

Gathering Guide

for Communities and Friends

Is This Justice? (Accused)

4/7/19

Where We Are In The Bible

In Matthew 26:57-68 we are brought to the following scene:

The betrayal and arrest of Jesus has brought its crushing blow. The disciples are scattered in fear of imminent defeat and Jesus is now in the hands of Jewish authorities just eager to rid themselves of the blasphemer. The first of these authorities to hold trial is Caiaphas, the High Priest. The High Priest presided over the supreme court of first century Israel, the Sanhedrin it was called; a 70 member council made up of Sadducees and Pharisees.

Lean In

- In your group, describe a time when you felt like you were “on trial,” under someone’s judging eye, or faced with open accusation. How did it make you feel? What were your fears, insecurities?
- When faced with accusation or the fear of it, we tend to self-justify. What are some ways we try to justify ourselves? Are there particular lines we rehearse and use, such as “well I’m a good person”?
- Tease out the reasons behind our tendency to self-justify. If it’s fear, fear of what? If insecurity, why? Do we feel misunderstood?

The Big Idea

In the book of Revelation, Satan is described as “The Accuser.” It’s his evil nature to ignore the mark of the Good Creator and make a claim on us according to our sins. But the grace of God in Jesus does not “count [our] sins against [us]” (2 Cor. 5:19) in order to redeem. Jesus took the Accuser’s claims that normally would be ours, and he took them all the way to the cross. “For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God” (2 Cor. 5:21).

Where To?

- Do you ever hear the whispers of the Accuser in your ear? What does he say? Confession of these attacks in a healthy group setting allows the Holy Spirit to heal and reaffirm. Take time to share, and afterwards spend time in prayer for one another.
- After sharing and praying, read Romans 3:21-26 together as an encouragement of Christ’s justification.

Prayer Focus

Holy God, somewhere inside we bear the mark of your goodness. But we have fallen from that grace and stand in need of redemption. The Accuser would like to hold trial on us! But you, Oh Lord, are slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. Thank you for the cross. Thank you for Jesus, who took our accusations upon himself in order that we, by means of your grace and activated through faith, might stand justified. Praise and glory to You, Eternal God. Amen.

