

THE BYSTANDERS

Matthew 27:15-26

In the Gospel accounts, the bystanders and crowds first flock to Jesus, eager to be healed and to hear the teaching of this one who may be the Messiah. By the end of the story however, the bystanders and crowds play a different role. They jeer at Jesus. They chant “crucify him” at the urging of the chief priests. The story raises powerful questions for our lives of faith: Is there such a thing as an innocent bystander? Will we stand for what is right when everyone else is calling for violence or retribution?

☐ **Monday: Read Matthew 27:15-18.**

When have you felt pressured to go along with the majority, even when you knew it wasn’t right?

☐ **Tuesday: Read Matthew 27:19.**

How do voices of influence shape your faith?
How can you be sure you're listening to God's truth?

☐ **Wednesday: Read Matthew 27:20.**

Who has the loudest voice in your life?
How can you discern when you’re being influenced away from Christ?

☐ **Thursday: Read Matthew 27:21-23.**

Have you ever gone along with something you knew was wrong?
What helps you stand firm in faith?

☐ **Friday: Read Matthew 27:24.**

Is there such a thing as an "innocent bystander"?
Where in your life might Jesus be calling you to take a stand?

☐ **Saturday: Read Matthew 27:25-26.**

How does the crowd’s choice to crucify Jesus reflect the human tendency to reject God’s way? What choices keep you on the way of Jesus?

The famous hymn says, “Were you there when they crucified my Lord?” The story invites us to ask, “If you were there, what would you have thought, and said, and done?”

Do you follow Jesus, or do you follow the crowd?

Prayer for the Week:

Jesus, you stood all alone before Pilate. No one spoke up for you. No one defended you. You devoted your life to helping others, yet they turned away. Lord, when I am tempted to remain silent in the face of injustice, give me courage to stand with you. Help me to live for you, even when it costs me something. Amen.