

# The Illegal, Unjust Trial of Jesus, Part 1

*John MacArthur*

## I. Introduction.

A. Text: Matthew 26:57.

## II. The Jews have prided themselves on justice, and rightly so. (Deuteronomy 16:18-20)

A. The Jewish Sanhedrin guaranteed public trial, the right of self-defense, and conviction by a minimum of more than one witness.

B. False witness demanded harsh punishment. (Deuteronomy 19:16-19)

C. Witnesses were executioners--this added a last degree of certainty to the testimony. (Deuteronomy 17:7)

## III. Procedure of the Sanhedrin.

## IV. Every law of justice and jurisprudence was violated at the trial of Christ. It was the most unjust trial ever.

A. There was no defense, no witnesses, among many other crimes.

B. Jesus had two major trials: Jewish and Gentile.

## V. Unjust elements.

A. The initial arraignment: Annas. (John 18; Psalm 118; John 18:13; 2:17; Mark 11:15-18; John 18:19)

1. The high priest looked for evidence for a crime that he had already been convicted of.

2. Jesus' response was to call for proper legal procedure. He was not to convict himself. (Acts 22-23, 1 Peter 2:23)

3. Illegalities: it was in the middle of the night, it was without witnesses, etc.

B. The illegal convening: Caiaphas. (Mark 14:53; Luke 23:15; Luke 22:51)

1. They had to make up a crime to go with it.

2. The only people that could condemn Jesus would be liars. He was perfect.

3. No witnesses were found, and none could agree. (Mark 14:56; John 2:19)

4. This scene demonstrates that Jesus was perfect because all earth and all hell could not find anything against Jesus.

**Application Questions:**

1. What stood out to you about the procedure of the Sanhedrin?

---

---

2. What are some of the ways that the trial of Jesus was unjust?

---

---

3. How does the trial scene itself demonstrate the perfection of Jesus Christ? Explain.

---

---