

## Jesus (and the World) on Trial

### Luke 22:63-23:25

In this passage, Jesus stands trial before religious leaders and Roman authorities. Though declared innocent multiple times, He is mocked, abused, and ultimately handed over to be crucified. Beneath the surface of these legal proceedings something deeper is going on. Not only is Jesus on trial — the world itself is exposed. This heartbreaking part of the Jesus story reveals how systems built on power, fear, and self-preservation respond to perfect justice. And yet, through it all, God's greater verdict stands.

#### **Consider/Contemplate**

- “The cross is the judgment of the world — not because God judges the world there, but because the world reveals what it is capable of when confronted with perfect goodness.” — N.T. Wright
- “When Christ comes into the world, he does not so much judge as reveal. His presence discloses what is in us.” — Dietrich Bonhoeffer
- “The world is organized around power. The kingdom of God is organized around love.” — Brian Zahnd
- “Hope is not the belief that everything was, is, or will be fine. Hope is the trust that God holds the final verdict.” — Fleming Rutledge

#### **Thinking It Through**

1. Pilate declares Jesus innocent three times. Why do you think Luke emphasizes Jesus' innocence so strongly?
2. Where do you see power being used unjustly in this passage?
3. In what ways does this story expose how human systems often protect themselves rather than pursue truth?
4. The sermon described “healthy disillusionment.” What illusions about power, politics, success, or leadership might this passage challenge?
5. When have you personally experienced injustice — societal, relational, or institutional? How does knowing Jesus endured injustice shape how you process that?
6. The crowd chooses Barabbas over Jesus. Why do you think people sometimes prefer destructive leadership over righteous leadership?
7. How does the resurrection function as God's “higher court” overturning the world's verdict?
8. In the application, Matt talked about how misplaced hope leads to anxiety, cynicism, or despair. Which of those are you most tempted toward?
9. What does it practically look like to redirect your hope to the risen and reigning King this week?

#### **Prayer Points**

- Pray that God would expose any false hopes or illusions we are clinging to and free us from misplaced trust in human power.
- Pray that God would anchor our hope in the risen King. That He would guard us from cynicism and anxiety, and fill us with steadfast, resilient hope.

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