

## Study Guide

Series: Who is This Jesus?

“The Enemies of Jesus”

**Monday** – Read Luke 18:31-19:10. “We are going up to Jerusalem,” Jesus said at the start of this passage and he was getting close. These stories happened in Jericho. Jesus kept healing and reaching out to tax collectors with great results. When Jesus asked the blind man, “What do you want me to do for you?” (18:41) it was not that hard for the man to identify the need he felt. If Jesus had asked wealthy, healthy Zacchaeus the same question, what do you think he might have answered? Imagine Jesus asking you that question. What answer(s) do you give? Luke 18:34 reminds us that after three years the disciples still didn’t “get” Jesus’ words about dying and rising. 19:8 suggests that in one day Zacchaeus’ values and actions changed radically. Has God ever changed any part of your life dramatically or quickly? In what areas are you patiently struggling to grow, even with God’s help?

**Tuesday** - Read Luke 19:11-40. Usually we can only wonder where Jesus got the idea for a parable. But verses 11-27 echo an actual event. Just a few years earlier, a group of Jews went to Rome to ask the emperor not to make Herod’s son Archelaus their king. (They failed.) When Jesus entered Jerusalem, he chose symbols that echoed prophecy and made a clear claim to kingship. Zechariah 9:9-10 said a righteous king would ride on a donkey’s colt, bringing Jerusalem salvation and peace. How does Luke point to the fact that Jesus planned his entrance into Jerusalem to fulfill that prophecy? In verses 37-39, who sang and praised Jesus? Who did his entrance into the holy city displease? Some of the grim details of the parable in 11-27 reflect the ruthlessness of Herod’s family. But the story’s focus is on the three servants who effectively used (or, in one case, did not use) what the king entrusted to them. What talents and resources do you have? How are you putting them to work for God’s Kingdom?

**Wednesday** – Read Luke 19:41-20:19. From the Mount of Olives, Jesus saw Jerusalem laid out before him. Jesus’ tears tell us he loved the city’s people. But their heedless leaders did not love him. As they plotted his death, Jesus told a story that exposed the murder in their hearts. With tears in his eyes, Jesus said to Jerusalem, “If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace” (19:42). Are you more open to God’s offer of peace than the leaders of Old Jerusalem were? How do you define peace? What steps are you taking to make God’s peace real in your life? 19:47 and 20:19 show the hatred toward Jesus during his last week. Jesus’ vineyard story drew on a beloved Scripture (Isaiah 5:1-7), which said Israel was God’s vineyard. We, like the Jerusalem leaders, can have blind spots. What is God’s spirit nudging you to face honestly in your life? Do you have the courage to do it?

**Thursday** - Read Luke 20:20-40. Jesus’ enemies tried urgently to create a cause for his death. If they could get him to criticize paying Roman taxes, they’d have a reason to accuse him as a revolutionary. That didn’t work, so the Sadducees tried to get him to agree with them that faith in a resurrection was absurd. Little did they realize how personal that issue was for Jesus. Imagine taxes creating controversy! Taxes paid to a foreign power like Rome were even more divisive than our country’s budget debates. How did Jesus’ reply avoid the trap of “either-or” thinking? Can you be a reliable earthly citizen while holding to your highest loyalty to God? Have you ever had to choose between those loyalties? Neither the Sadducees’ question nor Jesus’ answer was mainly about marriage in heaven. The Sadducees chose that subject to mock the idea of resurrection. What made absolute trust that death need not be the end crucial for Jesus? Do you share his confidence? If so, how can it make your day-to-day life better?

**Friday** – Read Luke 20:41-21:4. When people called the Messiah “the Son of David,” they thought he would be a warrior like King David, who expanded Israel’s military power. Jesus used Psalm 110:1 to say, “No, the Messiah is also David’s Lord.” His mission was not to be just like David. For him, greatness lay not in earthly rank, but in people like the humble widow, whose tiny gift only he noted. Jesus described pious frauds in verses 46-47: “In flowing robes...love to be greeted with respect...most important seats...places of honor...devour widows’ houses...for show make lengthy prayers.” Why do such people often gain honor, even if we “see through them”? What inner choices do you need to make to avoid being like that? Jesus’ question about the Messiah as the “son of David” was not just hairsplitting over a technicality. It asked whether he as

God's anointed one should follow God's agenda, or human expectations. Who or what shapes your ideas of greatness? How can you see people like the widow in the Temple as God sees them?