



## Questions from Jesus' Final Week

### Is It I, Lord?

*Matthew 26:17-25 | February 25, 2018*

**Introduction:** Likely, at some point in your life, you have been at a holiday dinner with family and friends when someone names the elephant in the room. It is most awkward and unavoidable when the host is the one pulling the curtain back.

It is the beginning of the feast of the Unleavened Bread. This is Israel's biggest holiday. Jesus and his disciples are reclining at table when Jesus decides to raise the issue of his impending passion and death. What's more, he knows his disciple-soon-to-turn-betrayer is at the table.

"Truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me," says Jesus.

And one by one the disciples soberly answer, "Is it I, Lord?" Interesting. The disciples don't deny the possibility of a traitor among them. And their question, "Is it I, Lord?" implies that they each know they are capable of such a betrayal. Here we see, yes, the tragedy of Judas' betrayal, but we also see the beginnings of faith—an honest assessment of the capacity to do and be evil. Without a sense of our essential sinful nature, the person and work of Jesus is reduced from the necessary...to the merely useful...to the inconsequential.

**Pray:** Lord Jesus, thank you for being Truth. And thank you, Jesus, for speaking truth into our lives. We acknowledge that we are complicit in the evil in our world, if not by what we've done, then by what we have left undone. It *is* I, Lord who has betrayed you. Given this betrayal and in light of the heavenly host you could call to your side, it is unexplainable that you still went to the cross. We gave you no reason to die for us. We are unworthy. Yet you loved us until the end. Teach us to see ourselves honestly, to serve you more faithfully, and ignite our hearts to love you. Amen.

**Read:** Matthew 26:17-25

#### **Discussion:**

1. What arrangements has Jesus made for the Passover meal?
2. How does Jesus associate himself with the actions of the meal?
3. Which predictions of this passage are hopeful?
4. To what extent are you anticipating communion in the Father's kingdom?
5. How does Judas answer Jesus differently than the other disciples?
6. Where do you see yourself in this passage?
7. The disciples recognize their complicity—or at least the possibility of it—in Jesus' betrayal. How might we be complicit in the forces that oppose the will of God today?

**Study Guide Continued on Following Page**



## Questions from Jesus' Final Week

### Is It I, Lord?

*Matthew 26:17-25 | February 25, 2018*

#### Discussion, continued:

8. It is common to wonder why Judas betrayed Jesus. But it might be good for us to spend time asking why the other disciples held back?
9. How might we take a lesson from Jesus when it comes to speaking hard truths? Speaking truth well implies relationships strong enough to sustain that kind of conversation. How do we form these kinds of holy friendships? What does it mean to be known and not known?

**Application:** This week think about how you can begin to speak as truthfully about the hard things in our world. Start by speaking that truth to yourself. Where might I need to examine my fidelity to Jesus? A Scotsman once said, "You're only really poor if you can't offer hospitality." Consider what it looks like to practice hospitality in your home, apartment, life.... How might it lead to deeper friendships, where Jesus is invited to be present, and where truth is spoken in love?

**Pray:** Eternal God, you never fail to give us each day all that we ever need, and even more. Give us such joy in living and such peace in serving Christ that we may gratefully make use of all your blessings, and joyfully seek our risen Lord in everyone we meet. In Jesus Christ, the Servant King, we pray. Amen.