What do you think hinders you the most in your zeal to live for the Lord?