

DISCUSSION GUIDE :: WEEK 3

**STOP, COLLABORATE & LISTEN
WHEN MARIO IS BETRAYED
LUKE 22:54-62 & JOHN 21:15-19
09/24/2017**



MAIN POINT

Jesus is our model for how to handle betrayal.

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

How has the social media world changed our perspectives on relationships?

What quality do you feel is most important in a friend and why?

What are some of the reasons that betrayal hurts so deeply?

We have all been in relationships long enough to feel the pains of betrayal from a roommate, friend, coworker, or spouse. Betrayal is one of the most painful hurts relationships can bring our way, and the destruction it can leave can affect us for years, even the rest of our lives. For this reason, it is important that we know how to handle betrayal in a godly way. Thankfully, the example of Jesus teaches us to remember that God's plan is still intact, let God deal with that person, and seek reconciliation at the appropriate time.

UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ LUKE 22:54-62.

Jesus stood at the house of the high priest. What should have been holy ground, keeping the leading religious official in Judaism holy and pure, became the scene of the most evil deed in history: the mockery of a trial that convicted the Son of God. Again, a disciple followed Jesus, but this time at a distance. He followed with curiosity to see what would happen, not with devotion to identify himself with the Master.

Look back at Luke 22:31-34. Why was denying Jesus unfathomable to Peter?

What emotions might Peter have felt in that moment when he realized Jesus' prophecy came true?

When have you felt like Peter? What do we learn about Peter from his response to his betrayal (v. 62)?

Peter's lie couldn't have been further from the truth. Peter was one of the first men Jesus called to be disciples (see Luke 5). During Jesus' three years of earthly ministry, Peter was present for some of the most miraculous moments, like the Transfiguration we studied earlier (see Luke 9). Peter exhibited great faith (like the time when he jumped out of the boat to walk on water, see Matthew 14), and he was one of Jesus' best friends. He wouldn't have been in the courtyard outside Jesus' trial if he didn't love Jesus, but fear and self-preservation kicked in, and he allowed those emotions to control him. Peter blatantly betrayed his friendship with Jesus, leaving Jesus alone to face the cross and the pain that lay ahead of Him. Jesus undoubtedly felt the pain of that betrayal.

Read Romans 8:28. Jesus knew that God's plan to save the world through the cross and resurrection was still intact even in the face of betrayal. How does that truth change the way we can react when we are betrayed?

Peter's betrayal of Jesus didn't interfere with God's plans for Jesus' life, and neither do the betrayals we face. Romans 8:28 reminds us that while everything may not be good, God does work everything together for the good of His plans. No matter how much pain you feel from a betrayal, remember that God's plan is still intact.

HAVE ANOTHER VOLUNTEER READ ROMANS 12:19.

What Jesus didn't do in response to Peter's betrayal was take revenge, even though that is a gut reaction to betrayal. Why is the idea of revenge so tempting?

What does revenge actually communicate about our belief in God?

As part of our human nature, we are born with the desire to self-protect, and revenge is evidence of that. Whether we admit it or not, we want to get back at the people who hurt us, because we feel like the way they have treated us is unfair. But when we seek revenge, or even have an attitude of revenge, then we say to God that what is happening to us is not fair, and we think we know better than Him how to look out for ourselves. We must let God deal with our betrayer. Our role is to forgive, not exact revenge.

HAVE ANOTHER VOLUNTEER READ JOHN 21:15-19.

Three times Peter had denied Jesus, and at this meeting on the shoreline, Jesus asked Peter if he loved Him three times, each canceling out a denial. Their dialogue makes it clear that in God's eyes, love far outweighs failure, and no one is beyond His reconciliation. That kind of love would propel Peter to spend the rest of his life spreading the good news of the gospel.

What does Jesus' example in this passage teach us about how to handle betrayal?

What is the ultimate goal of reconciliation?

Though Peter betrayed Jesus, Jesus was not finished with him, so Jesus sought reconciliation. When Jesus sought reconciliation, He did so without demanding an apology or demanding that Peter ask for forgiveness. This shows us that the goal of reconciliation is the freedom it brings. By seeking reconciliation, you acknowledge that you forgive the person you betrayed you. That act alone has the power to free you from the pain and hurt the betrayal caused. Jesus had big plans for Peter's life, and that required a restored relationship. When we seek reconciliation, we make room for God to work.

APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

Think back to a time when you were betrayed by someone close to you. How did the betrayal affect you emotionally? How did that compare with your outward response?

Why does it matter how we respond to betrayal?

Of the three practical steps for handling betrayal that we learn from Jesus (remember God's plan is still intact, let God deal with that person, and reconcile at some point), which do you need to apply to a particular relationship today? How can we help you do that?

PRAY

Spend time praying for any relationships that have been hurt by recent betrayal. Ask God to help all of you apply today's principles to your relationships.

COMMENTARY

LUKE 22:54-62

22:54. Jesus stood at the house of the high priest. What should have been holy ground, keeping the leading religious official in Judaism holy and pure, became the scene of the most evil deed in history: the mockery of a trial that convicted the Son of God. Again, a disciple followed Jesus (see v. 39), but this time at a distance. He followed with curiosity to see what would happen, not with devotion to identify himself with the Master.

22:55. This disciple did not follow Jesus for long. He distanced himself from the Master until he had joined the crowd around a comfortable campfire. He had quietly shifted identities. No longer a follower of Jesus, he became one of the crowd, curious to see what was about to happen and eager for a good time around the fire.

22:56-61. The rugged Galilean fisherman could not hide among the group at the Jerusalem court. He stood out from the crowd. A slave girl quickly noticed him. This man had been with Jesus. Without thinking, Peter went into a defensive mode. Peter had denied Jesus, but what he had done did not sink in. He had successfully defended his right to enjoy the warmth of the campfire. Another passerby noticed Peter. Peter again moved away from Jesus and joined the crowd more intimately. A defensive reaction changed his identity without him being aware of the immensity of what he had said and done.

An hour passed, still the devil's hour. Another face in the crowd spoke up, recognizing the Galilean accent. Peter was completely distant from Jesus. He had denied three times any knowledge of or relationship to the man. He now belonged to the crowd and to the devil. Satan had sifted him and found him wanting. A rooster's crow, not a human voice, made Peter realize what he had done. Reinforcement came in one glance from Jesus. Jesus' words stabbed their way into Peter's memory: "Before the rooster crows today, you will deny me three times."

22:62. The brashly self-confident man disappeared. Now he distanced himself from the crowd. Outside by himself, he wept bitter tears. Grief overwhelmed him. Follow Jesus to prison and to death? He could not even follow him to a mockery of a trial. The grief was as deep as Judas's later proved to be, but the response and subsequent actions would be quite different. Guilt led Judas to suicide. It led Peter to Pentecost.

ROMANS 12:19

The clear command is, Do not repay anyone evil for evil— whether a fellow believer or an unbeliever outside the church. There are at least two reasons for not taking revenge into one's own hand. First, it puts an individual, a part of the creation, in the place of judge over another part of creation. God has made it abundantly clear in Scripture, as Paul attests with his quote of Deuteronomy 32:35, that it is his prerogative and responsibility to avenge sin— and that he will do it (Eccl. 12:14).

The second reason not to seek revenge is that it could bring disrepute and harm to the cause of the gospel. When Paul told Timothy to lead the church in Ephesus in prayers for "kings and all those in authority," it was so that those same

subjects of prayer would not bring trouble to the church; so that believers could live "peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness" (1 Tim. 2:2). Since "God... wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim. 2:3-4), any disruption of a quiet and peaceful society would hinder the spread of the gospel.

JOHN 21:15-19

21:15-19. Following their breakfast meal on the shores of the Sea of Tiberias, Jesus turned to Peter and asked a series of questions related to Peter's devotion. The first word for love, used in Jesus' first two questions, refers to a love that involves the will and personality. The second kind of love, indicated by the word for love used in the third question of Jesus, refers more to the emotions than to the will.

Regardless of whether or not much is to be made of these word distinctions, the key issue is that of love for Christ, and this Peter surely expressed. His earlier three denials are here answered in three affirmations of love and service. Jesus clearly wanted love for Him to include both will and emotions, demonstrated in a life of discipleship and devotion to the church.

Then Jesus forecast the kind of death Peter would die in order to glorify God. The early church understood the "stretching out of hands" mentioned here to mean crucifixion. Tradition understands the death of Peter to have been by upside-down crucifixion.