

Sermon for March 15/16, 2025  
"The Tension Builds" Pastor Aaron Buer



# SMALL GROUPS

Share Life | Pursue God | Invest In Others

## THREE THINGS TO KNOW

**DON'T MISS THIS. EASTER WEEKEND** is coming soon. Celebrate the resurrection and the hope we have in our risen Savior. Join us this Easter season as we journey from the cross to the empty tomb. Good Friday services provide opportunities to contemplate the depth of Jesus's sacrifice, while our Easter celebration services focus on the joy and hope of his resurrection. Who might God have you invite to join you? Learn more about our Easter Weekend services [HERE](#).

**GROUP VALUES.** As we continue our journey with **SPIRITUAL PRACTICES** this month, let's encourage one another in our spiritual growth. What practice has been most meaningful to you recently? If you haven't chosen a practice to focus on yet, which one might help you see Jesus more clearly during this Easter season?

**GROW AS A LEADER.** Spring is on the horizon, which means our **SPRING HUDDLE** is fast approaching! *Huddles* are an intentional time set aside for small group leaders to grow together. We talk about tools and provide space to learn how to use them. This month, we'll highlight two topics: spiritual practices and prayer. Join us for an intentional dive into what the practices are and how we can implement one of them, prayer, into our groups. Whether you are leading a couple's, men's or women's group, check in with your staff contact to make sure you have your Huddle on your calendar!

## SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE

Welcome to the first week of our new sermon series **THE FINAL HOURS**. This week, we begin to explore the building tension surrounding Jesus in his final days leading up to the crucifixion by examining a pivotal moment in Mark's Gospel.

### ICEBREAKER

What is the most suspenseful book or movie you have ever experienced?

### THIS WEEK'S TEXT

Have someone read [Mark 14:1-26](#) aloud.

What stands out to you about the various responses to Jesus throughout this passage?

What tensions or conflicts do you observe building throughout this passage?

What significance do you see in Jesus's words and actions during the Passover meal with his disciples?

### **THIS WEEK'S SERMON**

Pastor Aaron Buer began our sermon series, **THE FINAL HOURS**, by discussing the building tension in the final week of Jesus's life. As a group, recall some of the sermon's big ideas and main points.

How can unmet expectations about Jesus or what we think he should do create dangerous spaces in our spiritual lives?

How could the perspective that we follow Jesus to get where *he* is going, not where *we* are going, change how someone navigates disappointment in their faith journey?

The woman with the perfume was focused on what she could give to Jesus, while Judas was focused on what he could get. How does this contrast challenge or encourage your approach to following Christ?

When have you witnessed someone make a sacrifice or extravagant gesture that demonstrated they truly understood the worth of Jesus? How did others respond?

Consider a current tension in your life. If you could see Jesus more clearly, how would your perspective about that tension shift?

The woman with the perfume was the only one who truly heard Jesus when he spoke about his coming death. What practices can help us truly hear and follow Jesus rather than just fitting his words into our expectations?

Amid the mounting tension and coming betrayal, Jesus institutes the Lord's Supper, pointing to God's sovereign power at work in hard situations. How could remembering that God remains sovereign and works to accomplish his purposes affect your response to chaotic circumstances or mounting tension in your life this week?

### **WRAP UP**

This week, we discussed how seeing Jesus clearly gives us the perspective we need for whatever tension is building in our lives. What from this conversation or the sermon encouraged or challenged you the most, and why?