

# III CONDEMNATION

...and they brought him to the council...  
WHAT FURTHER TESTIMONY DO WE NEED?

WE ADORE YOU, O CHRIST, & WE BLESS YOU BECAUSE BY YOUR HOLY CROSS

# IV DENIAL

I DO NOT KNOW YOU OR THE MAN YOU ARE TALKING ABOUT.

I DO NOT KNOW THE MAN.

I DO NOT KNOW THE MAN!

YOU HAVE FETTERED THE WORLD, LORD JESUS, HELP US WALK IN YOUR STEPS.

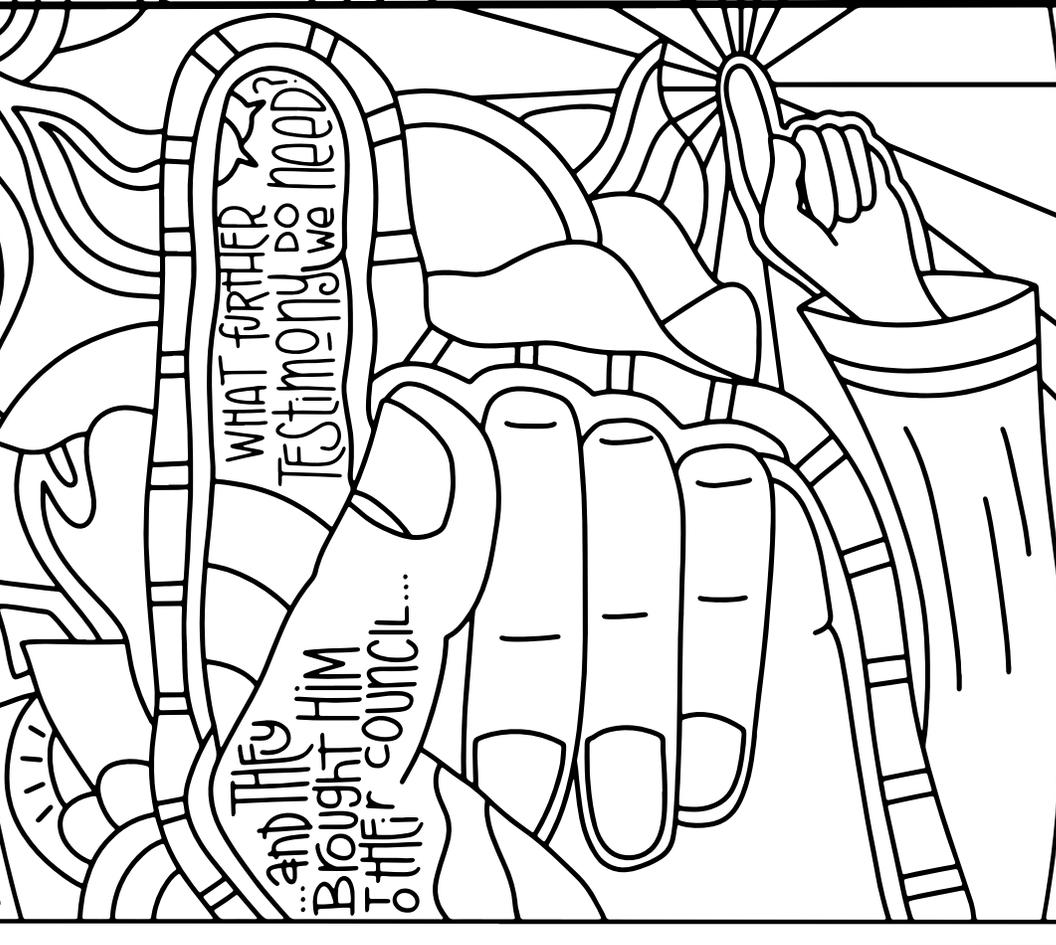
## STATION III: CONDEMNATION

Jesus is Condemned by the Sanhedrin: Luke 22:66-71

## STATION IV: DENIAL

Jesus is Denied by Peter: Matthew 26:69-75

# III CONDEMNATION



WE adore you, O Christ, & WE BLESS you BECAUSE BY YOUR HOLY CROSS

# IV DENIAL



YOU HAVE REDEEMED THE WORLD. LORD JESUS, HELP US WALK IN YOUR STEPS.

## STATION III: CONDEMNATION

Jesus is Condemned by the Sanhedrin: Luke 22:66-71

## STATION IV: DENIAL

Jesus is Denied by Peter: Matthew 26:69-75



## Station III: CONDEMNATION

Jesus is Condemned by the Sanhedrin

### SCRIPTURE

Take some time to read and reflect on this week's passage: Luke 22:66-71.

### REFLECTION FOR ADULTS

Davontae Sanford was only 14 years old when his life changed forever. While standing in his pajamas in his front yard, police arrested him for a quadruple homicide. He was taken to the police station, interrogated for 24 hours, and denied the right to see his parents or have an attorney present. Under the strain of those circumstances he confessed to the murders, was tried as an adult, and sentenced to 39 to 92 years in prison. The problem? Davontae did not commit the murders. Another man came forward and confessed. But the state would not relent. Thanks to the advocacy of the Center on Wrongful Convictions at Northwestern University, Davontae Sanford was exonerated in 2016, after serving nine years.<sup>1</sup>

According to the *National Registry of Exonerations*, since 1989 in the United States there have been 1,966 innocent people exonerated for crimes they never committed. For many of them their only "crime" is their poverty or race. They are simply unable to afford exceptional legal representation. And because of the color of their skin, many juries sadly find it difficult to believe they did not commit the crime. So they are quick to condemn.

As we arrive at this third station with Jesus, it is worth remembering that it was not "evil" people who condemned him. The people who passed false judgment were the "good" ones, the religious leaders, the ones who knew the law. Yet, in one of the saddest mockeries of justice in history, they sentenced Jesus to death. But not before they asked him this question: "Are you...the Son of God" (Luke 22:70)? Then, even after Jesus answered in the affirmative, they condemned the Son of God to death. How many people could be saved from wrongful

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<sup>1</sup> "Davontae Sanford." Davontae Sanford, Center on Wrongful Convictions: Bluhm Legal Clinic, Northwestern Pritzker School of Law. Web. 18 Feb. 2017.

condemnation in our own courts of law if we simply acknowledged this truth: like Jesus, we are *all* sons and daughters of God!

At some point in our lives, most of us have heard this proverb: when you point a finger at someone, there are three more pointing back at you. Take a look at the picture you are coloring. Notice all the fingers. Who are they pointing at? Are they your fingers?

## REFLECTION FOR CHILDREN

After Jesus was arrested, he was taken to the Roman governor, a man named Pontius Pilate. When the people brought Jesus to Pilate, they said all kinds of unkind things about him. Pilate asked Jesus if he was really the "Son of God." Jesus said, "Yes, I am." But Pilate did not believe Jesus. Instead, he decided to believe the unkind and untrue things the people said about Jesus. And so he sentenced Jesus to die on the cross.

## DISCUSSION WITH CHILDREN

- Have you ever said something untrue or unkind about a person just because they weren't like you?
- What would you do if you heard someone saying something untrue or unkind about your friend?

## GOING DEEPER

- When have you been guilty of condemning someone based on false externals?
- Have you ever hid behind the veneer of your own religious beliefs in an attempt to justify your prejudice?



## Station IV: DENIAL

Jesus is Denied by Peter

### SCRIPTURE

*Take some time to read and reflect on this week's passage: Matthew 26:69-75.*

### REFLECTION FOR ADULTS

In the autumn of 1934, the Detroit Tigers were in the middle of their first pennant race in 25 years. Hank Greenberg was one of the team's first baseman, and one of the greatest sluggers of all time, with a batting average of .339. The Tigers needed him in their game against the New York Yankees. But Greenberg, a Jewish-American, was torn about whether he should play the game that day. It was September 1...Yom Kippur. After consulting with his rabbi and family, Greenberg made the decision to not play. With American anti-Semitism on the rise, Greenberg's decision was not popular. Fans shouted, "Rosh Hashanah comes every year but the Tigers haven't won the pennant since 1909!" But Greenberg remained true to his convictions, attending synagogue services that day, rather than denying his faith by playing a game of baseball on the Day of Atonement, the holiest day of the Jewish year.<sup>2</sup>

It is not always easy to be true to our religious convictions when forces from all sides are asking us to deny the very things that give us life. Peter found this out in the courtyard as he watched Jesus being led away to trial. Just weeks before, Peter had mustered up the courage to profess that Jesus was "the Messiah, the Son of the living God" (Matthew 13:15). But now, when questioned, he denied he even knew his friend and Savior. Who knows what would have happened if Peter had the courage of his convictions at that moment? Would the questioning servant-girl have come to believe in Jesus? Would Peter's testimony have been able to save Jesus from death?

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<sup>2</sup> Halberstam, David J. "While Koufax Is Rightly Lauded, Yom Kippur Example Set by Hank Greenberg." USA Today. Gannett Satellite Information Network, 17 Sept. 2015. Web. 18 Feb. 2017.

The Tigers lost to the Yankees that day. Who knows whether or not Hank Greenberg's decision to not play had anything to do with the results of the game? But what we do know is, in a small way, his decision to not deny his faith helped pave the way for a more tolerant baseball league and society.

Take a look at the picture you a coloring. Is the person with folded arms a defiant Peter? Or could it be a defiant Jesus, saying to us, "no matter how many times you deny me, I will always love you!"

## REFLECTION FOR CHILDREN

Peter was Jesus' closest friend, and the leader of the disciples. The night Jesus was arrested however, Peter was afraid for his own life and ran away from Jesus. Some people in the courtyard recognized him, and began to ask him if he was a disciple of Jesus. Peter got angry, and said that he had never even seen Jesus. He denied Jesus. Even though Peter denied Jesus three times that night, Jesus loved Peter very much. After Jesus rose from the dead, he forgave Peter for denying him.

## DISCUSSION WITH CHILDREN

- Have you ever told someone you weren't a Christian because you were embarrassed?
- Do you think there is anything you could do that would make Jesus stop loving you?

## GOING DEEPER

- Has there ever been a time that you have denied your faith, or your belief in Jesus, in order to fit in? Was it worth it?
- Have you ever experienced God's forgiveness after thinking you had done something that was unforgivable?