

The Gospel of John

11:49-57

Welcome back to this week's study in the book of John.
As with this study and all bible studies, remember to pray before you start.

Last week Lazarus was finally raised from the dead.
At the end of last week's study, we read.

✠ **John 11:45-48** *Then many of the Jews who had come to Mary, and had seen the things Jesus did, believed in Him. But some of them went away to the Pharisees and told them the things Jesus did. Then the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council and said, "What shall we do? For this Man works many signs. "If we let Him alone like this, everyone will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and nation."*

When we ended last week, we ended with these questions.

- Was there not one who would stand up for Jesus?
- Did none of them (the religious leaders) believe in Jesus?

This week we will read of one who did believe in Jesus.
Or did he really?

✠ **John 11:49-52** *And one of them, Caiaphas, being high priest that year, said to them, "You know nothing at all, nor do you consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and not that the whole nation should perish." Now this he did not say on his own authority; but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation, and not for that nation only, but also that He would gather together in one the children of God who were scattered abroad.*

The interesting thing is that even though Caiaphas had prophesied (Proclaimed God's word) he didn't believe it. He spoke God's word yet didn't live the words he was speaking. I say this because we read of Caiaphas two other times, the first was when Jesus was brought before him to be judged.

✠ **Matt 26:57-66** *And those who had laid hold of Jesus led Him away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled. But Peter followed Him at a distance to the high priest's courtyard. And he went in and sat with the servants to see the end. Now the chief priests, the elders, and all the council sought false testimony against Jesus to put Him to death, but found none. Even though many false witnesses came forward, they found none. But at last two false witnesses came forward and said, "This fellow said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in three days.' " And the high priest arose and said to Him, "Do You answer nothing? What is it these men testify against You?" But Jesus kept silent. And the high priest answered and said to*

Him, "I put You under oath by the living God: Tell us if You are the Christ, the Son of God!" Jesus said to him, "It is as you said. Nevertheless, I say to you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven." Then the high priest tore his clothes, saying, "He has spoken blasphemy! What further need do we have of witnesses? Look, now you have heard His blasphemy! "What do you think?" They answered and said, "He is deserving of death."

This is the same Caiaphas who spoke these words a week earlier: *"You know nothing at all, nor do you consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and not that the whole nation should perish."*

Now, a week later he is saying: *"He has spoken blasphemy! What further need do we have of witnesses? Look, now you have heard His blasphemy! What do you think?"*

"What do you think?" Wait a minute, why does he have to ask others if God spoke through Him and now Jesus told him point blank: *"It is as you said. Nevertheless, I say to you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven."*

But he is now accusing Jesus of blasphemy?

God will use anyone. I heard a pastor once say that before he became a Christian, that he was at a party and asked about God. One man in a drunken stupor said, *"I don't know. I remember something about God so loved the world that He sent His only begotten Son to die or something like that."*

Now this man was not a Christian, yet the Lord used him to save this man who is now a pastor.

God can, and will speak through us. When He does we should not become arrogant and think we are something special or better than others. I know God speaks through me all the time through these studies and devotionals. He uses them to proclaim His word, which touches and affects everyone's lives, including mine. God also keeps me humble so I never think I am anything great, but I know it's all Him. I'm just a man with fingers who types out these studies each week on my computer. I have no great wisdom or knowledge apart from Jesus Christ.

I am a living example of:

† **Phil 4:13** *I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.*

My boast is in Jesus Christ not myself.

† **Gal 6:14 (NLT)** *As for me, God forbid that I should boast about anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. Because of that cross, my interest in this world died long ago, and the world's interest in me is also long dead.*

What about you, has God used you in a mighty way to minister to others?

Maybe you don't think so, but I bet you can think of times when He did use you to minister to someone, and when He did, you knew that it wasn't of your own ability, but rather the Lord working through you.

But Caiaphas became haughty and proud, and as we read, he denied Jesus and called him a blasphemer. But this was not the only time he rejected Jesus. After Jesus died and rose from the dead and had ascended into heaven, his disciples were arrested for healing a man and preaching the gospel. Once again they were brought before Caiaphas the high priest.

 **Acts 4:5-22** *And it came to pass, on the next day, that their rulers, elders, and scribes, as well as Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the family of the high priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem. And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, "By what power or by what name have you done this?" Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders of Israel: If we this day are judged for a good deed done to a helpless man, by what means he has been made well, let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands here before you whole. This is the 'stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.' Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus. And seeing the man who had been healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it. But when they had commanded them to go aside out of the council, they conferred among themselves, saying, "What shall we do to these men? For, indeed, that a notable miracle has been done through them is evident to all who dwell in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it. But so that it spreads no further among the people, let us severely threaten them, that from now on they speak to no man in this name." And they called them and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John answered and said to them, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you judge. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." So when they had further threatened them, they let them go, finding no way of punishing them, because of the people, since they all glorified God for what had been done. For the man was over forty years old on whom this miracle of healing had been performed.*

So Caiaphas proclaimed God's word that Jesus would die for their sins. He heard it straight from Jesus' mouth that he was the Messiah. He saw Jesus die and knew that Jesus rose from the dead. Then Jesus' disciples also reminded Caiaphas of Jesus, yet he still didn't believe. Talk about getting hit over the head with a rock, how much more did Caiaphas need to believe in Jesus? Yet his heart was just too hard, and he couldn't believe because of the hardness of his heart.

We have friends and family who see the change in our lives, miracles done in our lives and the lives of others. They have heard the gospel many times, but it seems like they will never believe. I would encourage you not to give up on them, because the Lord hasn't.

† **2 Peter 3:9** *The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.*

This includes your friends and family members that you have been praying for all these years.

✠ *And one of them, Caiaphas, being high priest that year, said to them, "You know nothing at all, nor do you consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and not that the whole nation should perish."*

Sad to say, the children of Israel still don't believe this, at least most of them don't. But that will all change very soon, when the time of the Gentiles will end and God will pour His Spirit upon the nation of Israel once again.

† **Isaiah 49:6** *Indeed He says,
'It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant
To raise up the tribes of Jacob,
And to restore the preserved ones of Israel;
I will also give You as a light to the Gentiles,
That You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth.'*

When that happens we will be gone. I would not want to be here to see it, although I pray for Israel everyday. But if I was here to see it, then that would mean that I would have to go through the seven-year tribulation period, and I don't want to do that.

✠ *Now this he did not say on his own authority; but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation, and not for that nation only, but also that He would gather together in one the children of God who were scattered abroad.*

This prophecy of Jesus dieing was not just for Israel, but also for every nation, that means you and me too, and not just the USA but every country in the world, ever person in the world; even the ones who haven't been born yet.

It reminds me of the day my little baby girl was born. I remember looking down at her and knowing that Jesus died for all the sins she will ever commit. Jesus loved my little girl that much. He also loves your children and you that much too.

So the result of Caiaphas' prophecy is not what you would expect it to be.

✠ **John 11:53-57** *Then, from that day on, they plotted to put Him to death. Therefore Jesus no longer walked openly among the Jews, but went from there into the country near the wilderness, to a city called Ephraim, and there remained with His disciples. And the Passover of the Jews was near, and many went from the country up to Jerusalem before the Passover, to purify themselves. Then they sought Jesus, and spoke among themselves as they stood in the temple, "What do you think--that He will not come to the feast?" Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a command, that if anyone knew where He was, he should report it, that they might seize Him.*

The high priest tells the other religious leaders that the Messiah is there, and their response was that they wanted to kill Him. I don't know, maybe they were afraid of losing their jobs because if the Messiah was there, what need was there for them? At least that may have been what they were thinking.

✠ *Therefore Jesus no longer walked openly among the Jews, but went from there into the country near the wilderness, to a city called Ephraim, and there remained with His disciples.*

Ephraim was about two miles northeast of Bethany and 20 miles from Jerusalem. We read before of Jesus leaving the area that He was in, because the Jews wanted to kill Him. Once again this was not because Jesus feared for His life, but rather because Jesus knew His time had not yet come and He was being smart and not tempting the Father.

✠ *And the Passover of the Jews was near, and many went from the country up to Jerusalem before the Passover, to purify themselves.*

It was the time of the Passover, which is one of the feasts that every adult male in Israel was required to attend. Josephus, the Jewish Historian tells us that there would have been close to 3 million people in Jerusalem during the Passover week.

✠ *Then they sought Jesus, and spoke among themselves as they stood in the temple, "What do you think--that He will not come to the feast?"*

Some believed and some didn't believe in Jesus. Some were just curious, whereas other wanted to grab Jesus and kill Him. They talked amongst themselves wondering if Jesus would come up to Jerusalem for the Passover. After all, if Jesus didn't come up then He was breaking God's law.

† **Num 9:13** *But the man who is clean and is not on a journey, and ceases to keep the Passover, that same person shall be cut off from among his people, because he did not bring the offering of the LORD at its appointed time; that man shall bear his sin.*

Maybe they were hoping that Jesus wouldn't show up so they could say that He was a sinner and that He was breaking God's command to keep the Passover. But what if Jesus did show up, then what would happen?

✠ *Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a command, that if anyone knew where He was, he should report it, that they might seize Him.*

But Jesus does show up, as we will start reading about next week. The remaining chapters tell of Jesus' last week before He is crucified, which we call the Passion Week. For the next week Jesus will stay in Bethany about two miles from Jerusalem, preparing Himself and His disciples for what is about to take place.

Well that's it for this week. Next week we will start chapter 12, which tells of Mary anointing Jesus, and Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

John records a lot of things that Jesus taught His disciples for the next six chapters. Then in chapter 18 is when Jesus lays down His life and allowed himself to be taken and crucified. But don't despair because we know that Jesus rose from the dead and is alive and well at the right hand of the Father right now.

May the Lord richly bless you in His love, grace and mercy and when others are curious about Jesus, may you tell them about Him!