

THE LAST WEEK OF CHRIST

A DAILY DEVOTIONAL
FEBRUARY 22 - APRIL 6, 2023



LENT

ASH WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 22

Ash Wednesday is the first day of the Christian season of Lent. It gets its name from the practice of placing ashes on the foreheads of believers as a reminder of human mortality, and as a sign of mourning and repentance to God. Ashes were used in ancient times to express mourning and sorrow for sins.

"Then I turned to the Lord God to seek an answer by prayer and supplication with fasting and sackcloth and ashes."

Daniel 9:3

REPENT AND BELIEVE:

As his ministry began, "Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe the Gospel.'"

Mark 1:14-15

This message is as relevant now as it was back then. Today, on Ash Wednesday, as you look toward Easter rather than the traditional giving up of something for Lent, use this time to explore your faith and your role in the Kingdom of God here in Lucketts, and deepen your relationship with Christ.

Jesus, the Son of God, gave himself as a ransom **FOR YOU**, so that you may have an abundant life now and an eternal life in heaven.

Consider that which separates you from God and what hinders you from having a full life of faith in Jesus Christ. Seek God's help in removing these barriers. Ask for forgiveness. Praise the Lord for his grace. And express your gratitude.

Amen.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 23

WHAT IF ... ?

Imagine you only have one week left to live.
Really think about this ... seven days and then that's it.
No more time on the planet.

Who would you want to see?

What would you do?

What would you say?

The verses we will be looking at throughout this study will enable you to see how Jesus answered the questions above. You will read about who Jesus spent time with, what he did and what he said during his last week on earth as a human.

Remember this as you work through this booklet over the next six weeks. Nothing you read should be taken lightly. Jesus knew he was going to be killed and so his words and parables and actions during his last week were purposeful, powerful lessons for us all.

Take time now to pray.
Ask the Lord to lead you through this study and help you find the discipline and positive attitude you need to take 10-15 minutes each day to get to know him better.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 24

USING THIS DEVOTIONAL:

Identify a "study spot" in your home where you can spend 10-15 minutes each day with this booklet and your Bible. If you have the option, do this in the morning so you can consider what you've read and apply it all day!

Begin each study time with a

PRAYER

Ask the Lord to help you focus on the readings and open your heart and mind to what it is He is saying to you today.

Look up the listed

BIBLE VERSE(S)

If you have time, read the verses before and after the one listed so you can better understand the context of the verse being studied. Consider: What is being said? What does this verse teach me about the Lord? About myself?

Take time to

ANSWER THE QUESTION(S)

Seriously consider the questions included here. They are meant to stir your heart and lead you to new revelations about God, about yourself and about your faith.

Plan to

TAKE ACTION

Make a difference on the planet.

End your study time by praying the

PRAYER

included each day.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 25

PRAY

BIBLE VERSE

Luke 19:28b-36

Jesus Comes to Jerusalem as King

Despite knowing his fate, Jesus nonetheless "went on ahead" into Jerusalem. He could have gone anywhere else, but he didn't. And, just as the prophet Zechariah (9:9) foretold, Jesus rode a donkey into the city. This particular donkey was never ridden before and therefore, fit for sacred use. Unlike military leaders who would typically ride into town on a horse, Jesus, a man of peace, rode a donkey.

Jesus was welcomed as a king by the people of Jerusalem. These people, who back then very likely did not have closets full of clothes, created a virtual red carpet for this king as they laid down their cloaks so a donkey carrying the Lord could walk on them.

QUESTIONS

Think about the last time you had to do something you didn't want to do. How did you handle the situation? Did you pout? Complain? Whine? Moan?

TAKE ACTION

God can use every situation for his glory. Next time, invite him to come along and make sure your attitude and behavior reflects the amazing power of your guest, the Lord. Review the event afterwards ... can you see the difference Christ made?

Think of at least one item that belongs to you that you can give up in the service of the Lord before the end of the day today ... money, time, food. It doesn't have to be big, but surely you can find something to share with others. "The Lord has need of it."

PRAYER

Jesus, how can I ever thank you for going "on ahead" of me and setting the example of how to do what needs to be done? Help me trust God's will for my life and give all that I have in your name. Thank you, Lord. Amen.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 26

PRAY

BIBLE VERSES

Luke 19:37-38 and Matthew 21:9

Those considered "disciples (not just the original 12) began joyfully praising God "for all the miracles they had seen." The followers of Jesus cheering for him as he entered Jerusalem saw him raise Lazarus, feed thousands, heal the sick, and more. No wonder they praised him!

In Luke's Gospel the crowd quotes David in Psalm 118, which points to the Messiah: "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord." In Matthew, the crowd is quoted as also shouting "Hosanna," meaning "save us," in hopes that this Jesus was the King of Israel who would restore their Kingdom and save them from the Romans.

QUESTIONS

What "miracles" has God done in your life?

How is your life different with Jesus in it?
New meaning? New hope? New perspective?

When you praise him, do you think of those things?

TAKE ACTION

The next time you worship the Lord, make your praise personal because of "all the miracles [you have] seen." Don't wait until you're in church ... praise him right now! Thank God for all that he has done in your life!

PRAYER

Oh, Lord! What amazing things you have done in my life! Thank you for all the small and mighty ways you have blessed me. Help me to praise you fearlessly wherever I go and never lose sight of the grace and gifts you bestow upon me each and every day. Amen.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 27

PRAY

BIBLE VERSES

Luke 19:41-44

When Jesus saw the city of Jerusalem, this verse says "he wept over it." "To weep" is much more than just to cry ... it is sobbing, and wailing, being agonizingly sad and emotional. This is how Jesus felt about this city and its people. He knew the amazing peace they might have had IF ONLY they would not reject him as their king.

QUESTIONS

Think of a time when you have literally sobbed. Can you remember that sorrow enough to get just a small glimpse of the anguish Christ felt when those he loved rejected him? What does this tell you about Christ's love for you?

This verse talks about peace. Take a look at these verses to see "what would bring you peace": John 16:33; Romans 5:1; Isaiah 26:3; and Philippians 4:6-7.

TAKE ACTION

Think about the people in your life who do not yet know Jesus. Just as he did for Jerusalem, Christ weeps for them as well. How can you be his hands and feet and share his love today?

PRAYER

Father God, I am ever so humbled by the intense, deep love you have for me ... love that would cause you to weep for those who don't know you. Help me to trust that love, to feel it around me, and to believe beyond a shadow of a doubt that I am safe and sound in your embrace. Give me courage to share that love with others through my words and actions. Thank you, Lord! Amen.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 28

PRAY

BIBLE VERSES

John 12:23-26

The triumphant entry into Jerusalem brought the Jews their king. And, in the midst of a exuberant crowd, Jesus says, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified." "Yay!", the crowds think, "our king is here!" But, wait. What does he say next? He has to die?!?

We understand the analogy of the seed that has to die to become more than just a single grain. Imagine if Christ was not put to death. We might have heard about him as an amazing teacher and an example of how to live a good life, but without his death and resurrection, we would not have been able to join him in heaven and he would have been "just a single grain" without any fruit.

QUESTIONS

Read verse 25 again. Does God really want you to "hate" your life here on earth? What does that mean?

Read John 10:9-10. What kind of life does God want you to have here on this planet now? How can you have this?

TAKE ACTION

How can you serve Christ today? How about this ... take 5-10 minutes to write a note, card, email or text to someone who needs to know s/he is loved ... send a hug from Christ via your words! It's amazing how you can make someone's whole day in just 5-10 minutes.

PRAYER

Lord Jesus. You died for me! ME! Help me to truly appreciate the immensity of what you have done on my behalf. May I be grateful, today, for all that you have done for me!

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 1

PRAY

BIBLE VERSES

John 12:37-43

Even though the Jewish people witnessed many of Jesus' miracles, they still did not believe. God saved the Israelites centuries earlier by parting the Red Sea and yet, shortly thereafter, they made an idol to a golden calf.

Why did the Jews not believe? Why do we all struggle to believe from time to time?

QUESTIONS

How can you ensure that you do not forget the miracles God has performed in your life?

Why do we tend to forget them so easily?

TAKE ACTION

Consider what God did to cause you to believe. That is your testimony. Are you prepared to share it if the opportunity presents itself? Think through how your life is different because of the Lord and write down your testimony – why you first believed and how your life has changed since that time. Now, don't be like the Pharisees who did not confess it because they loved human glory. Share your testimony with someone today.

PRAYER

Lord, despite all of the amazing ways you have moved in my life, I still love human glory and I often opt for that over the glory that comes from you. Holy Spirit, give me the courage to step out in faith and follow you even when that means I might risk the approval or acceptance of others. Show me my sins, Lord, and help me face them. Amen.

THURSDAY, MARCH 2

PRAY

BIBLE VERSES

Mark 11:12-14

What in the world did this fig tree do that was so awful? Typically, when a fig tree is full of leaves, it is then also full of figs. This particular tree “boasted” about having figs by having leaves, but in reality, the leaves were just false advertising ... there was no fruit to be found from this tree.

Was this a warning to Jerusalem? To the Pharisees? It was an actual “acted out” parable with an important lesson for us: Are we all leaves and no fruit?

QUESTIONS

You’ve heard it said that we should “Walk the Talk.” Do you **act** your faith as well as **profess** it?

If you skim through your calendar, does how you spend your time demonstrate your faith? How about how you spend your money?

TAKE ACTION

Look at the next week on your calendar. Find a few empty spots and fill them with actions you can take to **bear fruit** for Christ. Visit a friend. Buy someone lunch. Pay for the car behind you in the drive-thru. Send someone a gift card. Be creative ... share the wealth ... make a difference.

PRAYER

Oh, my Lord. So many opportunities to bear witness to you slip by me each and every day. Help me not just **see** where I can make a difference, but to stop the whirlwind I am often in and **actually do what I can**, right then and there. Help put aside my agenda and do what YOU want me to do, and give me peace in knowing that your work is what should be on the top of my to-do list for today. Amen.

FRIDAY, MARCH 3

PRAY

BIBLE VERSES

Matthew 21:12-17

There are two parts to this passage: First, Jesus overturns the tables of the merchants and money changers who were taking advantage of the travelers visiting the temple who needed the correct currency of money and the correct animals for sacrifice. Jesus went so far as to literally "overturn" their tables and benches ... a loud and bold display of emotion, to be sure.

But then, the compassionate Jesus began to show his mercy to those who came to him to be healed and who shouted "Hosanna!" about him. And take note ... which of these actions made the chief priests and teachers of the law indignant? (To be "indignant" means to be "annoyed at what is perceived as unfair treatment.")

QUESTIONS

Think about a time when you were so angry that you literally physically lashed out ... can you grab onto that emotion and better understand Jesus' actions in the temple? You gotta be pretty upset to do that in public. What impact do you think Jesus' actions had on the people who were visiting ... those being cheated by the merchants and money changers?

TAKE ACTION

Sit down at your computer and go to the website for the International Justice Mission (www.ijm.org). IJM's President, Gary Haugen, lives in Sterling, Virginia. Look through "Our Work" on their website and consider how Jesus would act in the face of the kinds of "violent oppression" IJM is trying to end around the world.

PRAYER

Tell me how I can help, Lord, and give me the courage to do just that. Amen.

SATURDAY, MARCH 4

PRAY

BIBLE VERSES

Matthew 21:23-27

Picture Jesus, in the temple he had cleansed the day before, teaching his amazing message to the people there. Up walks a group of big wigs ... chief priests and elders ... who ask, "Who gave you this authority?" Here they are, thinking "This Jesus came into our temple, knocked over all the tables, performed all these miracles and then comes back today and begins teaching our congregation ... who does he think he is?"

And oh, how great that Jesus answers their question with a question ... one that they cannot answer without indicting themselves!

QUESTIONS

Who has "authority" over you? Who has the power or right to give you orders, or make decisions for you or make you obey orders? Boss ... teacher ... parent ... police officer ... judge?

What does it mean, then, to have Jesus as your authority? To give God the permission, the privilege, the power, the control and the influence over your life? Read the words of Jesus in Matthew 28:18. Wow.

TAKE ACTION

If Jesus is your authority, then consider what he tells you to do in Matthew 28:18-20. Go. Make disciples. Baptize them. Teach. Get out your to-do list and a pencil ... perhaps you have some erasing to do?

PRAYER

Father God, I want to be my own boss. It is hard and humbling and scary to step out in faith and let someone else be in charge. I don't want to let go. Help me to see how much amazing peace there is in giving you all of the authority over my life. Let me taste that freedom and learn to crave it and love it and treasure it. Amen.

SUNDAY, MARCH 5

PRAY

BIBLE VERSES

Mark 11:20-25

When Peter points out that the fig tree that Jesus cursed had withered, Jesus replies, "Have faith in God" and you can move mountains! The idea of "moving mountains" was historically used for what seemed to be insurmountable problems. Earlier, Jesus taught the disciples that faith as small as a mustard seed could move mountains (Matt. 17:20). And then, he said, "with God all things are possible" (Matt. 19:26). The prayers of pure faith in God can remove the obstacles in our life that get in the way of our bearing fruit.

And Jesus also tells us here to forgive "anything against anyone" so that God will forgive us. That's a tall order and a huge leap of faith in God.

QUESTION

Only one question today ... What is stopping or hindering you from bearing fruit for the Kingdom of God?

TAKE ACTION

Well, don't you have some mountains to start moving?

PRAYER

Lord, help me take a long hard honest look at how I am living this one and only life you have given me. Help me break down the walls I have constructed to keep me safe and secure and comfortable. Help me honestly look at the skills you have given me and the resources at my disposal and show me how you want me to use them today, tomorrow, next month, next year, for your glory. It is in your name, I pray, Lord Jesus. Amen.

MONDAY, MARCH 6

PRAY

BIBLE VERSES

John 12:44-50

Oh what a wonderful passage! The heading for these verses in the NIV Bible is "Jesus Summarizes His Message." These are Christ's words, during his last week of life on earth, and they are full of hope and truth.

Jesus is God. Jesus is light. Jesus came to save the world. See Jesus, see God. Listen to Jesus, listen to God. Read the passage again. Did you see that Jesus says, "I KNOW that his command leads to eternal life." Hope. Truth. Absolutely amazing.

QUESTIONS

In many Bibles, the words of Christ are written in red ink. The verses for today are in red ink. Does reading them make you feel like the description above, full of hope and joy and light? If not, why not?

TAKE ACTION

Okay ... a bit outside that comfy proverbial box here ... Put your hands up in the air, smile, take a deep breath and sincerely thank the Lord for his Son, Jesus, the light of the world, who DIED for you! Too self-conscious to do that? Look around first or go into another room where you can be alone for a minute (bathroom stall, perhaps?!) and then give it a try. Go ahead. No one else is looking but God, and he is smiling right back at you.

PRAYER

Jesus, help me to fully understand the gift you have given me and my need for such a gift. Help me truly see your light and feel your love and believe your words. Help me love you right back, Lord, with all of my heart. Amen.

TUESDAY, MARCH 7

PRAY

BIBLE VERSES

Matthew 21:28-32

This is the parable of the two sons. The first son said he would not go to work but then did. The second son said he would go, but then did not. The father-son relationship is one of obedience. So, imagine you are one of the church elders hearing this. You fancy yourself to be at the top of your game, you finally have an answer for one of his questions and then, wham, Jesus tells you that the lowest of the low in society, the tax collectors and the prostitutes, are going into the Kingdom of God ahead of you! What?! Why? Because "even after you saw this, you did not repent and believe [me]."

QUESTIONS

What does it mean to repent? (Hint: it is a 2-step process.)

Did you notice that Christ said, "ahead of you" not "instead of you"? What does that mean?

TAKE ACTION

Perhaps the fitting action would be to "go and work today in the vineyard." Take that and run with it as you see fit.

PRAYER

Almighty God, help me repent and believe! You know all of my sins – my tendency to think I am in control, and my failure to recognize all that you have done for me, and my constant struggle with pride, and the symptoms of all of those things. Help me to see them, face them and confess them to you. Holy Spirit, nudge (or slap) me when I need it and help me with my daily struggle of trying not to fall back into the same rut again and again. Keep me on the path of righteousness, Lord. Amen.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 8

PRAY

BIBLE VERSES

Matthew 21:33-46

Jesus is teaching this parable in the temple on the Wednesday before Good Friday. Here's who's who: The landowner is God. The vineyard is Israel. The servants are the prophets. The tenants/farmers are Israel & their religious leaders (those listening to this parable). The son, and later the "stone the builders rejected" are Jesus. (This quote is from Psalm 118, as are the "Hosannas" the people have been shouting lately.) The people "who will produce" are the Gentiles. Now that you know all the players, read it again.

Did you notice verse 39, when Jesus tells the church leaders that they will kill him? Wow.

QUESTION

Did the very intelligent, learned men who were the religious leaders listening to this parable know the who's who of it? How do we know that for sure?

TAKE ACTION

Read Psalm 118. It is a wonderful Psalm. You will recognize a lot of passages in it. (Fun Bible Facts: Psalm 118 is the middle chapter of the Bible. Psalm 117 is the shortest chapter. Psalm 119 is the longest. Psalm 118:8 the verse at the very center of the Bible. Check it out. Pretty cool, huh?!)

PRAYER

Before you pray today, consider what you have read in Psalm 118. Read aloud verses 28-29 as your prayer. And remember, **This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it!** (118:24)

THURSDAY, MARCH 9

PRAY

BIBLE VERSES

Matthew 22:1-14

Three invitations were sent to this wedding banquet.
The First was refused and they did not attend.
The Second was ignored and some even killed the messengers.
The Third was accepted by those on the streets.

All but one of those who attended the banquet were clothed in wedding clothes (see Isaiah 61:10) and the one who was not was judged and sent out.

QUESTIONS

So ... who's who in this parable?

King:

Son:

Those refusing the invitation:

Those accepting the invitation:

Did this parable have an impact on the religious leaders who heard it? So what is the lesson for us?

TAKE ACTION

In Romans 13:14, Paul tells us to "clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ." Have you done that? Completely or are you just wearing Jesus like a coat you can take on and off depending on the environment around you?

PRAYER

Dear Lord, I thank you for the invitation to the wedding banquet. How honored I am to be included! Help me come before you humbled and joyful. Lord, I am ever so grateful for your Son, Jesus, who surrounds me like clothes and because of His death on the cross, I am now righteous and worthy to be your eternal guest. Amen.

FRIDAY, MARCH 10

PRAY

BIBLE VERSES

Matthew 22:15-22

Ah, taxes. Here's the twist with this passage: The Pharisees hated Roman rule but still they aligned with their enemies the Herodians, who supported Herod's rule, to try to trick Jesus. If he answered that taxes were to be paid, then the Pharisees would say he opposed God. If he said that taxes did not have to be paid, then the Herodians would arrest him.

Don't you just wish you could have been there to watch this take place? These pompous men who walked into this dialogue all full of themselves "were amazed [and] left him and went away." Ha!

QUESTION

What does Jesus' reply to the question about taxes mean for us here in the U.S. in 2020?

TAKE ACTION

You have 33 more days to do your taxes. Best get started!

PRAYER

Father God, as I sit here today and read this passage about paying taxes, I must admit that it is hard to give away a lot of the money I have worked hard to make. Help me to put what is in my pocket and my bank account into perspective: it is your money, given to me to use for the glory of your Kingdom. Help me be a willing steward and pay my taxes honestly, tithe to glorify you, give as much as I can to those in need and share what I keep with others. Thank you, Lord, for trusting me with so much. May I prove to be a worthy steward. Amen.

SATURDAY, MARCH 11

PRAY

BIBLE VERSES

Matthew 22:23-33

Notice that this verse takes place on "that same day" as our study yesterday when the Pharisees tried to trick Jesus about paying taxes. Now, the Sadducees, a rival group of religious society that followed only the first 5 books of the Old Testament, decided to give it a try as well. They posed a ridiculous hypothetical dilemma (called *reductio ad absurdum*) about what a woman might do in heaven if she buried 7 husbands who were all brothers.

Our sweet Jesus didn't laugh or belittle them. He said they were led astray because they did not know the Scriptures and because of their unbelief. So Jesus sets them straight on what the Scriptures say and on the power of God.

QUESTIONS

How does this passage impact your view on eternal life?

How does this passage impact how you view and address questions you get from unbelievers?

TAKE ACTION

Do a little bit of homework: Google the Sanhedrin, Pharisees and Sadducees and learn more about them.

PRAYER

Mighty God, oh how often I look at others through the lens of misunderstanding, ignorance and emotions. Help me to see others through your perfect eyes ... as unconditionally loved and valued by you, just as I am. So blessed. Amen!

SUNDAY, MARCH 12

PRAY

BIBLE VERSES

Mark 12:28-34

This next test of Christ, from a scribe (a Pharisee according to Matthew), has to do with something from the Old Testament that both the Pharisees and the Sadducees agree on ... the Law of God found in the books by Moses. And Jesus answers them from Deuteronomy 6:4-5. (Called the *Shema*.) This scribe, and everyone else listening, knew the answer to this question.

But, the scribe's response indicated something very important. He said that following the greatest commands ... love the Lord and love others ... are "more important" than the superficial burnt offerings and sacrifices. He understood that loving the Lord was internal, not external.

QUESTIONS

Jesus told the scribe that he was "not far from the Kingdom of God." What did he mean?

What would the scribe have to do to get to the Kingdom?

TAKE ACTION

Who do you love here on earth? Today your action is to tell them that you love them. Say "I love you" out loud or via text or email or card or whatever you'd like. Just say it.

PRAYER

Father God. I understand that I am commanded and encouraged to love you. I say I do, now and then, but I don't always feel that deep love that I know you want from me. Lord, help me love you more. Amen.

MONDAY, MARCH 13

PRAY

BIBLE VERSES

Matthew 23:1-12

And so the questioning ends. As Matthew's 23rd chapter begins, Jesus continues his teaching and there is much for us to learn. This first passage addresses the Pharisees and Sadducees and there is no question about how Jesus felt about them. These self-appointed leaders of the church are not ordained by God, but by men.

Jesus shows the crowd that these men lack authenticity, integrity, sympathy, spirituality and humility.

QUESTIONS

Matthew 23:5 says, "Everything they do is done for others to see." This is a very convicting verse. Be honest, what do you do just "for men to see?"

Think about the people in your life. Who do you see as a person of great integrity? What is it that s/he does to make you say that?

TAKE ACTION

Look back at your answers to the first question above. Make a commitment to change your behavior to be more authentic ... where will you start?

PRAYER

Jesus, you make it very clear how you feel about the hypocrisy of the religious leaders of Jerusalem. I know that I am a hypocrite and I am so thankful that because of your willingness to die for me, the Lord has cleared my slate and forgiven me. Thank you, Lord! Amen.

TUESDAY, MARCH 14

PRAY

BIBLE VERSES

Mark 12:41-44

This is a wonderful story with an important message for us all. The lesson here is that what matters most is not the amount of the gift but the heart of the giver.

To understand this fully, you must first truly believe that you need a savior. You must truly believe that Christ is your savior. You must trust the Lord with your life. Then you will be truly grateful. And you will give willingly, trusting that the Lord will provide what you need after you give away what you have.

QUESTIONS

When you write a check or pull out cash from your wallet to give some of your hard-earned money to the Lord, what is your attitude?

Do you trust the Lord to take care of you financially?

If you just answered, "Yes," then are you tithing?

If you just answered, "No," then why not?

TAKE ACTION

If you don't budget your finances each month, consider taking the time to review your income and expenses and see what you need to do to trust the Lord with your wallet as well as your life. Consult Crown Ministries or David Ramsey or other resources online to learn about managing your finances to honor the Lord.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, you have entrusted me with money and many nice things. Show me, Lord, how I can be a better steward with the material possessions you have given me. I want to be like the widow who put her life in your hands ... help me trust you that much. Amen.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 15

PRAY

BIBLE VERSES

Matthew 23:13-39

This passage contains the "Seven Woes" that guarantee God's anger toward the religious leaders. They are:

1. Making salvation difficult for others (v. 13)
2. Corrupting converts (v. 15)
3. Trivializing religion and the Truth (v. 16-22)
4. Neglecting what is actually important (v. 23-24)
5. Self-indulgence (v. 25-26)
6. Wickedness within (v. 27-28)
7. Murdering God's prophets (v. 29-36)

And then Christ laments for Jerusalem, again.

QUESTIONS

While Jesus is pronouncing judgment on these religious leaders and Jerusalem, his heart still breaks for them all. How about you? When the people in your life get what you believe is their due, does that make you happy or sad? Do you truly want to see EVERYONE come to the Lord? Or are some undeserving?

TAKE ACTION

Are there people in your life who might need to hear some words of advice and encouragement to bring them to, or back to Christ? Pray about your role in helping them and then have the courage to go to them in love and be honest about your observations and concerns.

PRAYER

Oh, Lord, it saddens me to know that there are people in my circle of friends who are lost right now. Lord, guide me on what you would have me do to help them and give me the discernment and words I need to do so. Amen.

THURSDAY, MARCH 16

PRAY

BIBLE VERSES

Matthew 24:29-32

In this passage, Jesus is driving home the point that his disciples should not be deceived either by world events or by people claiming to know that the "sign" of "the end" has occurred. He tells them that even our solar system will be shaken and the "Son of Man will appear in the sky with power and great glory."

We sometimes forget that this world is only temporary. We become wrapped up in the present, and we think things will never change. But they will. Christ will come again. When? He will come when he comes ... he has promised that and what a wonderful day it will be!

QUESTIONS

How would you react to the sign of Jesus' coming? Would you be excited? Nervous? Scared? Why?

When Jesus comes, who would tell about it first and what would you tell them?

TAKE ACTION

We can all become too excited for this big day, as it is a joyful day. As a member of the body of Christ, pray for patience and peace on the timing of Christ's return.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, I pray for the coming of your son Jesus and seeing the glory of your Kingdom. Please make us all one heart and one mind so we can serve you with joy forever, during our life here on earth. Amen

FRIDAY, MARCH 17

PRAY

BIBLE VERSES

Matthew 25:1-13

This parable is part of what is called "The Olivet Discourse," which is Jesus' teachings about his Second Coming. It is a parable of warning to us all ... are you prepared? The Lord's return will be at an unexpected time and this parable clearly teaches us to be ready now.

The scene here is a wedding. After the wedding, the groom typically had up to a year to get things ready for the bride ... to find a place for them to live and a way to provide for her. After that time, he would go get her so that they could begin living their life together.

Half of these women were not prepared when the time came and the groom, Jesus, returned for them.

QUESTIONS

Will you be ready? How is it with your soul?

Growing in your faith (sanctification) is a life-long process that includes pursuing Christ through worship, study, repentance, serving others, and prayer. Ask the Lord to help you cultivate a willing spirit and a deep love for him.

TAKE ACTION

So, when you put your head down on your pillow tonight, ask God to show you how you are unprepared. Keep praying for this. If the Lord wants you to strengthen your relationship with him, then read more of his Word, fellowship/study with others, pray more, etc, and do these things with the assurance that you are following the Lord's direction. You will see amazing results!

PRAYER

Lord, oh how I want to be ready. I want to know you better, truly I do. Help me see the hindrances in my thoughts or attitude that keep me from fully committing to you. Lead me, Lord. Pull me closer to you. Amen.

SATURDAY, MARCH 18

PRAY

BIBLE VERSES

Matthew 25:14-30

The Parable of the Loaned Money

The master in this parable gave the talents to his servants "according to [their] ability." No one received more or less than he could handle. The first two took what they were given and used it to further grow the finances of the master. The final servant was concerned only for himself; he was worried about repercussions or poor performance, worried that he might look bad or be judged harshly.

Just imagine what this world would be like if we all used our time, talents and money for the good of the Kingdom of God. Pretty close to heaven on earth, don't you think?

QUESTIONS

What do you just love to do that you are also really good at doing? (Go ahead and brag!) Could this be one of the gifts the Lord has given you to help him further his Kingdom here on earth?

In the job you have right now, how can you further the Kingdom of God?

TAKE ACTION

Look up at the answer you just wrote. It may be easier said than done, but take some time to pray about it and ask the Lord for direction and discernment. Maybe it is time to take a look at what "earthly good" you are doing.

PRAYER

Lord, I long to one day hear you say, "Well done, good and faithful servant" to me. Show me what I need to do to serve you here and now. Amen.

SUNDAY, MARCH 19

PRAY

BIBLE VERSES

Matthew 25:34-46 ... The King James version:
"Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was hungry, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee hungry, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

QUESTIONS

In Luke 10, when Jesus instructs the lawyer to "love your neighbor as yourself," the lawyer asks, "Who is my neighbor?" How does the Matthew passage above change your definition of "neighbor?"

Jesus declares righteous those who showed love and generosity to their neighbors. How do we reconcile that with our belief that we are found righteous by God's grace alone?

TAKE ACTION

You have neighbors. Right next door. How can you show them love and generosity today?

PRAYER

Our Father God, you have blessed me with so many gifts. Help me see those around me who are hungry (literally or figuratively), in prison (literally or figuratively), or sick (literally or figuratively). May I reach out to them in love. Amen.

MONDAY, MARCH 20

PRAY

BIBLE VERSES

Matthew 26:6-13

According to John 12:1-11, the woman who poured the expensive perfume on Jesus in this passage is Mary, the sister of Martha and Lazarus. Mary loves the Lord with all her heart; here we see that she doesn't hold back that love at all. And despite the disciples' objections, Jesus quotes Deuteronomy 15:11 and makes it very clear that worshiping him takes priority, even over caring for the poor and needy.

QUESTIONS

Was it a waste to use the ointment on Jesus when it could have been sold to help the poor? Why or why not?

Jesus foreshadows his own death in this story, but those around him seem not to notice that. How can you listen to God more effectively so that you will notice when he talks to you?

TAKE ACTION

Take time today to listen for God's calling – slow down and really listen. There will always be something else for us to do, but it pays to first listen to his calling and his will for our lives.

PRAYER

Father, in my busy-ness and preoccupation with activity, help me to slow down and listen to you; to "seek ye first." I live in a "Ready, Fire, Aim" world, and need your help to lead the life you would have me lead. I pray that you would guide my thoughts and deeds and that I would be open to your call and direction. My pride gets in the way at times, and I seek to do things on my own; help me see the folly in self-reliance and come back to you. Amen.

TUESDAY, MARCH 21

PRAY

BIBLE VERSES

Luke 22:24-30

Our society ranks a lot of things like top ten players of a sport, top ten songs on the radio, the ten best colleges in the nation, etc. Within group rankings, we often also rank the following: who has the nicest house, who makes the most money, who has the most professional achievements, who has the overall best life, who has the best behaved kids, who has the most trophies, etc.

QUESTIONS

Why do you think we do this?

In regards to the verses read, who was the greatest amongst this group? How did He describe himself?

As disciples of Jesus, how can we live this? In living this, would you do things differently?

TAKE ACTION

As Jesus' disciples, we should imitate him. As you go through this day, try to do things the way one who serves would. Go back to "What Would Jesus Do (WWJD)?"

PRAYER

Lord, thank you for the example of service that you have given me. Help me understand this example and what this looks like in my life. Amen.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 22

PRAY

BIBLE VERSES

John 13:1-20

People of this time in the passage, including the disciples, would walk in sandals on dirt and sand roads. The dirt, the sand, etc. would make their feet unclean. This made the cleansing of feet before sitting at the dinner table a matter of great importance; even a necessity. It was custom for a host to have a slave clean the feet of his dinner guests.

QUESTIONS

Jesus was the host of this dinner with the disciples. However, instead of having a slave clean the disciples' feet, Jesus took it upon himself to perform this task. Why do you think this happened? What kind of example does this set for us?

As previously described, the washing of feet was of great importance, even needed. This suggests Jesus cares about our entire lives, from our salvation to those needs that, at times, may seem insignificant. What are the needs of those around you that might at first glance seem insignificant? What can you do to help satisfy that need?

TAKE ACTION

Help someone today.

PRAYER

Lord, I thank you because nothing kept you from giving everything for me. Help me follow your example of humility, love and care. May I become more like you. Amen.

THURSDAY, MARCH 23

PRAY

BIBLE VERSES

John 13:21-30

If you knew someone was going to do you wrong, would you stay by this person? Would you still trust this person? Would you treat this person differently?

Jesus knew Judas would betray him; he also knew that other disciples would do him wrong. Yet he stayed by their side, loved them, and did not reject them. Many of these disciples later become the key in the establishment of the church.

QUESTION

Have you ever failed to do the right thing by God? Reflect on that a minute.

Many of us have been on this Christian journey for some time, and yet we continue to fail to do the right thing. Even so, God continues to show his grace and faithfulness in our lives. Even when we have felt him far away from us, he really isn't. After experiencing this love from God, we have no choice but to repent, get back up and continue this journey.

TAKE ACTION

Present yourself to God, just as you are. Receive his gift of grace.

PRAYER

Lord, I ask your forgiveness for my sins. I ask that you help me throughout this journey and that I may grow in understanding of your grace. Amen.

FRIDAY, MARCH 24

PRAY

BIBLE VERSES

Matthew 26:26-30

Many of us live a fast-paced life full of things to do, places to be, activities to attend, and appointments. Often we need to make note of important things so that we do not forget to do them when we are supposed to.

It was Passover and Jesus hosted a dinner for his disciples. During this dinner, Jesus used the bread and wine as symbols of his body and blood and, according to Luke's account, asked the disciples to continue doing this in remembrance of him. The disciples did not have agendas or pictures to remember the time they had spent with Jesus, but Jesus used this supper as a mechanism to help them remember who he was and what he was about to do.

QUESTIONS

Nowadays the church continues this tradition during communion or breaking of bread. Why is communion important?

What does it say about those who take it?

What does communion mean to you?

TAKE ACTION

Take time to remember the people who are important in your life. Pray for them. Thank God for them.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, I thank you for the sacrifice you made for me and for giving me the greatest gift I have ever received. Thank you for all your blessings. Amen.

SATURDAY, MARCH 25

PRAY

BIBLE VERSES

Matthew 26:31-35

Can you imagine Peter's face when Jesus was telling him these words? It seems Peter did not think himself capable of denying his Lord and Teacher. He may have even been offended by Jesus' statement; may have felt that Jesus was questioning his loyalty. Peter's response reflects that he really did not believe he would deny Jesus. However, later on Peter did just that.

Jesus speaks truth to our lives. This happens in many different ways when we read the Bible, when we sing and praise, in prayer, in the quiet times, etc. Sometimes this truth is difficult to accept because it is not what we want to hear or what we believe of ourselves. We may feel insulted. But it is still the truth and it is meant for us to grow and go deeper into our relationship with Him.

QUESTIONS

Have you ever been confronted by God? Has the Holy Spirit revealed a truth about yourself that you were not aware of?

What was your reaction? Has it changed you?

TAKE ACTION

God speaks to us in many ways. Be attentive and meditate on the message God is relaying to you. Consider what it means to your life and what it asks of you. Be open to God's Word and make this an opportunity of growth.

PRAYER

Lord, thank you that you care for me enough to reveal the areas in which I need to grow. Help me hear your words and understand what they mean. May I accept them as coming from the loving God you are and grow. Amen.

SUNDAY, MARCH 26

PRAY

BIBLE VERSES

John 14:1-14

In the first verse of this chapter, Jesus, who is equating himself with God, is not simply asking the disciples to believe in him, more so, he is inviting them to believe in Him as a rest for their troubled hearts. Jesus is declaring that communion with him is sufficient to calm the current pangs of our hearts.

In a world where we run to isolation, food, social media, music, entertainment, and the like to cope with our pain, Jesus is making a heavy promise — he promises to provide you rest through your relationship with him.

QUESTIONS

Is Jesus enough for you in the midst of the storm? How does it make you feel to know that Jesus is preparing your future home in his Kingdom right now?

What do you need to give to Jesus to find rest and to ease your troubled heart?

TAKE ACTION

Be deliberate in presenting what is going on in your life to God throughout your day. Remember the promises Jesus makes to you and lean on them throughout your day.

PRAYER

Jesus, may your name be revered and feared. Father, please help me experience daily that “to live is Christ, and to die is gain.” Amen.

MONDAY, MARCH 27

PRAY

BIBLE VERSES

John 14:15-31

If you turn on any Christian radio station today, you will no doubt hear the truthful expression, "Jesus loves you." However, here is a special question just as powerful and worthy of meditation: "Do you love Jesus?" In these verses, Jesus is teaching us a powerful truth. Our obedience to the things he says, reflects how we truly feel about him.

QUESTIONS

If we truly desire to love Jesus, we must be careful and deliberate to obey His commandments. How can we know which commandments should be obeyed?

Why is hearing, understanding and learning the Bible important?

TAKE ACTION

Identify some issues you struggle with, and find the Scriptural verses that teach how you should deal with them. Search by topic online, e.g., "Bible verses about jealousy."

PRAYER

Jesus ... "Search me and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." (Psalm 139:23-24) Lord, help me to walk as you walked and incline my heart to keep your Word. I ask this in your name Jesus. Amens

TUESDAY, MARCH 28

PRAY

BIBLE VERSES

John 15:1-8

Jesus is speaking to his disciples, all of whom will be persecuted and/or martyred for following him. In this last discourse before his arrest, he gives these men insight into the goal of the Christian walk and how to achieve that goal. He first explains that the goal/end result of an authentic Christian walk is to bear fruit. This concept is so critical, that in verse 2 Jesus teaches that even after we have brought forth fruit, we will be pruned so that we can develop even more fruit. Yes, we are to be a fruit factory for Jesus Christ our Lord!

What is significant about fruit is that it takes time to grow. A branch does not grow fruit immediately, but it cannot grow unless it is connected to the vine. When fruit appears, it only comes from a totally dependent attachment to the vine. As that branch continues its attachment to the vine, it will bear more and more fruit.

QUESTIONS

A relationship with Jesus only gets better and better as we abide in Him. What do you think it means to abide?

What do you think true attachment to Jesus looks like?

TAKE ACTION

Make a list of the things you can do to abide in the vine of Christ today.

PRAYER

Lord, help me abide in you. Direct my path and guide my steps so that I can bear the fruit you want from me. Amen.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 29

PRAY

BIBLE VERSES

John 15:9-17

As a great teacher, Jesus often used parables for teaching. Many times his parables were used for hidden truths. But in these verses Jesus could not be more direct; Love each other! And love as he loved us. This is a straight-forth command by Jesus which leads us to this question: How did Jesus love us? This is answered in verse 13; a sacrificial love. Jesus said this and then modeled it with his arrest, his torture, his crucifixion, and subsequent death; all done willingly out of love.

QUESTIONS

How does it feel to be loved so deeply?

A love like Jesus means putting someone else's interest before ours. It means loving and giving even when it's an inconvenience and undeserved. This may be easy to do for someone close to us like a spouse, a child, or sibling. But Jesus' love goes further as he died for the same people who put him on the cross.

As a follower of Jesus, you are to love EVERYONE. In your life, who is difficult to love?

TAKE ACTION

How can you show your appreciation and gratitude to someone in your life who wouldn't expect anything from you otherwise? Do that today.

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, thank you for the love you have poured out through the cross. Help me show that same love to all the people around me. Help me love even when it is difficult to do so. Always for your glory, Amen.

THURSDAY, MARCH 30

PRAY

BIBLE VERSES

John 17:1-26

Jesus, being the Son of God, still recognized his need to always take a moment to commune and pray to his father, God. How much more we, who are merely human, need to take moments to pray and commune with God!

The last prayer Jesus made before he was arrested and killed was about the unity of his believers. Just as Jesus and God are one, we, the body of Christ, are to be one.

Throughout history, great movements have been done when different people come together. Jesus prayed for us to be one so that another great movement would happen; the movement of a world that believes in him. In the manner that we love each other, that we share with each other, that we forgive each other, all in his name, the world will come to recognize he was truly the Son of God.

QUESTION

Who can you join with to make a difference in your neighborhood or in Lucketts? How can you use your gifts and talents to serve this community?

TAKE ACTION

See above? Yep ... just do it!

PRAYER

Thank you Jesus for the love and mercy you bestow on your church. I thank you for the pastors and leaders that are working to be light within our communities. Help me be apart the work you are doing in my community. Amen.

FRIDAY, MARCH 31

PRAY

BIBLE VERSES

Matthew 26:57-68

These verses tell of Caiaphas, the High Priest, asking Jesus to prove that he is the Son of God. The others who were religion scholars and leaders were gathered around looking for answers as well.

QUESTIONS

What questions do you have of Jesus?

Has he done miracles in your life to prove who he really is?

When Jesus does not do the things you want done in your life, how does that impact your faith?

TAKE ACTION

Dave Pettigrew, an amazing singer, wrote a song entitled, "Even if Not." This is the chorus:

*I know my God will rescue me
I know my God will come and save the day
But even if not, even if not, even if not
I will worship you tonight.*

Listen to it on YouTube. It is well worth the 4.12 minutes it will take!

PRAYER

Dear Jesus! I am sorry for questioning who you are. Help me to trust in you and to know that you are my Lord and Savior. I thank you for the things I can't understand. Help me to remember that you are with me through the good times and especially through the not so good times. Amen

SATURDAY, APRIL 1

PRAY

BIBLE VERSES

Matthew 26:69-75

Don't you just ache for Peter? He so enthusiastically loved the Lord and in Matthew 26:35, he declared, "Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you." And yet, in the face of fear and pain and ridicule and death, he first acted confused, then gave an oath that he did not know Jesus, and finally he called down "curses on himself" (kinda like saying, "may God strike me dead if I am lying") and swore/promised that he did not know Jesus. And then the rooster crowed. And Peter wept ... bitterly.

QUESTIONS

While you may not have actually denied Christ, have you avoided sticking up for him or speaking on his behalf when the opportunity presented itself?

How is that different from denying him?

TAKE ACTION

It can be very intimidating to stick up for something you believe in the face of others who don't have the same belief. But giving your testimony, explaining WHY you believe in Jesus Christ, is a very effective way to share the Gospel. So, what do you believe and why do you believe it? If you didn't do this back on March 4, then now is the time. Write it down. If you did this on March 4, then turn back to that day and read what you wrote. Say it out loud. Practice it, so that when the opportunity to share it comes along, you'll be ready.

PRAYER

Father, help me clarify and verbalize my faith. Remind me to call upon your Holy Spirit when I need help and to trust you to give me the words that I need to say and that others need to hear. Amen. (See Luke 12:11-12).

SUNDAY, APRIL 2

PRAY

BIBLE VERSES

John 19:1-16

In these verses, Pilate hands Jesus over to be crucified. Jesus is flogged and dressed in a crown of thorns and a purple robe. The priests and officials demand his crucifixion; the religious leaders state that our Lord has broken Jewish law. Pilate states that he has not found Jesus guilty.

Pilate and Jesus have a conversation, during which Jesus states, "You would have no power over me if it were not given to you from above." In verses 1-16, we see our perfect Savior freely submitting to pain and humiliation on our behalf.

Pilate wants to please the crowd and to keep from punishing an innocent man, yet his cowardice wins out. The soldiers take Jesus to be crucified.

QUESTION

Did Jesus have a choice in this situation?

Did Pilate have a choice in this situation?

TAKE ACTION

Pilate chose to stand in cowardice, and to deal in death and destruction. We do not face such choices, but we do choose each day to face or ignore the opportunities that present themselves to us. Ask the Lord what he wants you to do today to further his Kingdom. Do you sense an answer? A nudge? A calling?

PRAYER

Mighty God, you didn't have to submit to pain, mockery, and the cross. Yet you did this for me. I thank you for your sacrifice on my behalf. Help me choose you each day and appreciate all that you suffered for me. Amen.

MONDAY, APRIL 3

PRAY

BIBLE VERSES

Matthew 27:27-31

A "company of soldiers" is about 200 men. That's a lot of testosterone. These men took one man, your savior Jesus Christ, and stripped him and mocked him and spit on him and beat him "again and again."

QUESTION

Picture this whole verse ... live and in full color. See the Roman soldiers, the governor's soldiers in fact, all dressed up in their nice fancy uniforms. All manly men. All part of a powerful team. All of these men versus one quiet, humble, peaceful man.

What impact did the "crowd mentality" have here?

Can you remember recess bullies?

Were you a bully or one they picked on?

TAKE ACTION

Surely somewhere along the way, you have been mean to someone else. We all have. Take a moment to relive that time when you were like the soldiers. Now, with a truly contrite heart, ask the Lord to forgive you.

PRAYER

Lord, I know I have taken that superior role at points in my life. My pride and my fear have gotten the best of me and I have treated others as less worthy than myself. Forgive me, Lord. Help me to find the strength it takes to live humbly ... to be a person of peace and grace and love, just as your son Jesus was. Amen.

TUESDAY, APRIL 4

PRAY

BIBLE VERSES

Matthew 27:34-44

The drink that Jesus refused was wine mixed with gall, used to numb the pain. Why in the world would he not drink it before he was to be crucified, a very painful process? We know that Jesus dreaded what was to come ... he sweat actual blood in the Garden as he agonized over this. And yet, when offered a way to make it all a bit easier, Jesus refused. He was obedient to God's will and took on all the pain and anguish, fully sober, fully aware, fully willing.

QUESTIONS

Oh, the self-control it would take a regular human to not just do all the things the thieves and guards urged him to do ... and more, to offer proof and shut them all up. Why did Jesus not do what they said? How could he resist not showing off, just a little?

Dread. What is it that you dread to do?

TAKE ACTION

John Bradford, an English preacher who was executed by Bloody Mary in 1555, is quoted as first saying what has become the popular, "there but for the grace of God go I." Today give God the credit for all that you accomplish, even the little things like waking up. It is through his grace alone that you do anything at all. Give credit where credit is due, as they say.

PRAYER

Lord, all too often, oh goodness, most of the time, I take you for granted. Help me see how each and every day you are with me, blessing me and loving me and forgiving me. Thank you, from the bottom of my heart. Amen.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 5

PRAY

BIBLE VERSES

Luke 23:32-34

Those who crucified Jesus knew that they were killing an innocent man. They crucified him anyway. They might have known that what they were doing was not right, but what they did not know was the depth and profound impact of their actions. Jesus' death on the cross is for our forgiveness of not only the things we know we have done, but also for the depth of the impact of our wrong actions that we don't even see now.

QUESTION

Christ died so that your sins can be forgiven. How can that fact impact your daily life?

TAKE ACTION

Forgiveness is a strange thing. Even if it is offered, it must be accepted to have an impact. Accept God's forgiveness offered to you through Jesus today. You are forgiven. For everything. Done. Gone. Clean slate.

PRAYER

God, forgive me. Thank you for what you did so that I could be forgiven. Amen.

THURSDAY, APRIL 6

PRAY

BIBLE VERSES

Luke 23:39-43

In this verse, our savior is hung on the cross between two thieves. One of the thieves says to him, "if you are the Christ, save yourself and us." The other thief has a very different interaction with Jesus. He asks that the Lord remember him when he enters his Kingdom. In verse 43, Jesus replies to him, "Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise."

QUESTIONS

What did the second thief do in order to receive everlasting life with Jesus?

Is there anyone who is too far gone for Jesus to save?

TAKE ACTION

Spend some quiet time with God today. Imagine what the life of the second thief had been like prior to his encounter with Jesus. One sincere request is all it took for Jesus to take this man with him to heaven. What do you want to ask Jesus? How would he answer?

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, what amazing verses these are! Thank you for making your Word available to me so that I may learn about you. Thank you for the true and simple fact that through your grace I receive the gift of eternal life and an abundant life here on this amazing planet you created. Please help me celebrate this every day. Amen.

GOOD FRIDAY, APRIL 7

PRAY

BIBLE VERSES

John 19:28-37

In this passage from the Gospel of John, we get a picture of Jesus' final moments on the cross. He "thirsts" and is given sour wine (vinegar). When Jesus had received the sour wine he said, "It is finished." And, "bowing his head, he gave up his spirit."

The legs of the two thieves were broken to hasten their deaths, but they instead pierced Christ's side. This fulfilled scripture that said that his bones were not broken and his side was pierced.

QUESTIONS

These verses are painful to read and visualize. How do you feel when you read them?

What was "finished?"

TAKE ACTION

Back to your computer ... go to CBN.com and search for "A Physician's View of the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ" by Dr. C. Truman Davis. It is not an easy read at all. But maybe you should know exactly what Christ went through physically on the cross for you.

PRAYER

Lord, my God! It hurts my heart to see you there on the cross, but I thank you from the depths of my being for coming to earth and finishing what needed to be done for me! I thirst for you, Jesus. I thirst for greater knowledge of you and your Word. Please guide my path as I grow in understanding and love for you. Amen.

SATURDAY, APRIL 8

PRAY

BIBLE VERSES

Matthew 27:51-54 and Luke 23:44-49

At the moment Christ died, four miracles also took place:

1. Darkness came despite the fact that it was daytime.
2. The curtain in the temple was torn into two pieces, from top to bottom.
3. There was an earthquake that shook the ground and caused rocks to split.
4. Tombs broke open and bodies of holy people were raised to life and were also resurrected.

QUESTIONS

What do you think is the significance of the temple curtain being torn in two at the moment of Jesus' last breath?

If you had witnessed these events like the centurion did, what would have been your reaction?

TAKE ACTION

The throne of God is no longer a sacred place that only the priest can access. We can approach our Lord anytime and anywhere. He is available to you 24/7/365. How cool is that? You are never alone and you are always loved. The action for today? Smile and praise your God!

PRAYER

Gracious God, we stand in awe of your power. Based on what you have done in the past and what you promised for your people in the future, please help us to live now fearlessly for you. To you, God, is the power and the glory forever. Amen.



EASTER

BIBLE VERSES

Matthew 28:1-8, Mark 16:1-8,
Luke 24:1-12, John 20:1-10

QUESTIONS

Our view of this morning is much different that of Mary and Mary Magdalene on the way to the tomb. What was their mental state that morning?

Has God ever taken a time of great grief in your life and ultimately turned it into a great blessing? Reflect on that.

PRAYER

Loving and gracious God. We thank you for all that you have done for us through your Son, Jesus Christ. It is something we could never have done for ourselves. Please help us God, through your Holy Spirit, to be living examples of your love, grace, and mercy wherever we may go. Amen.