

## Life of Jesus

### Session 10: The Power to Destroy

Here in the West, Jesus is a familiar figure to Christians, dominating Sunday School lessons and sermons since our earliest memories. Yet, removed as we are by 2,000 years since he walked the earth, He remains somewhat mysterious. Why did He come? What did He teach? What was He really like? We will be exploring the Life of Jesus in 21 sessions; the first 14 will focus on Jesus' life and ministry in the 1<sup>st</sup> Century and will end around Easter. The last 7 will focus on Jesus' life and ministry in our own century and will take us through the month of May. Let's experience the Life of Jesus together!

**Deep Hope:** May we, together, (re-) fall in Love with the Messiah as we understand, imitate, and experience the Life of Jesus.

#### PART I: Review

1. 1<sup>st</sup> Century Jews were living in the Promised Land, but under Roman Rule.
2. Many believed that Messiah would free Israel and reinstate God's kingdom on earth.
3. Jesus announced (and proved with miracles!) that the Kingdom was at hand—not an after-death reality, but rather God's rule breaking into our reality.
4. Jesus' miracles show what God's kingdom looks like, and the Sermon on the Mount and Jesus' parables tell what it is like!
5. Jesus loved those at the margins of His society—spending time with the sick and the sinners.
6. Jesus' disciples imitated Jesus' ministry in both preaching and miracles.
7. On the Mount of Transfiguration, Jesus was revealed as the climax of God's story—three disciples caught a glimpse of kingdom past, present, and future.

#### PART II: The Power to Destroy

1. The 1<sup>st</sup> Century world of Jesus had \_\_\_\_\_ major power structures.
2. Rome had a "peace" that came at the cost of slavery, coercion, and oppression.
3. Herod ruled as a \_\_\_\_\_ king for Rome.
4. His family was messed up. The Herod dynasty continued for generations.
5. The Jews were governed by a religious body of 70 elders called the \_\_\_\_\_.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ ruled this body as high priest(s).
7. All this authority ruled through the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_.

8. Behind these power structures lurked \_\_\_\_\_ and the forces of darkness, which Jesus spent his life confronting. He is headed for a showdown at his death.
9. Mary anointed Jesus' feet with expensive perfume and wiped them with her hair. She was \_\_\_\_\_ Jesus as King. But Jesus said her act prepared him for \_\_\_\_\_.
10. The power Jesus came to destroy was the power of \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_. The power he used to do it was \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_.

### **Part III: Small Group Discussion Questions:**

1. What do you remember from the Gospels about Rome/Herod/High Priest? What stands out about these institutions/figures in your mind?
2. Why did Rome call their empire "peaceful?" Was it real peace?
3. What made Herod (and his descendants) so afraid and paranoid?
4. You could read again the story of Mary anointing Jesus in Matthew 26, Mark 14, and John 12. Why is Mary's anointing of Jesus so special? Why does Jesus say it will be told alongside the Gospel forever?
5. The disciples don't appreciate the waste of money on Jesus. Can you sympathize?
6. The worshipful act of Mary, interpreted by Jesus to be about his death, sends Judas over the edge and the next story is about his agreement to betray Jesus. Why does this event, do you think, act as a tipping point for him?
7. We've been talking a lot about Jesus' Kingdom. This story sets Jesus and His kingdom against the kingdoms of the world, which are pictured as empowered by the devil. What are some major differences between these two kingdoms?

### **Part IV: Gospel Reading: The Destruction of the Temple**

The final week of Jesus' life has some dramatic stories, but the most dramatic has to be Jesus clearing the temple of money changers. Read about Jesus' drastic action in John 2 OR Matthew 21:12-13 or Mark 11:15-17 or Luke 19:45-46! Then, take a look at Mark 13 to see what Jesus says will happen to this temple very soon. What is up with all this talk about the temple?! Does Jesus love it or hate it?

**Prayer:** *"Father, we need you. May you disenchant us with worldly gain, worldly power, and worldly perspectives. Re-enchanted us with the sacrificial Way of love that Jesus so clearly showed us. May we be drawn to reverence a suffering Savior as well as celebrate a resurrected one. Take away from us this fear of suffering and death and instill in us the hope of Resurrection. Amen."*