



## Session 3

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### **BIG IDEA**

Public Integrity.

### **GROUP OPENER**

How would you define integrity?

In broad terms, what are things that often cause people's integrity to fail?

What leads to those failures, again in broad terms, not specific?

### **GROUP DISCUSSION**

- Read this passage: Matthew 26:57-27:2. Twice out loud, in different versions of the Bible – everyone listens.
- What are some significant observations you have about this text? What stood out? What didn't you like? What was confusing?
- What does this passage teach us about God? How does it change how I see God?
- What does this passage teach us about humanity/ourselves? How would it change how I treat others?
- What does this passage teach us about obedience? How should it affect the way I live?

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WEEKEND

### **As a Group Discussion:**

#### **Questions:**

Where do you see Jesus holding up integrity in today's passage?

How do you see a lack of integrity from Peter and the Sanhedrin in today's passage?

Social psychologist Jonathan Haidt says in his book *The Righteous Mind*. "Reasoning can take us to almost any conclusion we want to reach, because we ask 'Can I believe it?' when we want to believe something, but 'Must I believe it?' when we don't want to believe. The answer is almost always yes to the first question and no to the second."

We believe things because we want to believe them. We can put wanting our own comfort in front of asking hard questions like what Jesus would really have me do in this situation.

#### **Question:**

Can anyone share a time when you did something uncomfortable because it felt like the thing Jesus would have you do?

How can we live with more integrity?

During the trial of Jesus, we see that the trial violates the Jewish laws on capital cases in these ways.

- They hold a trial during Passover
- They do it secretly during the night
- They do not begin with arguments for Jesus
- The defense has no favorable witnesses
- The prosecution's witnesses are false and don't agree
- The witnesses (and collaborators) are not executed for perjury

Jesus was executed not based on actual crimes but instead based on what people wanted to believe.

## ACTION STEPS

### *I will statement...*

- Based on what God is teaching in this passage, what should I do? Reflect for a minute or two and develop an action statement. Put it in the form, "I Will \_\_\_\_\_". Make it concrete, simple, and achievable.
- Share your "I Will" statement with the group.

## Thought

Recently, a stakeholder at Northeast who serves in another part of the world as a missionary, when asked about violent bombings and the safety of where they were serving, had this to say:

"My faith tells me the safest place to be in the universe is right in the middle of God's will for our lives. If not us, then who? He has no other hands nor feet than ours. So, I guess "safe" is relative. He's called us all to love and serve the least of these. I think it's infinitely safer to live in obedience and serve the people God has put before us than any other alternative."