



Station III: CONDEMNATION

Jesus is Condemned by the Sanhedrin

Scripture ~ Luke 22:66-71

⁶⁶ When day came, the assembly of the elders of the people, both chief priests and scribes, gathered together, and they brought him to their council. ⁶⁷ They said, "If you are the Messiah, tell us." He replied, "If I tell you, you will not believe; ⁶⁸ and if I question you, you will not answer. ⁶⁹ But from now on the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the power of God." ⁷⁰ All of them asked, "Are you, then, the Son of God?" He said to them, "You say that I am." ⁷¹ Then they said, "What further testimony do we need? We have heard it ourselves from his own lips!"

Reflection for Adults

Davontae Sanford was only 14 years old when his life changed forever. While standing in his pajamas in his front yard, police arrested him for a quadruple homicide. He was taken to the police station, interrogated for 24 hours, and denied the right to see his parents or have an attorney present. Under the strain of those circumstances he confessed to the murders, was tried as an adult, and sentenced to 39 to 92 years in prison. The problem? Davontae did not commit the murders. Another man came forward and confessed. But the state would not relent. Thanks to the advocates, Davontae Sanford was exonerated in 2016, after serving nine years. According to the National Registry of Exonerations, in the US since 1989 there have been 1,966 innocent people exonerated for crimes they never committed. For many of them their only "crime" is their poverty or race.

As we arrive at this third station with Jesus, it is worth remembering that it was not "evil" people who condemned him. The people who passed false judgment were the "good" ones, the religious leaders, the ones who knew the law. Yet they sentenced Jesus to death. But not before they asked him this question: "Are you...the Son of God"? Even after Jesus answered in the affirmative, they condemned him to death. How many people could be saved from wrongful condemnation in our own courts of law if we simply acknowledged this truth: like Jesus, we are all children of God!

At some point in our lives, most of us have heard this proverb: when you point a finger at someone, there are three more pointing back at you. Look at the picture. Notice all the fingers. Who are they pointing at? Are they your fingers?

Going Deeper

- When have you been guilty of condemning someone based on false externals?

Reflection for Children

After Jesus was arrested, he was taken to the Roman governor, a man named Pontius Pilate. When the people brought Jesus to Pilate, they said all kinds of unkind things about him. Pilate asked Jesus if he was really the "Son of God." Jesus said, "Yes, I am." But Pilate did not believe Jesus.

Instead, he decided to believe the unkind and untrue things the people said about Jesus. And so he sentenced Jesus to die on the cross.

Discussion with Children

- Have you ever said something untrue or unkind about a person just because they weren't like you?
- What would you do if you heard someone saying something untrue or unkind about your friend?