

The Thread

Discovering The Thread of the Gospel Through The Big-Picture Story of the Bible

Part 3: The Gospel Come To Life Lesson 37: Jesus' Arrest and Trial



Session Snapshot

Narrative Passage: Matthew 26:36-56; 27:11-26

Gospel Focus: Isaiah 53:7-10

Student Takeaways:

- Students will understand that Jesus was arrested and tried even though He was found to be innocent of any crime.
- Students will see that by allowing Himself to be arrested and crucified, Jesus was confirming Old Testament prophecies concerning His identity as the Messiah.
- Students will consider the depth of God's love for them, that Jesus would willingly endure what He did to save them from their sins.



Overview

The narrative of Jesus' arrest and trial contains some of the rawest scenes in Scripture. We see Jesus in a tattered and worn emotional state, pressed down by sorrow. We see Him fighting to remain obedient to His Father. We learn that all of it, every act of people's betrayal and deceit, is God's plan and that God is going to use these twisted acts of injustice to rescue humankind from sin and death. In the middle of it all stands this single powerful truth: Jesus willingly laid down His innocent life in order to pay the penalty our sin earns for us.



Teacher Prep Video

Each *Thread* lesson comes with a Teacher Prep Video. These are short videos designed to help you grasp the main point of the lesson as you prepare to teach.

To access your *Thread* lesson 37 Teacher Prep Video, login to your Lesson Manager, navigate to lesson 37, and click on the "Background" tab. You'll notice the Teacher Prep Video near the top of the Lesson Manager window.



Bible Background

The Bible Background is designed to help you provide the basic context for the passages you'll be studying.

- **What do we mean by "context"?** In every ym360 Bible study lesson we encourage teachers to help students know who wrote a particular book, when it was written, and why it was written.
- **Why teach context?** Grasping the big-picture view of God's story of redemption is difficult for teenagers without understanding the context of the books and passages they're studying.

Matthew

Author: Matthew, a former tax collector, was a disciple of Jesus and a firsthand witness to the stories he relates in his gospel.

Time frame: Most people hold to Matthew's gospel being written in the late 50's or 60's AD, though there are some who think it was written after the destruction of the Temple in 70 AD.

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Purpose: Matthew was writing to a primarily Jewish audience to convince them that Jesus was indeed the long-awaited Messiah. But he was probably aware of a Gentile audience, as his gospel makes the case that the saving truth of Christ is for all nations.

Isaiah

Author: Isaiah, son of Amoz wrote the book of Isaiah.

Time frame: The events of Isaiah occurred between 740 and 681 B.C., though some parts of the book would have been constructed at a later date.

Purpose: The purpose of this book was to call the nation of Judah back to God, to warn of coming judgment, and to tell of God's ultimate salvation through the Messiah.



Lesson Plan

The Lesson Plan contains four elements:

- An introductory activity called Getting Started designed to prepare teenagers to engage with God and the truth of His Word.
- A section entitled The Story featuring a narrative from Scripture that helps teenagers know God better through learning the story of the Bible.
- A special emphasis entitled The Thread where teenagers discover the Gospel thread coursing throughout the story of the Bible.
- An application-focused segment called Wrapping Up helping teenagers ask the question, "How am I impacted by what I learned today"?

Getting Started

- **Goal:** Students will discuss being wrongly accused of a crime, in order to understand how it feels to be accused even when innocent.
- **Set-Up:** You may want a dry erase board to write down student's answers.

FIRST, explain to your students that throughout human history there have been examples of people who were convicted of crimes, even though they were innocent. The most famous examples of innocent people being wrongly accused include Joan of Arc, Rubin "Hurricane" Carter, and the Salem Witch Trails. Explain to them one example called the Dreyfus Affair. In 1894, Alfred Dreyfus, a captain in the French army, was wrongly accused of treason and exiled to Devil's Island, a penal colony, as punishment. The real traitor was found two years later, but military authorities didn't want to look bad, so they covered up the evidence until 1899, when Dreyfus was given a new trial. It was not until 1906, 12 years later, that he was fully cleared of any wrongdoing. (For more details: <http://listverse.com/2013/03/27/10-people-who-were-wrongfully-accused-of-heinous-crimes/>)

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THEN, ask your students to think about what it would be like if they were wrongly accused of doing something they did not do. Ask:

- **How would you feel if you were wrongly accused, like Alfred Dreyfus? What would you do?**
- **Have you ever been falsely accused of something?**
- **How does it feel to be innocent, yet thought to be guilty?**
- **What would you do (or did you do) if you were falsely accused of a crime? Would you defend yourself? What lengths would you go to in order to prove that you were actually innocent?**
- **How would it make you feel to know that people wrongly accused you for their own personal gain?**

FINALLY, explain to your students that in today's lesson you will learn that Jesus was falsely accused, arrested, and tried. Ask them to remember the emotions they just described as they study what Jesus went through.

Then, transition to The Story.

The Story

- **Goal:** Students will understand that Jesus was arrested and tried even though He was found to be innocent of any crime.
- **Set-Up:** Students will need a Bible or a Bible app.

FIRST explain to your students that in today's lesson you will explore Jesus' arrest and trial. Review last week's lesson to remind them of the context. As you review, instruct your students go to Matthew 26:36-56. As they find the passage, explain to them this story happens immediately after the Last Supper. You can use the Connecting the Dots section below to help fill in the gaps.

Connecting The Dots

As you teach The Thread, there will naturally be some gaps in the story. This is an optional way for you to fill in some of the gaps between the last lesson you taught and this one. Use it as a way to review and/or to connect the dots to the events surrounding the passage.

- **Jesus' arrest and trial happen immediately after the Last Supper.**
- **The Last Supper is when Jesus gathered with His disciples to observe the traditional Jewish Passover meal.**
- **One of the main characters in today's story is Judas. Judas was one of Jesus' disciples, and as we'll see today, is most famous for betraying Jesus.**

THEN, read or have a student read Matthew 26:36-46. As the passage is being read, ask them to focus on Jesus' words to His disciples. Ask:

- **What was Jesus' emotional state? Why was He feeling this way?**
 - o Answer: The Scripture says that He was full of sorrow and deeply troubled. He knew that the cross was in front of Him, which was causing His very emotional response.
- **How does it make you feel to know that Jesus experienced these types of emotions?**
 - o Answers will vary. But students should understand that Jesus can empathize with them when they are experiencing sorrow. He understands.

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- **How would you summarize Jesus' prayer? What does that prayer teach us about Jesus?**
 - o Answer: He prayed not His will, but God's will be done. This shows us that Jesus did not have a death wish. He wasn't looking forward to the suffering ahead, but He was committed to God's will and God's plan to save people from sin.
- **Who's idea was it for Jesus to die on the cross?**
 - o Answer: Ultimately, it was God's plan. This was the way that God decided to rescue people from sin.
- **Jesus mentions "the cup." What is He talking about?**
 - o Answer: Your students may not fully understand this, but it is important. The cup was God's wrath intended to be poured out on humankind for their sin (Jeremiah 25:15, Isaiah 51:17). Don't get bogged down in that discussion, but it is important for your students to understand that "the cup" is God's punishment for sin. Jesus is going to take all the sin of the world (drink the cup) when He dies on the cross.

Explain to your students the key idea is that Jesus is willingly going to the cross. He is willingly laying down His life as a substitute for sinners, to take our punishment that He doesn't deserve. He is willing to die for sinners both because He desires to obey the Father, and because of His great love for us.

NEXT, read or have a student read Matthew 26:47-56. Ask:

- **We now 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?**
 - o 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?**
 - o 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"?**
 - o 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.

THEN, ask your students to go to Matthew 27:11-26. 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:

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- **Will someone summarize what we read?**

- o 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?**

- o 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?**

- o 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?**

- o 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?**

- o 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?**

- o 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.

Explain to your students that they should see clearly in this passage that Jesus was tried, convicted, and sentenced to death despite the fact that He was innocent. Pilate and his wife attest to Jesus' innocence. Their religious leaders know that Jesus is innocent, which is why they arrest Him at night, make false accusations, and bribe the crowd to demand for His crucifixion.

If students don't have any questions, transition into The Thread and explore further how Jesus' arrest and trial connect to the big-picture narrative of Scripture.

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FIRST Instruct your students to go to Isaiah 53:7-10. You may want to cover the background information on Isaiah in the Bible Background section, at least so they understand that Isaiah was written well before Jesus' birth.

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THEN, read or have a student read Isaiah 53:7-10. Explain these verses are prophecies. In other words they are describing an event that will take place in the future. Ask:

- **What do you see in this prophesy about the Messiah that reminds you of Jesus' arrest and trial? Look at each verse carefully.**
 - o Answer: He was silent before His accusers (verse 7). The people didn't understand the true reason that Jesus was laying down His life (verse 8). He was treated as a wicked man, even though He was innocent (verse 9). It was God's will for Jesus to die (verse 10).
- **Wow! Isn't it incredible that approximately 700 years prior to Jesus' birth Isaiah prophesied these things? What does that tell us about God's plan?**
 - o Answer: It is incredible. It tells us that God plan's involved Jesus death and crucifixion from the very beginning.
- **How does it make you feel to know that God was always planning on sending Jesus to rescue us?**
 - o Answer: Answers will vary. We should be amazed, blown away, humbled, and even overwhelmed.

Explain that here they should clearly see an example of how God's plan to redeem His people, extends through the entirety of Scripture. Specifically, God intended for Jesus to be falsely accused, arrested, tried, and convicted, even though He was completely innocent.

FINALLY, conclude the Thread by reminding your students that Jesus died for our sins, not His own. He is the completely sinless sacrifice for us, dying in our place to pay the penalty of our sin. If your students don't have any more questions, transition into the Wrapping Up section.

Wrapping Up

- **Goal:** Students will consider the depth of God's love for them, in that Jesus would willingly endure what He did to save them from their sins.
- **Set-Up:** A dry erase board or paper and pens for everyone in your class.

FIRST, review the facts of the lesson with your students. Jesus was betrayed by a friend. He was arrested under false pretenses. He was wrongly accused as a criminal. He was sentenced to death by crucifixion even though He was innocent. After reviewing the facts ask:

- **Who was to blame for Jesus' death? Who's fault was it?**
 - o Answer: Your students may answer Judas, the religious leaders, Pilate, the crowd. Write down their answers on the board or ask them to write their answers on a piece of paper.
- **Then, ask the students to identify the motivation for each name on the list. What drove those people to send Jesus to the cross?**
 - o Answer: Judas - personal gain. Religious leaders - jealousy. Pilate - fear. The crowds - money.

THEN, tell your students that all of these people do shoulder some of the blame for Jesus' death. Explain that it would be easy for us to be appalled by the conduct of these people. Remind them, however, that Jesus is willingly laying down His life for the purpose of rescuing people from sin and death. So, while we can blame

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others, the truth is that Jesus died in our place as well as the place of each the people we've identified. We are also to blame for Jesus' death.

NEXT explain to your students that the wicked characteristics of the men listed above are easy to point out. Tell them to now make a list of the characteristics that Jesus embodies when He willingly lays down His life for us. The list could include, humble, self-sacrificing, loving, gracious, generous, and much more.

THEN, draw a circle around the negative motivations on one side and the positive characteristics on the other. Make it clear to your students that Jesus extended humility, love, grace, generosity, and selflessness to us, when we only have pride, jealousy, selfishness, and fear to offer Him. Ask:

- **How does it make you feel to know that Jesus did this in order to take your punishment in your place?**
- **Why did Jesus give up so much? Why did He endure such hardships?**
- **How does this story demonstrate God's love to us? What is the depth of His love for us?**

FINALLY, challenge them to remember this list when they begin to doubt or forget God's love for them. Make sure your students don't have any questions. Then, close your Bible study in prayer. Specifically pray that each student would know how great God's love is.

- **If you've purchased the *Tracing The Thread* devotional journal, remind students that they'll be working through Week 37 this week. Encourage them to keep up with the daily devotions, and to give memorizing this week's verse their best shot.**
- **If you'll be utilizing the digital devotions included in the *Thread* curriculum, remind students how you'll be making them available, i.e., Instagram, Facebook, etc.**
- **Use the Social Media guide to stay in touch with students via text or Twitter, and to encourage them to follow through with reading their devotions.**

We Want To Hear From You . . .

- Do you have questions about a lesson?
- Something that worked particularly well you want to share?
- Something that didn't work you want to bring up?

We value your feedback! Please do not hesitate to email us with your questions, comments, or concerns, at feedback@youthministry360.com.