

JESUS INVESTIGATING

HOW WE KNOW.
WHY WE FOLLOW.

INVESTIGATING JESUS | PART 6

What happened at the end of Luke's account of the life of Jesus made sense of, and created context for, everything that happened during Jesus's time on earth.

CONNECT

As a group, read **Luke 23:13–32**.

LEARN

You will watch a shortened version of a message from this series to set up your group discussion. Encourage your group members to watch the full message sometime this week to remind them of what you talked about.

APPLY

After giving your group members an opportunity to share what stood out from the video, discuss the following questions as a group:

1. When was the last time you reflected on Jesus's crucifixion? What emotions does it evoke?
2. When talking about **Luke 9:23**, Andy said, "To take up a cross was to signify my independence, me living life the way I want to live and calling my own shots—has come to an end." How does our desire for independence make following Jesus difficult?
3. Read **Luke 9:24–25** aloud. What key words stand out to you? Would you say your faith is costing you anything presently? If so, what? If not, should it be?
4. Followers of Jesus follow his example and forgive even when forgiveness seems impossible. On June 17, 2015, there was a shooting at Emanuel AME Church in South Carolina. Anthony Thompson's wife, Myra, was murdered in the shooting and 48 hours later, he spoke at a bond hearing. Here is how he described what was going on in his heart and mind leading up to the hearing in an interview with Bible Gateway:

I did not want to go to that bond hearing, but my children wanted to go, and they would not go unless I did. So I went for them. I told them "Keep your mouths closed. Don't say anything." When we got there I sat with my head down. I wanted it to be over with so I could go back home. Then God intervened. He whispered in my ear, "I have something to say."



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Without a shadow of a doubt I knew that it was the voice of God. It was the same whispering voice I heard at the age of seven that told me I'd be a preacher. So I got up immediately and listened to what God had to say. He said to Dylann, "Son, I forgive you and my family forgives you. But we would like you to take this opportunity to repent! Repent and confess, and give your life to the One who matters the most: Christ! So that he can change it and change your ways. And no matter what happens to you, you will be okay. Do that, and you will be better off than you are right now."

*After I did that, I experienced God's love! I experienced peace! For the first time, I knew and understood what it meant and felt like to experience the "peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:7). God's love freed my heart, soul, and body of the burden of bitterness and anger. God healed me from the inside out. He took away all my burdens and granted me his peace!**

What emotions does this story evoke? Why?

FOR NEXT TIME

We all fall short in at least one area of our lives. While we and those around us need grace, we can't neglect that hypocrisy is a big reason Christianity is not taken seriously by those outside the faith. This week, think about one way that you're currently being hypocritical. With the help of God and the people in your group, how could you change that?

Take some time to read **Luke 21–24** in preparation for Part 7.

PRAY

Use Andy's prayer as a guide:

Heavenly father, we so want to get this right. So wherever this lands with us, whether it's a relationship, the way we're managing our time, our money, what we're doing, what we're not doing, the way we're treating people, hanging on to some silly grudge, refusing to forgive, wherever this lands with us, would you just break through in this moment and just give us the courage to hold up our hands even physically or symbolically and just say I surrender. I pray that we would daily, every single day, declare our non-independence, our dependence on our king. And thank you that the invitation stands and you stand there as you did the afternoon you hung there with your arms wide open. In Jesus' name, amen.

*Jonathan Petersen, "Forgiving the Killer of the Charleston Church Shooting: An Interview with Rev. Anthony B. Thompson," Bible Gateway Blog, June 13, 2019, <https://www.biblegateway.com/blog/2019/06/forgiving-the-killer-of-the-charleston-church-shooting-an-interview-with-rev-anthony-b-thompson/>.

