

Matthew 27:24-51 Discussion Guide

Pray

Apart from God, we can do nothing. Pray for the Holy Spirit to guide your discussion. Throughout your time together, continue asking God for help.

Read Scripture

Read Matthew 26 and 27 together with a special focus on 27:24-51.

Pray

- Take time to pray for one another and ask for His grace to apply His Word to our daily lives.

Open: According to your own observations, what are some common views that people hold about the basic goodness of mankind?

Context: “We now come to the events toward which Matthew’s narrative has been steadily heading from the start. Leading up to Jesus’ death, we reach what the political and religious leaders do: they arrest, try, convict, flog, and crucify Jesus. We read about what his disciples do: Judas betrays him, Peter denies him, and all abandon him. We also learn what Jesus does: he predicts his death, explains its meaning, and willingly endures it. And then he defeats it. The end of Matthew’s gospel looks to the future, with the disciples’ commission to take the gospel to all nations.” (ESV Study Bible Notes)

Observing the Text:

- 1) As you read through Matthew’s lengthy account of the final hours before Jesus’s crucifixion, what strikes you about the people we see in it who are in positions of leadership? How do they act? What seems to be motivating their actions and decisions?
- 2) What is Jesus’s demeanor throughout this passage? What do you observe about his words and actions? What is Matthew trying to teach us throughout this passage about the purpose of Jesus’s death?

Understanding the Text:

- 3) What do you learn about Pilate through the interactions he has with Jesus and the angry crowd (27:11-26)? How do the people openly hold themselves responsible for the crucifixion of Jesus? What might Pilate be seeking to accomplish by going along with their desires?
- 4) What does Matthew want his readers to notice about the mockery and abuse that Jesus endures yet again after Pilate’s decision (27:27-31)? How do the soldiers speak truer than they know?
- 5) How does Jesus continue to be mocked as he goes to the cross (27:32-44)? What specific examples of mockery does Matthew choose to include—and how do they serve to remind us of Jesus’s true identity (27:37, 40, 42)?
- 6) What one phrase does Matthew record being spoken by Jesus as he hangs on the cross (27:46)? Why might Matthew have included this phrase—and what significance does it have for our understanding of the death of Jesus? In what sense has God the Father “forsaken” the Son here—and for what purpose?
- 7) There are three signs that occur in Jerusalem at the moment of Jesus’ death (27:51-53). What is the significance of the curtain of the temple being torn in two?

Bible Connections:

- 8) Matthew includes just one phrase from Jesus during his crucifixion: a line that he was quoting from Psalm 22. Read through Psalm 22 now, and not David's words about his own suffering and agony. How does this psalm clearly point forward to Jesus? Why might Jesus have chosen to quote the first line of this psalm as he was being crucified?
- 9) Read Exodus 26:31-33, which speaks of the "veil" or "curtain" that was made to section off the holy of holies in the tabernacle. What was this veil meant to teach God's people about the holiness of God? How does this Old Testament background shed light on the significance of the fact that this veil was "torn" at the death of Jesus?

Applying the Text:

- 10) What warnings does today's passage offer about giving in to fear—or the will of the crowd?
- 11) How should you apply this passage to your own heart, as you consider the suffering and death of Jesus? What do you find beautiful about his death? How can you cultivate a deeper appreciation of the costliness of your salvation and of your relationship with God?

PRAY:

- Take time thank God for sending Jesus to be the Promised Savior and King.
- Take time to thank Jesus for His amazing display of love for you to secure your redemption.
- Ask God for grace to more fully believe that Jesus's death took away your guilt, shame, and punishment due for your sin.
- Ask God for opportunities to share His great love through the cross with others.

NOTE: most questions taken from *Matthew: Making Disciples for the Nations Volume 2* by Jon Nielson and Daniel M. Doriani.