



SESSION **4**

Good Friday



MEETING AIM

To explore the events leading up to the crucifixion, and specifically how Judas and Peter responded; and what implications that has for us.



BIBLE PASSAGE

John 18–19



BACKGROUND

There are various aspects you could explore in this passage, so don't feel you have to explain or cover everything. Allow the young people to delve into and discover new aspects they haven't previously considered, but don't assume they are all familiar with the story. Go with your group on a brand new journey in the passage. Don't fall into the trap of walking the same old worn, clichéd paths! Can you get this generation excited about the crucifixion story in a fresh way?

➤ GATHERING TIME



Welcome the young people to the group by name and share any refreshments you have prepared. As you eat and drink, chat together about the past week. If you are doing this session at Easter, they may have been on holiday, so chat about the different things they've been doing. Has everything gone to plan or have some things been a disappointment?

➤ INTRO ACTIVITY



You will need: a pack of cards

Count out enough cards for each person to have one, including the ace of clubs. Invite everyone to take a card and look at it (without showing anyone else). Set the scene as follows. You are all in the high priest's courtyard and Jesus has just been arrested. The person holding the ace of clubs is 'Peter', who is denying that he was with Jesus. The rest of you are trying to work out who is Peter!

Peter must lie, trick, bluff, stay silent or use any other tactics to not give away that he / she has that card. Give everyone a couple of minutes to discuss what happened and what clues they have.

Then give the group three guesses at who Peter is.

When the game is over, you could ask them how it felt to deny Jesus. It's meant to be tongue in cheek, of course, but it could actually be an emotional insight into the passage for them. If they like it, you could play again and use a different card to represent Peter.

➤ BIBLE EXPLORATION



You will need: large sheets of paper or card; felt-tip pens; paper; pens

Tell the young people there are six main locations in today's passage (the garden, the high priest's courtyard, inside the high priest's house, Pilate's headquarters, Golgotha and the tomb). Split them into six teams and assign a location to each. Ask them to design a sign for their location and, when they are done, to stick them to the walls around the room. As they are working, read out John 18 and 19.

Staying in their teams at each location, they should complete the following tasks:

- Look at the passage to find out what happened at their location and list the main events on a sheet of paper.
- Come up with a statue-like freeze-frame scene involving the whole team that gives some idea of the most important thing going on there. This will be displayed to the rest of the group later.
- Discuss the main questions (not the answers) that occur to them as they discuss the story and look at the passage. For example: "Why was Simon Peter carrying a sword in the garden?" or "Was Pilate brave or a coward?" They should write one or two main questions in big letters at the top of another sheet of paper and stick it to the wall next to their sign.

➤ CHATTING TOGETHER



As a group, walk round each of the locations in the room and read the appropriate part of the story (visiting the high priest's courtyard twice). At each location, ask the group to:

- Display the freeze-frame pose.
- Give a quick overview of their thoughts on what was going on.
- Present the questions they wrote on the big piece of paper. The rest of the group should then be invited to help

answer these questions and discuss this part of the story.

➤ CREATIVE RESPONSE



You will need: a pack of cards; marker pens

Have a short discussion about how we might turn our backs on Jesus (like Judas) or be tempted to deny him (like Peter) in our own lives.

Give out a playing card to each person and ask them to write their first name across the face of it. Which disciple does this card represent for them? Do they feel they are struggling with their faith or disillusioned about aspects of it? Or do they feel they are rash, judgmental or overenthusiastic at times?

Ask rhetorical questions like: "At school, do you avoid the subject of being a Christian?", "What are the pressures on your faith?" and "What fears do you have about living boldly for Jesus?"

Say that, by putting their names on the cards, they are disciples of Jesus in just the same way the original twelve were. Being a disciple involves lots of highs as well as lows. Encourage them to explore both.

Get them into pairs to discuss how they feel and their answers to some of those questions for a few minutes. Ask them to swap cards with each other and commit to praying for one another this week.

➤ PRAYER



Remind them that we can all know Jesus' love and forgiveness. Because of the cross, we can all be free from condemnation, fear and guilt. We can happily press on, trying again when we slip up and growing in boldness to be good witnesses with his help.

Be silent together for a moment. As they look at the name on their card, ask them to pray for that person now, and to keep it safe so that each time they see the card during the week they can continue that prayer.

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