

Island Group Discussion Guide

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WEEK OF MARCH 22, 2026

THE BOOK OF MARK - WEEK 48

WHAT WILL YOU DO WITH JESUS? • MARK 15:1-15



OPENING PRAYER TIME

Begin your meeting with 10-15 minutes of prayer using these prompts:

- Thank God for His presence with us today and for His Word that reveals truth
- Ask the Holy Spirit to guide our discussion and soften our hearts
- Pray for the courage to honestly examine how we respond to Jesus
- Invite God to reveal areas where we have been silent when we should speak and defensive when we should be still
- Ask for hearts that choose truth over comfort and obedience over self-preservation
- Pray for our church to be a community that boldly stands with Jesus no matter the cost

DISCUSSION

- **Ice breaker:** Have you ever known the right thing to do in a situation but chose the easier or safer option instead? What happened?
- **Read Mark 15:1.** Mark tells us that “as soon as it was morning” the chief priests delivered Jesus to Pilate. In the sermon, we heard that early morning was the most sacred time of day — set aside for extended prayers. Yet this morning, getting rid of Jesus was more important to them than talking to God. What does it reveal when religious activity gets set aside to protect our own plans?
- Pastor Charlie pointed out that these leaders “already knew what they were doing — their minds were made up.” They even bound Jesus like a dangerous criminal to put on a show for Pilate. We heard that “this is what happens when people already decide what the outcome is that they want, and they have to stage the evidence to match that.” Where do we see this kind of thinking — deciding the outcome first and bending everything to fit — in our own lives?
- In John’s Gospel, the religious leaders wouldn’t even enter Pilate’s house because it would make them ceremonially unclean — plotting murder but worried about ritual defilement. The sermon warned that “religion without relationship produces exactly the kind of blindness these Pharisees and scribes had.” How can we guard against that same blindness?
- **Read Mark 15:2 and John 18:33–38.** Pilate asks Jesus, “Are you the king of the Jews?” In John’s fuller account, Jesus asks Pilate a deeply personal question: “Do you say this of your own accord, or did others say it to you about me?” The message challenged us with this same question — are our conclusions about Jesus truly our own, drawn from reading Scripture, or are we just going along with what someone else has said? We were warned that “you can be scripture adjacent by listening to people talk about it, but you are not scripture rooted unless you’re reading it.” **Application question:** Is what



you believe about Jesus based on your own reading of Scripture, or primarily on what others have told you?

- **Read Mark 15:3–5.** When the chief priests pile on accusations, Jesus makes no further answer, and Pilate is amazed. The sermon highlighted a powerful pattern: “When asked about the truth, Jesus spoke. When accused with lies, Jesus was silent.” The message then made this convicting observation: “Our instinct when we’re falsely accused is to go on the attack. But our instinct when God tells us to speak up for Him is to suddenly get silent and quiet.” We were challenged that “we get it exactly backwards.” **Application question:** Where in your life are you being loud when you should be quiet, or quiet when you should be bold?
- **Read Mark 15:6–14.** Pilate tries to use the Passover custom of releasing a prisoner to free Jesus, but the chief priests stirred up the crowd to ask for Barabbas instead. When Pilate asks, “What evil has he done?” the crowd simply shouts louder: “Crucify him!” Pastor Charlie observed that “the crowd did not arrive at this decision by themselves” — the priests were manipulating and working the room. The result? “Volume replaces logic. Emotion overrides truth.” How do we guard against letting the loudest voices shape our convictions instead of Scripture?
- **Read Mark 15:15.** Mark writes that Pilate, “wishing to satisfy the crowd,” released Barabbas and delivered Jesus to be crucified. The sermon called this “maybe the most damning line in all of Scripture” and said that “Pilate cared more about keeping the peace than doing what was right.” **Application question:** Where in your life are you tempted to keep the peace rather than do what is right?
- The message walked through every group in this passage and how each answered the question “What will you do with Jesus?” The religious leaders chose their power. Pilate chose self-preservation. The crowd followed the loudest voice. And Barabbas — guilty of every charge falsely levied against Jesus — went free while the innocent man took his place. We were reminded: “Barabbas is every one of us. Guilty, but set free because an innocent man took our place.” Which of these responses do you most identify with, and how does seeing yourself in Barabbas change the way you understand the gospel?
- We were challenged that “every day we’re answering that question, whether you realize it or not” — when we stay quiet about our faith, when we let the crowd define what we believe, when we know what’s right but choose what’s easy. **Read John 14:15.** Jesus said, “If you love me, you will keep my commandments.” The teaching reminded us that “what we do in our obedience to Jesus says what we think about Jesus.” **Application question:** What is one specific area where you know God is asking you to act or speak up — and what is holding you back?
- Pastor Charlie closed with this encouragement: being “all in” with Jesus “looks really scary when we see what it might cost us — up until the moment that we’re all in with Jesus. Once we’re all in, we realize that all that other stuff just really isn’t as important, isn’t as bad, isn’t as humiliating, isn’t as awkward as we imagine it is.” **Application question:** What would it look like for you to stop standing on the edge and go all in with Jesus this week?

CLOSING PRAYER TIME

Share prayer requests and concerns with the group. Be sure to write these down and send them to all group members so everyone can pray throughout the week, including those who were absent today.