

Youth Teaching Resources

April 14, 2019



Lenten Season (March 10-April 14)

Purposeful Love

John 12:1-8 – “The Scent of Love”

Luke 23:1-49 – “Of Passion and Pain”

Easter Season (April 21-June 2)

John 20:1-8 – “Best. News. Ever.”

Resurrection Realities

Acts 5:27-32 – “First Allegiance”

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Find links and videos related to this lesson.

Of Passion and Pain

Luke 23:1-49

YOUTH Teaching Guide

by Jeremy Colliver

This youth teaching outline is designed to support THE BIBLE LESSON by Tony Cartlege, printed in *Baptists Today*. You can subscribe to either the digital or print edition of *Baptists Today* to access the lessons. Please also ensure that each person in your class has a copy of *Baptists Today* so they can prepare before the lesson.

PARENT PREP

There are times when life is hard, and it can be even harder to watch what is going on. Can remember a situation that you were part of that you knew was going to be bad, but you knew you still had to go through with it? How did you make it through? What steps did you take? What did you do to recover from it? Life was never promised to be easy, but there are times when it can seem like too much. Sometimes you do even need to let go and fall into the arms of God. What your experience can be the same for your students. Be there when they let go to catch them, or to pick them back up off the ground. Your presence will mean more than you can ever imagine.

TEACHING THE LESSON

Fellowship

Begin your session by showing the scene “The Best” from *The Judge*. If you are unable to show the clip, summarize it to the best of your ability and then facilitate a discussion with questions like the following:

- 1) Why are trial scenes so impactful in movies?
- 2) What other trial scenes do you remember in movies?
- 3) What do trial scenes all have in common?
- 4) Why are trials so riveting?
- 5) What do you remember about Jesus’ trial scene?

Information

Transition to the next section of the session by reading Luke 23:1-49. Allow the students to ask any initial questions they have about the text. As you answer their questions, you may want to provide some of the information found in Tony’s commentary to answer their questions. When the students have had an opportunity to share their initial thoughts, continue the discussion by facilitating a discussion using questions like the following:

- 1) Why was Jesus taken before Pilate and not to one of the Jesus leaders for trial? How does Pilate rule?
- 2) Why does Herod end up hearing charges brought against Jesus? Why does Herod send Jesus back to Pilate?

Information *continued*

- 3) Why does Pilate allow Jesus' execution even though Pilate has said Jesus is innocent three times? Who does Pilate blame?
- 4) How was Jesus taunted throughout this entire episode, even while on the cross?
- 5) Who was there to witness Jesus' death? What did they say as Jesus died?
- 6) Why is this passage difficult to read?

If your group would like to dig deeper in their discussion, share some of the insights that Tony provides in the "Digging Deeper" portion of his commentary. You may want to use some questions like the following to facilitate your discussion:

- 1) Who are the Sanhedrin?
- 2) What was Herod's role?
- 3) Who is blamed in this passage? Who deserves the blame?
- 4) Who was Simon of Cyrene?

You may also want your group to discuss "The Hardest Question" if they would like to continue their discussion on this passage. Tony poses the following question to consider as "The Hardest Question": What is the green wood and dry wood of verse 31?

Transformation

As we continue through this season of Lent, conclude your session by leading your group through another spiritual discipline. For this discipline, read through the scripture again and have the students write down all the different characters that they hear mentioned in the passage and then have the students choose one of those characters. Read the passage again and challenge the students to listen to the passage again from the perspective of the character that they chose. When you have finished reading the passage for a second time, allow the students to share how their characters viewed the story. Wrap-up your discussion by facilitating a discussion using questions like the following:

- 1) What did you experience when you observed the story from a different character?
- 2) Which character did you most identify with? Explain.
- 3) How did different vantage points bring out different parts of the passage?

Close with a prayer thanking God for being present with us even when it means giving all of yourself.

Digging Deeper

by Tony Cartlege

Digging Deeper is designed to support THE BIBLE LESSON by Tony Cartlege, printed in *Nurturing Faith Journal*. Watch for the “shovel” icon in the THE BIBLE LESSON, and then reference that item in this Digging Deeper resource. You can subscribe to either the digital or print edition of *Nurturing Faith Journal* to access the lessons. Please also ensure that each person in your class has a copy of *Nurturing Faith Journal* so they can prepare before the lesson.

The text—The Revised Common Lectionary’s gospel text for this week is Luke 22:14 – 23:56, or Luke 23:1-49. The first option is far too much to cover in a single Bible study with any depth, as it begins with the Lord’s Supper and ends with Jesus’ burial, including all the intervening events. The second text is also challenging, as it begins with Jesus being brought before Pilate and ends with his death on the cross. It is more manageable, however, and will be our choice.

The Sanhedrin—The Sanhedrin, which Luke calls “the assembly of the elders,” was the supreme governing body of the Jewish people at that time. It consisted of seventy-one priests, scribes, and elders and held, under Rome, wide-ranging powers of self-government. The ruling council found Jesus worthy of death, but Rome did not grant it the power of capital punishment.

Herod—The area we think of as Israel was ruled by Herod the Great from 37 BCE until about 4 BCE. Herod was appointed by Rome as a client “King of Judea” around 40 BCE, but didn’t gain full control until 37 BCE. He was known as a great builder – hence the name “Herod the Great” – but also as a paranoid ruler who coldly assassinated anyone he perceived as a threat, including his Jewish wife Mariamne and her sons.

After Herod died, his kingdom was divided among three of his sons. The northern and eastern areas of Iturea and Tracheonitis were allotted to Herod Philip, perhaps the most competent of the three, and he ruled there from 4 BC to 34 CE

Herod Antipater (better known as Antipas) was given charge of Galilee, which he ruled from the city of Tiberius, which he built on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee, from 4 BCE to 39 CE. Antipas famously divorced his first wife and married his brother Philip’s wife, Herodias, after she divorced Philip to marry Antipas. John the Baptist sharply criticized the arrangement, and lost his head as a result (Matt. 14:1-4).

Herod Archelaus was put in charge of Judea and Samaria, but ruled only from 4 BCE to 6 CE. Archelaus was so cruel and incompetent that the Romans deposed him, made Judea a “procuratorship,” and ultimately put a series of prefects in charge of Jerusalem and the surrounding area. Pontius Pilate was the fifth of these, ruling from 26-36 CE.

Thus, when the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem brought Jesus before Pilate, who didn’t really want to condemn Jesus, he tried to defer his case off to Herod Antipas, who ruled Jesus’ home area of Galilee.

Digging Deeper *continued*

Who's to blame?—While the Roman leader Pilate passed the sentence, Luke insists that he did so only at the instigation of the temple officials. But who's really to blame?

The late Malcolm Tolbert observed that many generations of Christians have avoided the implications of the cross by blaming it on the Jews, while failing to see that the people who killed Jesus were no different than we are, preferring to silence the voice of God and take over the world for ourselves. This, he wrote, is the ultimate idolatry. “In this sense the crucifixion is not only something that happened a long time ago; it takes place every day in our own world” (“Luke,” in the *Broadman Bible Commentary*, Vol. 9 [Broadman Press, 1970], 178).

How do you react to this statement?

Simon of Cyrene—Cyrene was a city in northern Africa, located where Tripoli, the capital of Libya, is today. Mark tells us that Simon was the father of Rufus and Alexander, who must have been known to his readers in the early church (Mk. 15:21).

Paradise—The word for “paradise” seems a bit unusual, given that we would expect Jesus to affirm that the thief would join him in heaven, or in the kingdom. The term translated “paradise” (*paradeisō*) is derived from an Old Persian word meaning “enclosure,” with the extended meaning of a garden or park. The word came to be used in conjunction with heaven, perhaps speaking of a garden or area within it (2 Cor. 12:4; Rev. 2:7).

The Hardest Question

by Tony Cartlege

The Hardest Question is designed to support THE BIBLE LESSON by Tony Cartlege, printed in *Nurturing Faith Journal*. You can subscribe to either the digital or print edition of *Nurturing Faith Journal* to access the lessons. Please also ensure that each person in your class has a copy of *Nurturing Faith Journal* so they can prepare before the lesson.

What is the green wood and dry wood of v. 31?

Jesus' prediction of Jerusalem's destruction was peppered with comments designed to intensify its impact. That day would bring such suffering to them and their children that they would claim barren women most blessed, a turnaround from the normal view (v. 29). They would call for the mountains to fall on them and bring a quick end, for they would be better off dead than facing what came with the end of the city (v. 30).

Finally, he said "For if they do this when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry?" (v. 31). This verse has puzzled interpreters for years. Some have sought a connection with the wood of the cross, but that is unlikely.

The saying is probably proverbial and subject to application in different circumstances. The most common view is that here the "green wood" represented Jesus and the "dry wood" represented Jerusalem. If such suffering could come upon the innocent "green wood," how much worse would the disaster be for wood that is guilty and spiritually dry, like seasoned firewood?

A related interpretation suggests that if Jesus' tragic death could occur when Jerusalem was relatively peaceful (like green wood), what atrocities might happen if tensions rose and it became like a tinderbox?

Both scenarios are harbingers of trouble to come: the women might mourn over Jesus' death, but a day would come when the entire city would face a devastating destruction.