



Only Murders in the Bible Week 4 – The Religious Leaders Kill Jesus Discussion & Reflection Guide

Message & Scripture Discussion

- **What's one thing you hope to see happen in your lifetime?**
- **What stood out to you from Sunday's service?** How did you sense God at work in you through the songs, the story video, the message, and being together with others as part of the church? (The message's main points and scripture are listed below if it helps you think back.)
- Jeremiah gave a quick description of some of the key moments in the story of Jesus as he entered Jerusalem and the tension between him and the religious leaders grew. If you want a refresher, look through the scriptures listed below. **What do you notice about Jesus? What do you notice about the various reactions to Jesus?**
- In his message, Jeremiah shared that we cannot be neutral about Jesus; it's not okay to simply "like" Jesus. "You have to completely adore Jesus or you have to despise him."
How do you react to these options for responses to Jesus?
- As we looked at the religious leaders as suspects in the death of Jesus, we saw that their mockery revealed a feeling of superiority and a certainty about how God must act. **When are the moments, situations, or relationships that you're tempted to feel like you know how God should or must act?**
- As we reflected on Judas and his motivations, Jeremiah asked some big questions for self-reflection. **Look over these questions and pick one or two to spend some time with – honestly reflecting and asking God to show you what you need to see more clearly.**
 - Do I only follow Jesus when it profits me but sell out when it costs me?
 - Am I really God's servant? Or do I only want God to serve me?
 - Am I serving God or using God?
 - Do I trust God's good plan?
- "The killing of Jesus is the ultimate example of God bringing good from evil." **How do you react to this statement? How does it encourage you? How does it challenge you?**
- The message closed with this verse from 1 Peter 5:7 - "Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that He may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you." **Let that verse guide you in prayer. Humble yourself. Cast your anxieties on him. Remember he cares for you.**
- **Is there anything else from the message you want to explore more deeply this week?**

Message Main Points & Scripture

- Matthew 21:8 - "Most of the crowd spread their garments on the road ahead of him, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. Jesus was in the center of the procession, and the people all around him were shouting, 'Praise God for the Son of David! Blessings on the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Praise God in highest heaven!' The entire city of Jerusalem was in an uproar as he entered..." (8-10).
- Matthew 22:26 - "No one could answer Him. And after that, no one dared to ask Him any more questions."
- Matthew 23:2-5a - "The teachers of religious law and the Pharisees are the official interpreters of the law of Moses. So practice and obey whatever they tell you, but don't follow their example. For they don't practice what they teach. They crush people with unbearable religious demands and never lift a finger to ease the burden. Everything they do is for show."
- Matthew 23:13 - "What sorrow awaits you teachers of religious law and you Pharisees. Hypocrites! For you shut the door of the Kingdom of Heaven in people's faces. You won't go in yourselves, and you don't let others enter either."
- Matthew 23:15 - "...you cross land and sea to make one convert, and then you turn that person into twice the child of hell you yourselves are!"
- Matthew 26:65-66 - "the high priest tore his clothing to show his horror and said, 'Blasphemy! Why do we need other witnesses? You have all heard his blasphemy. What is your verdict?' 'Guilty!' they shouted. 'He deserves to die!'"
- **You have to completely adore Jesus, or you have to despise Him.**
- Matthew 26:66-68 - "'...Guilty!' they shouted. 'He deserves to die!' Then they began to spit in Jesus' face and beat Him with their fists. And some slapped Him, jeering, 'Prophecy to us, you Messiah! Who hit you that time?'"
- Matthew 27:26 - "So, Pilate released Barabbas to them. He ordered Jesus flogged with a lead-tipped whip, then turned him over to the Roman soldiers to be crucified."
- **Suspect List: The Religious Leaders**
- **Political Messiah**
- **Mockery always requires feelings of superiority.**
- **Suspect List: Judas**
- **Why did Judas do it?**
- **Pure Evil**
- Matthew 27:3-4 - "When Judas, who had betrayed Him, realized that Jesus had been condemned to die, he was filled with remorse. So he took the thirty pieces of silver back to the leading priests and the elders. "I have sinned," he declared, "for I have betrayed an innocent man."
- **Self-Preservation**
- **Greed & Forcing Jesus' Hand**
- **Do you ever do that to God's Word?**
- Luke 22: 24 - "Then they began to argue among themselves about who would be the greatest among them."
- Matthew 20:22 - "Jesus answered by saying to them, 'You don't know what you are asking! Are you able to drink from the bitter cup of suffering I am about to drink?'"
- Luke 22:37 - "For the time has come for this prophecy about me to be fulfilled: 'He was counted among the rebels.' Yes, everything written about me by the prophets will come true."

- **You are saved by trusting in me.**
- Matthew 26:56 - "...At that point, all the disciples deserted him and fled"
- Matthew 26:35 - "'No!' Peter insisted. 'Even if I have to die with you, I will never deny you!' And all the other disciples vowed the same."
- **Are we like Judas?**
- **Which are you?**
- **Are you serving God or using God?**
- Tim Keller said, ***"There really are only two religions. You can either get into religion to serve God, or you can get into religion to get God to serve you."***
- **Our false logic:**
 - **A: "I know how my life needs to go."**
 - **B: "If there is a God, He must also know how my life needs to go."**
 - **C: "Therefore, if He's not making my life go right, He's either a bad God or He doesn't exist – there is no God."**
- **The killing of Jesus is the ultimate example of God bringing good from evil.**
- **Do We Trust God's Good Plan?**
- 1 Peter 5:6-7 NIV - "Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that He may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you."

We hope you'll use this guide to take the teaching from Sunday's service and reflect on it with a few friends or with a group. If you have questions or want to talk more about how to take your next spiritual step, contact us at info@wschurch.org.

Holy Week & Good Friday – We will text daily devotions each day of Holy Week. To sign up or to find a reading plan for each day, visit wschurch.org/easter. You can also find a link with information about a Good Friday prayer event, which we will host on Friday, March 29.

Join us for Easter at West Side on March 30 & 31. For service times and all the info you'll need, go to wschurch.org/easter.