

Praise: Start your time in worship together as a family by following the order of service posted by Westview.

Pray: It is important to spend time communicating with our savior. Express exactly what you are experiencing to God with full sincerity. Ask God for peace. Ask Holy Spirit to meet with each of you and to draw you into deeper intimacy with God.

Review: Remind yourselves about last Sunday's lessons as well as what God has taught you, or made you aware of, through this past week. Last week we looked at the Last Supper and what Jesus' sacrifice means for us, how did you do with the challenge to spend 5 minutes a day reflecting.

Ask: Why does Jesus have to be put on trial and sentenced?

Watch: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3dEh25pduQ8>

Read: Matthew 26:47-56

Engage:

We see that Judas had been plotting with the Jewish religious leaders to betray Jesus. How would you respond to a betrayal like this? How does Jesus respond?

- Students' responses will vary. Jesus responded by calling Judas "friend," which was a powerful display of grace. It is also important to remember that Jesus is going to die for Judas' sin as He dies for the sins of the world.

Is Jesus powerless to stop His arrest? What does He say that let's us know He is able to stop it, but chooses not to?

- *Answer:* No, Jesus explains that he could stop His arrest by calling on angels to rescue Him. Yet He chooses not to in order to fulfill the Scriptures. He means that this is happening according to God's plan.

Twice in this passage (26:54 and 26:56) Jesus says that His arrest is to fulfill the Scriptures. What is He talking about when he says "Scripture"?

- *Answer:* He means the Old Testament prophecies.

Explain that you can make three clear and important observations from this story: 1) Jesus is willingly laying down His life; 2) God's will is for Jesus to suffer at the hand of sinners; and 3) the Scriptures foretold this would happen.

Read: Matthew 27:11-26

Engage:

As they find the passage, explain to your students that after Jesus' arrest He was tried by the Jewish high priest and a counsel of Jewish religious leaders. These men, while powerful among the Jewish people, did not have the authority to execute criminals, only the Romans could. So they sent Jesus to Pilate, who was a Roman ruler and able to sentence Jesus to death.

Read or have a student read Matthew 27:11-23. Ask:

Will someone summarize what we read?

- *Answer:* 1) Jesus did not defend Himself against His accusers; 2) Pilate allows the crowd to decide Jesus' fate; and 3) the chief priest and the elders bribe the crowd to demand for Jesus' crucifixion.

What does the Scripture say was the motivation for the chief priests and the elders delivering Jesus to Pilate?

- *Answer:* Verse 18 says that it was apparent to Pilate that they delivered Jesus to him out of envy.

Why does Pilate allow the crowd to make the decision about Jesus' future? Do you think he was surprised by the crowd's response?

- *Answer:* Pilate is playing politics. He doesn't want to hurt his relationships with the religious leaders by denying their request, but he also doesn't want to sentence Jesus to death. He is trying to get out of being responsible for either decision.

In verse 23 Pilate asks, "Why, what evil has he done?" What is the answer to his question?

- *Answer:* Nothing. It is obvious from the story that Jesus is innocent of wrongdoing. The crowd demands for His crucifixion without an explanation of His guilt.

NEXT, read or have a student read Matthew 27:24-26. Ask:

What was Jesus' crime according to Pilate? What had He done to deserve to be crucified?

- *Answer:* Nothing. Jesus was not guilty, yet Pilate bends to the will of the people and sentences Jesus to death by crucifixion.

Pilate tells the crowd that he is innocent of Jesus' blood. What does the crowd say? Why is it significant?

- *Answer:* The crowd says, "His blood be on us and our children." It is significant because they are taking responsibility for Jesus' death. While they are unaware at this point, the only hope for their forgiveness is the blood of Jesus being applied to their sin.

Conclusion: Read Isaiah 53: 7-10, This prophecy (told hundreds of years before Jesus) tells us that God was and is in control the whole time. God is always working to rescue us from sin and to bring us back to relationship with him.

Challenge: Take communion together as a family, reflecting on last week's lesson as well as the suffering Jesus went through before even reaching the cross. As we approach Easter next week consider throughout the week, what it means that Jesus not only took on humiliation before the cross, but still desires to take on our suffering now.