

PEOPLE OF  
THE PASSION

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS  
WEEK 1

1. Who was Caiaphas? What was the importance of the high priest in Israel? According to Pastor Rick, what was Caiaphas' interest in Jesus? Why did the Sanhedrin condemn Jesus, who was their Messiah promised throughout the Old Testament?

**Answer** – Caiaphas was the High Priest of Israel during the 3 years of Jesus' ministry. The High Priest was the religious and political ruler of Israel underneath the rule of Rome and he was the leader of the Sanhedrin that was also the religious and political ruling body of Israel. They were supposed to be God's intermediaries with the people of Israel. The High Priest was the one person who could enter the Holy of Holies in the temple once a year to offer a sin sacrifice for the people on what became known as the Day of Atonement. The Sanhedrin had become overly concerned with the political power they had which kept them from being the religious leaders they should have been. This was true to the point where Caiaphas and many of the Sanhedrin were more concerned with losing their political authority to Jesus than they were with him being the Messiah. That is why they voted to condemn him.

2. When people say that they do not like Christians or Christianity because there are too many hypocrites in the church, what can you say? Do you think this is a legitimate criticism? Why?

**Answer** – They are correct when they say that the church is full of hypocrites, but the truth is that everyone is a hypocrite to some degree or another. As Christians, we are called to be holy as God is holy (1 Peter 1:15,16). Since that is what we are supposed to be, it is impossible to claim that you are a Christian and not be a hypocrite. In essence, we are called to be perfect as God is perfect and there is no way we can measure up to that standard, so we will be hypocrites. Zig Ziglar had it right when he said about people who use this excuse, "I don't go to church because there are so many hypocrites there... Go anyway, there's always room for one more." The problem that we create as Christians is when we judge and condemn people for what they do wrong and then we ourselves do not live up to what we claim to believe. That is when people see our hypocrisy and are turned off by it.

3. Pastor Rick shared that even though we are all hypocrites to some degree, there is a way that we can keep that hypocrisy from turning people off to Christianity. What was it? Why is this so hard to do for many people?

**Answer** - The way is to be honest and transparent about who we are and the mistakes that we make.

PEOPLE OF  
THE PASSION

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS  
WEEK 1

3. Pastor Rick shared that even though we are all hypocrites to some degree, there is a way that we can keep that hypocrisy from turning people off to Christianity. What was it? Why is this so hard to do for many people?

**Answer -** The way is to be honest and transparent about who we are and the mistakes that we make.

4. If a Christian that you know said, "I do not want to let anyone know I am a Christian because I do not want them to call me a hypocrite." what advice would you give them?

