

sermon discussion/exercise guide

- ... they ... nailed him to the cross ... *Matthew 27.35*^{NLT}
 - I demand in the name of the living God — tell us if you are the Messiah, the Son of God. *Matthew 26.63*^{NLT}
 - ... this is all happening to fulfill the words of the prophets as recorded in the Scriptures. *Matthew 26.56*^{NLT}
 - This man truly was the Son of God! *Matthew 27.54*^{NLT}
1. Your preacher has a pile of rocks in his yard that helps his mind's eye. Do you have a *physical/visual reminder* to you of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ?
 2. Have you ever had a serious battle *with yourself* revolving around disillusionment with God and his way(s)? If so, tell us about that experience. What helped? What didn't? (27.35)
 3. How can you *help* someone struggling with *disillusionment* with, or confusion/frustration over, God? (27.35)
 4. Why do we “*demand*” God fit our agenda, expectations, etc.? (26.63)
 5. The high priest Caiphas demands that *the* high priest (Jesus) tell him plainly who he is. The *irony* is huge! Can you identify a time in *your life* when God was doing something profoundly plain to/with you, but you simply couldn't/wouldn't see it at the time? (26.63)
 6. In effect, Jesus said his life was Scripture writ large. How is our constantly returning to, re-examining, and reflecting on *Scripture* crucial to the outcome of our battle with dissonance and disillusionment? (26.56)
 7. Scripture does *not* give us pat answers, a list of a seven rules to check off, or a systematized set of explanations. Instead, it gives us a *story*. Why? (26.56)
 8. Ultimately, it all comes down to *faith*. What sort of *good soil* is required in a heart in order for faith to grow? (27.54)
 9. What can *you* share and/or do to *help* the faith of *others* remain and increase, despite irony, troubles, and disillusionment? (27.54)
 10. God often shows up before us in *unexpected* ways. *Why* is that?