INCONSISTENCIES AND CONTRADICTIONS

Even the best advances toward Christ-centered liberty were often compromised by political pressure and personal bias. Many formerly oppressed Protestant leaders developed their own harsh policies toward dissenters, effectively becoming oppressors themselves.

Early on, Martin Luther envisioned the church to be a voluntary group of believers and was extremely distraught by people who wanted to forcibly remove idols from Catholic churches. However, when some of the German princes began supporting Lutheranism, Luther used the state’s power to deal with perceived religious threats like the Anabaptists. Though he had much in common with this group of believers, he viewed them as seditious and blasphemous, believing they should be banished from Germany or put to death. Both Lutherans and Catholics were responsible for many Anabaptists’ deaths in the following years. Luther’s teachings freed many, but Luther himself struggled to leave the methods and spirit of the age behind.

Anabaptists have always believed faith can only be voluntary and therefore supported adult baptism (not infant baptism) and separation of church and state—common teachings today that were quite radical at the time. Ironically, Anabaptists have applied Luther’s principles more faithfully than the Lutheran Church did. Today, we should examine our lives to guard against any inconsistencies and contradictions that might discredit our message. In this week’s lesson, we will discuss the cruelty a church-state alliance inflicted upon Jesus and how we can avoid embracing the methods that killed our Savior.
Write out Luke 23:1–43 from the translation of your choice. If you’re pressed for time, write out verses 1–5. You may also rewrite the passage in your own words, or outline or mind-map the passage.
Go back to your scribed text and study the passage.

**Circle** repeated words/ phrases/ideas

**Underline** words/phrases that are important and have meaning to you

Draw Arrows to connect words/ phrases to other associated or related words/phrases

What special insights do your marks seem overall to point to?

Memorize your favorite verse. Write it out multiple times to help with memorization.

How did the religious leaders succeed in gaining control over the secular power (Pilate) during Jesus’ trial?

In what ways did Pilate fail in his responsibilities as governor when he consented to Jesus’ death?

Read more at www.inversebible.org/RL06-3
After looking at your scribed and annotated text, what special insights do your marks overall seem to point to?

What questions emerge after studying this passage? What parts are difficult?

What other principles and conclusions do you find?

How does Jesus’ trial indicate what the persecutors will use against His disciples?

Read more at www.inversebible.org/RL06-4
What relationship do the following verses have with Luke 23:1–43?

Matthew 5:11–16
John 15:18—16:4
John 18:28—19:16
Acts 5:40–42
Acts 14:22
2 Timothy 3:10–15
Revelation 17:1–6

What other verses/promises come to mind with the primary passage?

Meditate on the primary passage again and look for where Jesus is.

How does true conversion affect the way a person views religious liberty?

How do you see Jesus differently or see Him again?

What is He saying to you personally through the text of the week?

Prayer Response:

Read more at
www.inversebible.org/RL06-6
Review the memory verse.
How does it apply to your life this week?

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After this week’s study of the passage, what are some personal applications you are convicted of in your life?

What are some practical applications you must make in your school, family, workplace, and church life?

Read more inSight from the Spirit of Prophecy at www.inversebible.org/RL06-7
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Share insights from this week’s memory verse and Bible study as well as any discoveries, observations, and questions with your Sabbath School class (or Bible study group). Consider these discussion questions with the rest of the group.

What are some of the dangers of blending church and state not mentioned in this lesson?

Why do you think Christians are so prone to becoming oppressors when we’ve had to fight so many oppressive situations?

How can studying the events leading to Jesus’ death prepare us for the coming challenges and persecution?

How can we experience the same kind of transformative encounter with Christ that Paul had? Do we have to wait for Jesus to show up, or is there something we can do?

How can we know Jesus is changing us if we never have an encounter like Paul’s? How can we avoid stagnating in our relationship with Him?

How can we have the same serenity and peace Jesus displayed amidst the total madness of His trial?