



Twenty-Four Seven – Week 5 – Hell Shoots Its Shot
Spiritual Formation Guide

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 a next spiritual step, contact us at info@wschurch.org.

Scripture:

Then the entire council took Jesus to Pilate, the Roman governor. ² They began to state their case: "This man has been leading our people astray by telling them not to pay their taxes to the Roman government and by claiming he is the Messiah, a king."

³ So Pilate asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?"

Jesus replied, "You have said it."

⁴ Pilate turned to the leading priests and to the crowd and said, "I find nothing wrong with this man!"

⁵ Then they became insistent. "But he is causing riots by his teaching wherever he goes—all over Judea, from Galilee to Jerusalem!"

⁶ "Oh, is he a Galilean?" Pilate asked. ⁷ When they said that he was, Pilate sent him to Herod Antipas, because Galilee was under Herod's jurisdiction, and Herod happened to be in Jerusalem at the time.

⁸ Herod was delighted at the opportunity to see Jesus, because he had heard about him and had been hoping for a long time to see him perform a miracle. ⁹ He asked Jesus question after question, but Jesus refused to answer. ¹⁰ Meanwhile, the leading priests and the teachers of religious law stood there shouting their accusations. ¹¹ Then Herod and his soldiers began mocking and ridiculing Jesus. Finally, they put a royal robe on him and sent him back to Pilate. ¹² (Herod and Pilate, who had been enemies before, became friends that day.)

¹³ Then Pilate called together the leading priests and other religious leaders, along with the people, ¹⁴ and he announced his verdict.

"You brought this man to me, accusing him of leading a revolt. I have examined him thoroughly on this point in your presence and find him innocent. ¹⁵ Herod came to the same conclusion and sent him back to us. Nothing this man has done calls for the death penalty. ¹⁶ So I will have him flogged, and then I will release him."

¹⁸ Then a mighty roar rose from the crowd, and with one voice they shouted, "Kill him, and release Barabbas to us!" ¹⁹ (Barabbas was in prison for taking part in an insurrection in Jerusalem against the government, and for murder.) ²⁰ Pilate argued with them, because he wanted to release Jesus. ²¹ But they kept shouting, "Crucify him! Crucify him!"

²² For the third time he demanded, "Why? What crime has he committed? I have found no reason to sentence him to death. So I will have him flogged, and then I will release him."

²³ But the mob shouted louder and louder, demanding that Jesus be crucified, and their voices prevailed. ²⁴ So Pilate sentenced Jesus to die as they demanded. ²⁵ As they had requested, he released Barabbas, the man in prison for insurrection and murder. But he turned Jesus over to them to do as they wished.

The Crucifixion

²⁶ As they led Jesus away, a man named Simon, who was from Cyrene,^[b] happened to be coming in from the countryside. The soldiers seized him and put the cross on him and made him carry it behind Jesus. ²⁷ A large crowd trailed behind, including many grief-stricken women. ²⁸ But Jesus turned and said to them, “Daughters of Jerusalem, don’t weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. ²⁹ For the days are coming when they will say, ‘Fortunate indeed are the women who are childless, the wombs that have not borne a child and the breasts that have never nursed.’ ³⁰ People will beg the mountains, ‘Fall on us,’ and plead with the hills, ‘Bury us.’”^[c] ³¹ For if these things are done when the tree is green, what will happen when it is dry?^[d]”

³² Two others, both criminals, were led out to be executed with him. ³³ When they came to a place called The Skull,^[e] they nailed him to the cross. And the criminals were also crucified—one on his right and one on his left.

³⁴ Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they don’t know what they are doing.”^[f] And the soldiers gambled for his clothes by throwing dice.^[g]

³⁵ The crowd watched and the leaders scoffed. “He saved others,” they said, “let him save himself if he is really God’s Messiah, the Chosen One.” ³⁶ The soldiers mocked him, too, by offering him a drink of sour wine. ³⁷ They called out to him, “If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!” ³⁸ A sign was fastened above him with these words: “This is the King of the Jews.”

³⁹ One of the criminals hanging beside him scoffed, “So you’re the Messiah, are you? Prove it by saving yourself—and us, too, while you’re at it!”

⁴⁰ But the other criminal protested, “Don’t you fear God even when you have been sentenced to die?” ⁴¹ We deserve to die for our crimes, but this man hasn’t done anything wrong.” ⁴² Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your Kingdom.”

⁴³ And Jesus replied, “I assure you, today you will be with me in paradise.”

The Death of Jesus

⁴⁴ By this time it was about noon, and darkness fell across the whole land until three o’clock. ⁴⁵ The light from the sun was gone. And suddenly, the curtain in the sanctuary of the Temple was torn down the middle. ⁴⁶ Then Jesus shouted, “Father, I entrust my spirit into your hands!”^[h] And with those words he breathed his last.

⁴⁷ When the Roman officer^[i] overseeing the execution saw what had happened, he worshiped God and said, “Surely this man was innocent.”^[j] ⁴⁸ And when all the crowd that came to see the crucifixion saw what had happened, they went home in deep sorrow.^[k] ⁴⁹ But Jesus’ friends, including the women who had followed him from Galilee, stood at a distance watching.

Luke 23:1-19

Reflection Questions:

- When you see a cross, what comes to your mind?
- Chip mentioned several lenses and ways to see the cross. Read through them again – which one is familiar to you? Which one is new and intriguing?
 - the Cross is a set-up to Easter’s victory—but it’s also a victory in itself. Paul calls the cross a victory over the spiritual authorities that rule over us, the Cross of Christ puts *THEM* to shame.
 - The cross = a picture of God’s forgiveness of our sin—of God paying the price.
 - The cross = the way we get FREED from sin’s bondage, when God breaks the chains between our HEARTS and the IDOLS we’ve given our hearts to.
 - The cross = the shape of a disciple’s life—it’s the way of self-denial, as we learn to give up what we want for the sake of Christ, and live out the WAY of Jesus.
 - The cross = a pic of humility and servanthood—a way of putting others before ourselves
 - The cross = a picture of God’s HATRED of the SIN that separates
 - The cross = a picture of God’s LOVE for his kids who are separated from Him.
- Read Luke 23:1-49.

- What do you notice about Jesus?
 - What do you notice about the other people in this passage and their reactions to Jesus?
 - With whom do you identify in this story?
- Chip points out the reaction of the soldier observing this and realizing Jesus' innocence. What do you think he saw?
- Another question from the message: How close have you been to someone who's giving up their life for your sake? Have you ever experienced self-sacrificial love? How did it impact you?
- How does looking at Jesus' example challenge and inspire you to follow him in this kind of love?
- How do you want to walk with Jesus this week as you remember his final week? Share some of your plans with a trusted spiritual friend.