

The Passion of Jesus Christ

A Bible study from FocusOnTheFamily.com

Lesson two: Why did some people want to kill Jesus?

Read aloud:

Imagine you were so sick that your parents wanted to take you to the emergency room instead of to church. Unfortunately, they couldn't because it was against the law for doctors to work on Sundays.

Well, as strange as it seems to us today, when Jesus lived on earth, many activities were forbidden by Jewish law on the Sabbath – the day set aside to worship God. In fact, the ancient Jewish people lived under a different set of laws than we do today.

Jesus often got in trouble with a powerful group of religious leaders called Pharisees because Jesus broke their laws about how God's Sabbath should be observed.

Let's open the Bible and read three brief stories together out loud.

First, let's read Matthew 9:13. What did Jesus do that made the Pharisees very angry?
[Jesus forgave sins.]

Second, let's read Matthew 12:9-14. What did Jesus do that made the Pharisees angry again?
[Jesus healed a man's shriveled hand on the Sabbath.]

Third, let's read John 10:25-33. What did Jesus do that made the Pharisees so angry this time?
[Jesus said, "I and the Father are one."]

Each time, the Pharisees said that Jesus was committing blasphemy. Blasphemy means that Jesus was claiming to do things – forgive sins and heal people – that only God has the authority and power to do.

Blasphemy was a very serious crime. Usually, Jewish people would throw rocks at the guilty person until he died.

Talk about it:

1. Why did the Pharisees get so angry at Jesus?
2. Why do you think Jesus said and did things that only God should say or do?

Define these words:

Blasphemy – acting or speaking in a way that mocks God or claims to be him

Pharisees – legalistic Jewish religious leaders during the time of Jesus Christ

Sabbath – The Jewish holy day, which begins on Friday at sundown and lasts all day Saturday.

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