

## What did Jesus look like? | Matthew 26:47-49 Sermon Discussion Participant Guide

**Purpose of Discussion:** To take steps towards representing Jesus more truthfully both to ourselves and our culture.

**Icebreaker:** What are a couple of your favorite Halloween memories?

**Introduction:** Halloween can be a fun time to dress up or make ourselves up to look like whatever we want. But when it comes to Jesus, it is important that we don't make him up to look like whatever we want. It is crucial that we think carefully and biblically about who he is and represent him truthfully to the world because our faith is based on the historical person of Jesus of Nazareth.

### Discussion:

1. When you imagine Jesus, what do you picture in your mind? What mental image or visual representation of Jesus do you have? Where did you learn it from?
2. What did you learn from this sermon about how we ended up with a white Jesus for the most part in our culture? What did you find interesting?
3. Read Matthew 26:47-49 out loud together.

Matthew 26:47-49 – <sup>47</sup> While he was still speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, arrived. With him was a large crowd armed with swords and clubs, sent from the chief priests and the elders of the people. <sup>48</sup> Now the betrayer had arranged a signal with them: “The one I kiss is the man; arrest him.” <sup>49</sup> Going at once to Jesus, Judas said, “Greetings, Rabbi!” and kissed him.

Jesus was not recognizable. The crowd had to have a signal from Judas because Jesus looked like everyone else. What does that teach us about what Jesus looked like?

4. How could imagining Jesus as a white person go wrong? How does realizing that you love and worship Jesus, a man of color, change the way you think about Jesus and your faith?

5. Read Romans 12:2. According to Paul, why is it important that our minds be renewed according to truth? What implications does this principle have on our discussion of what Jesus looks like?

Romans 12:2 – Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

6. What are some ways that misrepresentations of Jesus have caused misunderstandings of Jesus, hurt people, and hurt the cause of Jesus in this world?
7. When we misrepresent Jesus to our own minds or to others, the Bible calls us to repent. In this case, to repent is to turn away from false images and false ways of representing Jesus to a truthful image and to truthful ways of representing Jesus. What are some specific ways we might need to repent? How would having a truthful image of Jesus change the way you think about and treat people who are different than you?

### Sharing and Prayer:

Revelation 5:9 is an amazing statement about Jesus. Read it out loud together.

Revelation 5:9

“You are worthy to take the scroll  
and to open its seals,  
because you were slain,  
and with your blood you purchased for God  
persons from every tribe and language and people and nation.”

Jesus loves all people and died for people of all tribes, tongues, and nations to be brought into his kingdom. In an age of division and strife, this is such good news.

Take a few moments for whoever wants to pray in your group to pray about these points:

- Praise Jesus for the good news that he is gathering a multiracial, multilingual, multinational church.
- Confess any ways that you have had a wrong mental image of Jesus or represented him wrongly to others.
- Pray for the unity of Jesus’ church and for the racial healing of our society.

Now take a few minutes to ask others what is going on in their lives that needs prayer and pray for each other.