

St. Matthew's  
*Passion*  
DISCUSSION GUIDE

# Despised and Rejected

Matthew 27.1-26

## WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

*Share plans for future Community Group gatherings and the following happening in the life of the church:*

- **Men's Retreat April 20th & 21st** | Join the men of New City for our 2nd annual Men's Retreat (not at Camp America this year, we've upgraded to Higher Ground). The early bird registration deadline is March 19th. Visit the website and/or the City for more information.
- **Interfaith Hospitality Network (IHN) | the week of April 1st** **Once again, New City will be partnering with Interfaith Hospitality Network to host families in need.** Interfaith Hospitality Network (IHN) is a family homeless shelter located in East Walnut Hills that partners with the faith community to provide shelter and food for families in need. Each week different congregations in the city host 4 families for the week, starting Sunday at 5pm to the following Sunday at 6am. In most cases this is done at IHN's own facility. New City will be hosting at Grace Place, which is located in College Hill. New City will begin hosting families starting Easter Sunday evening, April 1st through Sunday morning, April 8th. This is a great opportunity for New City to serve those who are experiencing homelessness in our city. For more information and to sign up to serve visit the City.
- **Missional Motherhood Saturday, April 7th 9-11:30a** | Missional Motherhood is designed to engage and encourage mothers of all ages as we seek Biblical direction in living intentionally as mothers. We will meet at New City on Saturday, April 7, 9 – 11:30. The format will include coffee & breakfast, a speaker and small group discussion time. Come to learn, engage with other moms and be encouraged! There is nothing to prepare or read prior. Our APRIL SESSION will focus on teaching the gospel to our children as well as to ourselves with some teaching from Susie Hammitt. We will have resources and ideas for you- Come, let's learn and share together! RSVP required on the City by Tues, April 3.

## OPENING PRAYER

Open your group in prayer. Pray extemporaneously, or use this prayer: *God our Father, we come tonight to grow in our understanding of you. Help us together to understand and apply your Word to our lives. In the name of Jesus, we pray. Amen.*

## OPENER

On Sunday Ryan (shamelessly) mentioned that one of his achievements in high school was acquitting John Brown in a mock trial, share with your group one of your highlights in high school.

## STUDY/DISCUSSION

*We believe that people experience and grow in their faith when they get to spend time reflecting on God's Word, and also hearing from other Christians. That's what we're hoping for tonight.*

1. **Read Matthew 27:1-26.** Who are some of the characters in this passage? What are some of their actions that surprised you, baffled you, or convicts you?
2. On the surface, Judas seems to have sincerely repented of his sins, but why is his "repentance" not enough?
3. The chief priests and elders betrayed Jesus, brushed Judas off, but still scrupulously keep to the details of the law? What are some ways you sometimes try to make up for your guilt by your own works?
4. Pilate washed his hands clean of Jesus' blood, how would you tell a friend who does not believe in sin that his/her own conscience cannot be the final judgment of their actions?
5. Jesus only spoke four words in this entire passage, "You have said so" (verse 11). He used the same words to answer the chief priest in 26:64. Why does Jesus answer them in such indirect way?
6. The four gospel writers did not provide very much information on Barabbas, even though he played a very important role in the trial of Jesus. How does what we know (or don't know) about Barabbas help us see the hope we have in Jesus?
7. Which of these characters in this passage do you identify with the most? Why?
8. Read Ephesians 1:15-23. Paul prays that among many things, we would know "[Jesus'] glorious inheritance in the saints." How does knowing this encourage you to continue follow Jesus in faith?

## PRAYER

End your community group time in prayer. You may elect to just lead the group in a closing prayer, pray together as a large group, or break into smaller groups to pray. You can share requests, or simply pray about the things you discussed tonight.