



A 40-DAY JOURNEY TO EASTER

LENT





*A 40-Day Lenten Devotional to prepare the  
heart of the church to worship Christ through  
His resurrection on Easter.*

*“Attention is the beginning of devotion.”*

*John Mark Comer*

The Christian life involves noticing—recognizing where we perceive God, understanding His actions, and subsequently participating in His mission. It’s about observing how God operates within us and among those around us, placing ourselves in environments and practices (such as scripture reading, community, singing, communion, etc.) where we can acknowledge God’s presence. In short, the Christian life revolves around paying attention.

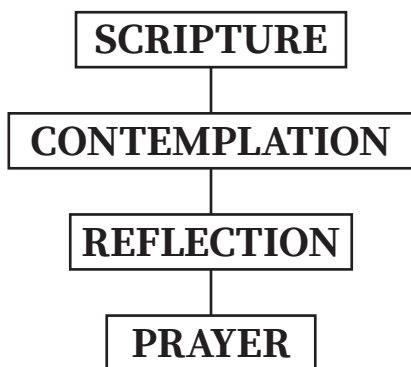
However, attention is a precious commodity, and everything demands yours. It’s estimated that, on average, a person encounters four to six thousand advertisements every day. That’s four thousand times daily that something demands, “Pay attention to me.” How do we prioritize paying attention to God in such a chaotic and distracting world? This is where the season of Lent can assist us, as Lent is about paying attention.

Lent, according to the Christian calendar, spans the 40-day period from Ash Wednesday to Easter (Sundays not included). These 40 days symbolize Jesus’ temptation when He was led by the Holy Spirit into the wilderness, fasting and being tested. That is why this season is marked by humility, repentance, and fasting. It is a time of stripping away distractions for the purpose of paying attention—a season of sobriety. It is a period to reflect on our own frailty as we anticipate the resurrection, where what is mortal will give way to what is eternal.

This devotional will guide you on your Lenten journey as it traces Christ throughout the scripture’s narrative. It serves as a tool to help you recognize ever-present hope, even in the most broken places. It is a journey that prompts reflection on your own fragility, with the constant reminder that a Promised One is coming to lead His people out.

## HOW TO USE THIS DEVOTIONAL

*Each day will consist of four components:*



You are encouraged to read the scripture in your own Bible, go through the daily contemplation, and then allocate intentional time for reflection. Following this, a prayer has been written to aid your response to what God is communicating.

On Sundays, during the 40 days of Lent, instead of a reading, there will be Prayers of Preparation. Consider these Sundays as “mini-Easters”—moments for God’s people to gather and feast on His Word and His promises in light of His resurrection. These prayers are designed to prepare our hearts and minds for the church gathering.

# DAY 1

## SCRIPTURE

*Genesis 3:14-19*

## CONTEMPLATION

*“For you are dust and to dust you shall return.”* On this Ash Wednesday we are called to reflect on the frailty and brokenness of humanity. The rescue of Easter is all the more glorious when we remember the curse and tragedy of the bondage. In today’s reading we are reminded of the seriousness of sin and the comprehensiveness of its destruction. There is not a square inch of the world not stained by its touch inflicted through the disobedience of mankind. We traded humble communion with our God for prideful isolation from His creation and from others. Bearing the weight of the curse, in our sin, we have found ourselves outside of Eden looking in desiring to go home, but with no way back. Here is where we sit today but not without a glimmer of hope for even at the origin of all of human plight there is a promise. A crack with a ray of light shining through: *“he will crush your head and you will bruise his heel.”*

## REFLECTION

*Where are you reminded of your own brokenness?*

*Why do you think it’s important for believers to reflect on this?*

*What reminds you of your need for a Savior?*



## PRAYER

*Heavenly Father, You are God over the  
dirt and the dust.*

*Today, I remember my own mortality: that I  
am frail, that I am weak, that I am broken in  
my sin, that I am created and not Creator, that  
I am human, not God. Help me not to hide as if  
my fragility pushes You away. Thank You that  
You run towards my brokenness.*

*Help me today to remember my sins against  
You with honesty and courage. Not broken  
under the weight of the curse but standing firm  
in the promise of the rescue.*

*Gracious God, I give over to You all the ways  
I try to mask and cover my inadequacies,  
inconsistencies, and broken places. Thank You  
for loving me as I am and inviting me into a  
life of completeness and wholeness  
through your Son.*

*Help me today, to trust in Your promises and to  
hope in Your plans and to rest in  
Your providence.*

*Remind me today that I am but dust and to  
dust I will return.*

*Amen.*

# DAY 2

## SCRIPTURE

*Genesis 9:8-17*

## CONTEMPLATION

Although sinful disobedience brought about judgment and devastation through the flood, God promised redemption and restoration. In the Noahic Covenant, while “everything on the earth would die” (Genesis 6:17), God pledged, “I will establish my covenant with you” (v. 18). God kept His promise, using the same words in Genesis 9:9, yet fulfilled, “Behold, I establish my covenant with you.” We serve a God who “bestows a crown of beauty instead of ashes” (Isaiah 61:3). All creation, including the covenant sign of the rainbow (v. 12), points to Jesus. His horrific crown of thorns on the cross would also be a beautiful sign that He is the guarantor of a better New Covenant (Hebrews 7:22).

Although it would rain again, Noah and his family did not have to worry every time it did. God placed a covenant rainbow in the sky “for all generations to come” (v. 13). Since then, one needs only to look heavenward in the cloudy mist between storm and calm to remember the promises of God. God also sees the rainbow and remembers His covenant (vv. 14-15). This covenantal promise fulfilled for our time on this earth points us to God’s promise of salvation fulfilled through Christ for eternity in heaven.

## REFLECTION

*What do you think about when you see a rainbow?*

*How do God’s earthly moments of redemption encourage you?*

*How has God redeemed varying aspects of your life?*





## PRAYER

*Heavenly Father, You are God over the dirt and the dust. Even the rainbows point us to Your goodness and grace. The rainbow reminds us of Your peace, protection, and provision in Christ. It's many colors illustrate Your manifold grace (1 Peter 4:10).*

*You are a God Who made covenants with Adam, Moses, David, and Noah, and You make them to us as well. Your New Covenant promise of salvation was poured out through Your blood (Luke 22:20). Thank You for making us brand new – born again.*

*Thank You for the blood of Christ that washes away our sins. Thank You for not leaving us in the destruction and hopelessness of sinful flesh.*

*Thank You, Jesus, for Your redeeming grace.*

*Amen.*

# DAY 3

## SCRIPTURE

*Genesis 15:7-12, 17-21*

## CONTEMPLATION

*“How am I to know?”* The question that Abram asks God in response to His announcement of the promise is a question all of us ask in one way or another. During the season of Lent, perhaps this is the question we are to delve into. In the presence of so much that is wrong with us and the world, how can we be certain that God’s promise of redemption will be fulfilled?

In response to Abram’s question, God condescends to relate to him in a way that Abram could understand. He made a covenant with the man Abram. The animals are cut in half, signifying that the parties to the covenant will keep it or suffer the same fate as the animals. However, in this covenant, God presents Himself as the representative for both parties, as demonstrated in verse 17 by the smoking pot and flaming torch (Exodus 13:21). By doing so, God gives Abraham the strongest possible assurance in response to his question. God guarantees His promise through His unchanging character (Hebrews 6:17-18), offering Himself as the keeper of the covenant.

This remains our hope today. Our God keeps His covenant and secures it with the blood of Jesus.

## REFLECTION

*Where are you doubting God’s promises today?*

*How does God’s promise in Jesus, that our sins are forgiven and we have an inheritance in His Kingdom, give you an anchor in today’s storms (see Hebrews 6:17-20)?*

*How freeing is it to know that God represents you in Jesus in the covenant?*



## PRAYER

*Our most merciful and gracious God,*

*It is You Who has come to us so that we can know You. I am reminded today that You are a God Who keeps covenant with His people. You are as unchanging as I am changing, as patient as I am impatient, as faithful as I am unfaithful. I confess both my inadequacies and Your perfection and cling to You as my anchor.*

*Whatever trials I may face today, I will know that You are He Who promises to be with me. You are the Unchanging One Who was and is and is to come. I will rest today knowing that though I am limited in every way, I serve a God Who is without any limit and Who has bound Himself to me in covenant relationship.*

*Help me today to find peace in You and know with absolute certainty that Your promise of salvation is true. Help me trust You in all that I do and say today.*

*Amen.*

# DAY 4

## SCRIPTURE

*Genesis 22:1-14*

## CONTEMPLATION

*“God himself will provide the lamb.”* There was a pastor in a small town who adopted a young girl with a traumatic background. When she moved into his home, she began hoarding food from the pantry in her bedroom. When the pastor found out, he gave the young girl a big hug, sat her on his lap, and told her, “Bringing you into my family was the proof that I will provide for you.”

In today’s text, God is pictured as the great provider! He provided a lamb for the sacrifice instead of Isaac. This foreshadows the lamb God has provided for us now. In John 1:29, Jesus is called the “Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.” Jesus accomplishes this through His life, death, and resurrection. Moreover, in Romans 8:32, Paul writes, “[God] did not even spare his own Son but offered him up for us all. How will [God] not with him grant us all things?” Here, Paul teaches that if God loves you enough to sacrifice Jesus to restore your relationship with Him, then He loves you enough to meet any other needs you might have.

God has shown His faithfulness through Abraham. He perfectly demonstrated it through Jesus. Trust that He wants to show it to you personally.

## REFLECTION

*Reflect upon a moment of God’s faithful provision in your past. Re-count your emotions during this time.*

*What stands in the way of you trusting God’s provision now?*

*What step of faith is God asking you to take? Why are you not taking it?*



## PRAYER

*God, You are the faithful provider for all who trust in You. When you gave Your son, Jesus, for my salvation, You demonstrated that You would provide for any other need as well!*

*Please help me to walk by faith  
in this truth.*

*Amen.*

# SUNDAY

Every Sunday is a mini-Easter! The church assembles to live out and celebrate the reality of the resurrection. Gathered under a central confession that Christ has come, He has died, He is risen, and He will come again. Gathered to be edified through God's Word and to encourage God's people. Gathered to remind our hearts, souls, minds, and bodies what is true about God and what is true about ourselves, and to help others do the same. Today, before you gather, prepare your heart to receive and obey the Lord's instruction.

*Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me, even if he dies, will live. Everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?"*

***John 11:25-26***

# PRAYERS OF PREPARATION

## PREPARE TO HEAR FROM GOD

*Lord, on this Sunday, would You fill me with Your Spirit to be able to hear and understand all that You desire to say to me through Your Word and Your people? Help me to be aware of Your presence this morning and to gather expectantly with Your church.*

*Ask God to speak to you in any specific areas that you may need to hear.*

## PREPARE TO OBEY GOD'S WORD

*As I hear You this morning, would You empower me to obey every word You speak? I want to cooperate with everything You are doing. I love You, God. Help me to obey Your commands this morning.*

*Ask God to show you any steps of obedience you specifically need to take.*

## PREPARE TO ENCOURAGE GOD'S PEOPLE

*I thank You that I have the privilege to gather with my brothers and sisters in Christ this morning. In the same way that I ask You to work in me, would You work in them? Would You allow me to encourage, bear burdens, pray for, and serve others this morning? Use me to minister to Your church.*

*Pick a few people this morning and pray for them.*

# DAY 5

## SCRIPTURE

*Genesis 49:8-12*

## CONTEMPLATION

In these verses, we see that Jesus will be a descendant of Judah. The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet. The promised Messiah will be a 'lion from the tribe of Judah.' But you might ask yourself, 'Why Judah? Didn't he betray his brother Joseph?' Yes, his failure is well known. But we often forget that Judah pledged his life for that of Benjamin. In fact, it was this sacrificial act that overcame Joseph, and he finally revealed himself to his brothers. Judah's actions foreshadowed those of the coming Messiah. God didn't choose Judah because of this, but it shows Judah living up to his calling. In His amazing power, God worked through the broken to bring hope and ultimate healing to the broken.

## REFLECTION

*Do you truly believe that God can use you in His plans?*

*Is there something in your past that you think stands in the way of God using you?*

*How might God reframe your greatest failure, so He could use it to bless others?*





## PRAYER

*Heavenly Father, we truly are dust. We are broken and fail to live up to Your holy standards each day. But how amazing is it that when we submit ourselves to You, this dirt can become clay in Your hands; clay that can be molded into a useful part of Your plan.*

*Instead of thinking that the cross was somehow the end of Your plan, help us realize that Your plan is still unfolding day by day. You are still seeking out those who need Your forgiveness through Your people. You are still healing the broken-hearted through Your people. You are still working miracles through the prayers of Your people.*

*Father, we are part of Your story. You want to use our past, our victories and our failures, our strengths, and our weaknesses, to further Your Kingdom RIGHT NOW.*

*Thank You for the opportunity to serve the King of Kings.*

*Amen.*

# DAY 6

## SCRIPTURE

*Exodus 12:1-14*

## CONTEMPLATION

This plague of death was no respecter of persons. The greatest in Egypt to the lowest enslaved person were equally at risk, and only God could save those in its path. The death of a firstborn son in this time would not be a singular loss. It would cut families off at the knees. Their breadwinners, successors, and namesakes would be gone in a breath. As God always does when He must bring judgment on sin, He forewarns of the threat and provides a way out. The blood on the doorframes is a gruesome reminder that sin cannot be overlooked by a holy, good God, even of those who follow Him. Justice must be done and what's wrong must be made right in one way or another. All of this is meant to foreshadow the ultimate sacrifice to allow a Passover: Jesus' death and resurrection. It is why God tells the Israelites to observe Passover for centuries to come. As we stand on the other side of the cross, may we be filled with gratitude that God provided a way for us to experience the freedom and life of being "passed over" as sinful people. Praise God, Jesus is the Passover of God made manifest for all.

## REFLECTION

*God gave the Israelites the command to observe Passover each year, to remind them of His past mercy and to hope for His future grace. How can observing Lent be a similar practice for your household?*

*What do you think it says about God and about you that Jesus, the Lamb, would not be spared so that you could be freed?*

*When was the last time you thanked Christ for being your Passover Lamb?*



## PRAYER

*Jesus, our Passover Lamb, both past and present, thank You. May we share with those we know and love that though sin has made the world bitter like herbs, You have provided hope of a sweet future.*

*Thank you, God, that You compromised nothing about Your character - neither Your justice, nor Your holiness, nor Your kindness and grace - by sacrificing Yourself to pass over our sin and restore our freedom.*

*Amen.*

# DAY 7

## SCRIPTURE

*1 Samuel 2:1-10*

## CONTEMPLATION

This prayer was written by Hannah, the once barren wife of Elkanah, after the Lord answered her cries for a son. After years of barrenness and shame, the Lord granted her Samuel—the son who would help establish Israel’s kingdom (1 Sam 16:10-13) and become a righteous prophet over the people (Acts 3:24, 13:20). Hannah faithfully gave Samuel back to the Lord, fulfilling the promise she made before she even knew she would conceive.

In Hannah’s life and prayer, we witness her magnifying the Lord and acknowledging the often paradoxical nature of God’s kingdom—where the barren become fruitful, the feeble are made strong, the hungry cease to hunger, and the lowly are exalted. In Luke 1, Mary’s words echo Hannah’s, directing our attention to the superior leader of Israel, the superior prophet, and the ultimate mediator between God and humanity—the promised Son of God. He is the one who has come to dwell among us, bringing the paradoxical ways of the kingdom of God to earth as they are in Heaven.

This is our resurrection hope—Christ is making all the wrong things right, and we can trust Him to sustain and provide for us, just as He sustained Hannah throughout her lengthy season of longing and waiting.

## REFLECTION

*What does Hannah’s prayer teach you about our Holy God?*

*Consider reading Mary’s song of praise in Luke 1:46-55. How is it like Hannah’s prayer?*

*Where do you notice the backwards way of the Kingdom of God in your own life?*



## PRAYER

*Father, thank You that you make the barren  
fruitful and give life and mercy in the midst  
of hardship and brokenness.*

*Thank You that you feed the hungry and  
give strength to the weary.*

*Thank You that you are making all the  
wrong things right in Jesus.*

*There is no one Holy like You, O Lord.  
Help me to see how you are working in my own  
heart and life to bring about the Kingdom  
of God on earth as it is in heaven. Help me  
to press into You in lengthy seasons of  
longing and waiting.*

*Amen.*

# DAY 8

## SCRIPTURE

*1 Samuel 2:27-36*

## CONTEMPLATION

Everything we possess in this life is a blessing from our generous God. From the clothes we wear and the food on our tables to the occupations we hold, all come from God's goodness. This passage serves as a reminder that our possessions and our positions in life are gifts and honors bestowed upon us. However, it also underscores our responsibility to honor God just as He has honored us.

Eli's household had been chosen by God to serve as priests, a highly esteemed and honorable role. Instead of obeying God's commands and fulfilling their duty with dedication, Eli and his sons exploited their position by taking the best sacrifices and offerings for themselves. As a consequence of their disobedience and dishonor, they lost their status as God's chosen priests and tragically, their lives. Although God had granted them the greatest honor of walking in His presence, they lived for their self-interest and ultimately lost everything. *"For those who honor me, I will honor, and those who despise me shall be lightly esteemed."*

## REFLECTION

*Are there things in your life you hold onto for yourself rather than offering to the Lord?*

*What steps could you take to prioritize giving honor to God?*

*How could you use the position in life God has granted you to glorify His Kingdom and serve Him well?*



## PRAYER

*Heavenly Father,  
Thank You for the numerous blessings You  
bestow on Your children. Your goodness is  
never ending and Your kindness never ceasing.  
I do not deserve all that You have given  
to me, yet You continue to amaze me  
with Your generosity.*

*Help me to use what You have blessed me with  
to serve Your Kingdom, glorify Your name,  
and share Your love at every opportunity.  
Father, take back what is Yours if my actions  
do not honor You; draw my heart and  
desires back to You alone.*

*Amen.*

# DAY 9

## SCRIPTURE

2 Samuel 7:1-5, 11-17

## CONTEMPLATION

*“Would you build me a house to dwell in?”* David asked a simple question: why should I live in a house while the presence of God dwells in a tent? He desires to honor God by doing something for Him. God answers David’s question with a question of His own and a promise.

*“Can you build me a house that can contain me?”* God reminds David that His faithfulness to His people has never been about what man can do for God, but what God can do for man. He proceeds to make a promise. Through David’s offspring, He will build a temple for Himself, and beyond that, through his descendants, God will establish David’s throne forever.

As time would reveal, David’s son, Solomon, completed a temple for God. However, this promise was far deeper and more glorious than any physical temple could depict. One day, there would be an heir of David who would build an eternal temple (Mark 14:58), be established on an eternal throne (Matthew 19:28-29), and reign over an eternal Kingdom (John 18:36). His power would not be attained through might but through a cross, a grave, and a resurrection.

## REFLECTION

*How do you think David felt knowing he would not be able to see the finished temple?*

*How does the promise of an eternal King help us in our disappointments?*

*What prayers do you need to bring to Jesus today, your eternally, enthroned King?*





## PRAYER

*God, eternal King forever. I come to You  
knowing that I have nothing I can bring that  
You need. For I am just human, and  
You are divine.*

*I am thankful today that Your affection for  
me is not based on what I can do but based on  
who You are, on Your faithfulness and loving-  
kindness toward Your people.*

*I thank You for Your Son, Jesus. Who is the  
mediator between God and man. He knows me,  
loves me, and is powerful enough to save me.*

*I bring You all my pains, worries, questions,  
and doubts because You are a good King Who  
I can cast all my cares on for You care for me.  
Help me to see, feel, know, and live in  
light of that reality.*

*Amen.*

# DAY 10

## SCRIPTURE

*Psalm 110*

## CONTEMPLATION

Psalm 110:1 stands as the most quoted and referenced Old Testament verse in the New Testament - and for good reason! This verse, cited at least 24 times by Jesus, Peter, Paul, and the writer of Hebrews, encapsulates the essence of the Gospel. In merely seven verses, Psalm 110 portrays Jesus as both king (vv. 1-3) and priest (v. 4), foreshadowing the ascension (v. 1), final judgment (v. 1b, 5-6), eternity (v. 4), and the resurrection (v. 7). Each verse emphatically points to Jesus! King David serves as a reminder of Jesus, the ultimate King of Kings. This High Priest serves beyond the limitations of time, as “He is a priest forever” (v. 4). While the Law stipulated that a man could not hold positions as both priest and king since they originated from different tribes, Jesus defies these boundaries! He reigns sovereignly as King and intercedes mercifully as Priest. As King, He crushes those who oppose His throne, and as Priest, He intercedes from the right hand of God’s throne to save all those who call Him Lord.

## REFLECTION

*What comfort does Jesus being seated at the right hand of God bring to your life?*

*Jesus lives forever to make intercession for you. How does that impact you?*

*Is Jesus your Lord, King, and High Priest?*



## PRAYER

*Thank You Jesus for being my Lord, King, and  
High Priest. Thank You for interceding for  
me at the right hand of God.*

*Thank You for reigning over everything as King  
of Kings. Thank You for being the only One who  
saves and takes away our sins! Thank You that  
one day You will pour out Your wrath on all  
evil as You continue Your eternal reign.*

*You are my Lord! You are my King! You are my  
High Priest! In Jesus' name I pray,*

*Amen.*

# SUNDAY

Every Sunday is a mini-Easter! The church assembles to live out and celebrate the reality of the resurrection. Gathered under a central confession that Christ has come, He has died, He is risen, and He will come again. Gathered to be edified through God's Word and to encourage God's people. Gathered to remind our hearts, souls, minds, and bodies what is true about God and what is true about ourselves, and to help others do the same. Today, before you gather, prepare your heart to receive and obey the Lord's instruction.

*For the love of Christ compels us, since we have reached this conclusion, that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all so that those who live should no longer live for themselves, but for the one who died for them and was raised.*

**2 Corinthians 5:14-15**

# PRAYERS OF PREPARATION

## PREPARE TO HEAR FROM GOD

*Lord, on this Sunday, would You fill me with Your Spirit to be able to hear and understand all that You desire to say to me through Your Word and Your people? Help me to be aware of Your presence this morning and to gather expectantly with Your church.*

*Ask God to speak to you in any specific areas that you may need to hear.*

## PREPARE TO OBEY GOD'S WORD

*As I hear You this morning, would You empower me to obey every word You speak? I want to cooperate with everything You are doing. I love You, God. Help me to obey Your commands this morning.*

*Ask God to show you any steps of obedience you specifically need to take.*

## PREPARE TO ENCOURAGE GOD'S PEOPLE

*I thank You that I have the privilege to gather with my brothers and sisters in Christ this morning. In the same way that I ask You to work in me, would You work in them? Would You allow me to encourage, bear burdens, pray for, and serve others this morning? Use me to minister to Your church.*

*Pick a few people this morning and pray for them.*

# DAY 11

## SCRIPTURE

*Psalm 2*

## CONTEMPLATION

*“Why do the nations rage and the people plot in vain?”* Lent is a season of reflection and repentance, a time where we are reminded of our own frailty. It is a period to reflect on Christ, where we see our own attempts to wield power and control laid bare.

Yet, the One who truly sits on the throne simply laughs. Our rebellion poses no threat to His authority, to His Kingship. Our attempts at authority lead to chaos, disorder, rage, and vanity. However, the True King brings stability, security, blessings, and life.

While His authority is unquestionable, our submission to it is. In today's reading, we are invited to kiss the Son. We are called to submit to and obey the True King, not just a King but the promised Divine Son who will restore all things through His life, death, burial, and resurrection. The King whose authority doesn't lead to harm but to goodness, to wholeness. This is The King. This is Our King, and today we lay aside our raging and plotting to choose to trust the Divine Son who sits on His throne.

## REFLECTION

*What areas of your life are you grasping for your own authority instead of submitting to Christ's?*

*Where are you currently experiencing chaos and need to ask God for His peace?*

*Why are you thankful that Jesus is your King?*



## PRAYER

*My Lord and King, everywhere You rule there is order, flourishing, and peace. Thank You for Your kind and compassionate heart that doesn't crush me with Your authority, but through Your Son provides life abundantly.*

*Today, I am submitting to Your rule and reign in my life. All the ways I try and control. All the ways I try and maneuver and manipulate to bring order in my life I give over to You, my good King. My attempts at ruling only lead to more harm and brokenness so I choose to trust You.*

*Thank You for being King of my life. Thank You for saving me through Your Son. Thank You for empowering me through Your Spirit. Thank You for ruling with kindness and compassion.  
I trust You today. I submit to You today.  
I love You today.*

*Amen.*

# DAY 12

## SCRIPTURE

*Psalm 118:22-24*

## CONTEMPLATION

Although rejected by the religious leaders of His day, Jesus was God's perfect choice to bring redemption to mankind. When Jesus quoted Psalm 118:22-23 in Matthew 21:42, He reminded everyone that while He was "the stone the builders rejected," He was also the "cornerstone" upon which faith is built.

In ancient construction, builders carefully selected the biggest and strongest stone as the cornerstone to support the weight of the entire building. They rejected stones that did not meet their specifications. Some looked at Christ and rejected Him as the Messiah and Savior. How could anyone reject God's precious and chosen cornerstone (1 Peter 2:6)? Simply put, they made the wrong choice. They wanted something grand built that met their specs – but only Jesus could do that. They were foolish, building on sinking sand instead of the solid Rock that is Christ (Matthew 7:24-27).

Jesus is the Chief Cornerstone, chosen by God, upon which we must build our lives. No wonder the psalmist bookends Psalm 118 with "give thanks to the Lord, for He is good. His love endures forever" (vv. 1, 29). Jesus, our Firm Foundation, generates tremendous gratitude and gives us reason to celebrate. While some may foolishly reject Him, we wisely rejoice and are glad. We declare with great confidence that Jesus is marvelous in our eyes (v. 23).

## REFLECTION

*As you read Psalm 118, what words and phrases stand out?*

*What causes some to reject Christ as the foundation for their lives?*

*How does Christ being chosen by God while rejected by men bring you hope and confidence?*





## PRAYER

*Jesus, You are the Rock upon which I build my life. Others may reject You, but I thankfully choose You as my Firm Foundation. You are precious and chosen by God, perfect in every way, and the only One able to rescue, save, and redeem. The Lord has done this! It is marvelous in my eyes! I will rejoice and be glad!*

*Amen.*

# DAY 13

## SCRIPTURE

*Psalm 69:1-12*

## CONTEMPLATION

Waiting is hard—much harder if it occurs amid severe trial. We do everything in our power to avoid or shortcut our times of waiting. Yet, in this season of Lent, we are, in many ways, invited to lean into these moments of waiting.

This Psalm depicts the dire situation in which David found himself. He describes the water rising up to his neck (v. 1), sinking without a foothold (v. 2a), being swept away by floodwaters (v. 2b), weary of crying out (v. 3a), parched without water (v. 3b), outnumbered by enemies (v. 4), causing his people to stumble (v. 6), bearing the reproach of others (v. 9), and so on. Have you ever found yourself in a helpless situation, where God's intervention seemed the only means of survival?

The good news of Jesus is that although we are born helpless in sin because of Adam, our reproach has fallen on God in Jesus, who grants forgiveness and freedom. So, our present weeping turns to profound joy. What we await is the certain work of God.

## REFLECTION

*Which verse resonated with your experience? Where do you feel helpless right now?*

*How does the good news of Jesus' death and resurrection in our place speak hope to your helpless feelings?*

*God knows our struggle and has stepped in, joining Himself to us. How does that help you in your current struggle or waiting?*



## PRAYER

*Heavenly Father,*

*Remind me today of Your deep well of mercy  
made accessible through Jesus. All that I need,  
You have and generously give. Help me rest in  
Your forgiveness and freedom today.*

*When the water was up to my neck because of  
my sin, You intervened and saved me in Jesus.  
I am no longer helpless. May I glorify You in  
all that I say and do today, remembering Your  
sufficiency in my weakness, Your riches in my  
poverty, Your life in my death.*

*Amen.*

# DAY 14

## SCRIPTURE

*Psalms 109:21-31*

## CONTEMPLATION

For many, a feeling of discomfort arises when reading this psalm. David's request feels hateful and mean-spirited. We seek forgiveness and restoration, yet the psalm does not end there. It simply concludes with David's trust that God will ultimately make everything right.

What if this feeling is the emotion that the season of Lent is meant to evoke? Things in this world are broken. Sickness, unrest, and injustice are results of this brokenness. Therefore, sometimes we might feel as David did. We become upset at the unfair and unjust situations we encounter, hurt by those close to us, and feel the weight of the world's brokenness.

Thus, in this season of Lent, we are challenged to reflect on this brokenness. We are called to confront the world's brokenness, just as David mourns in this psalm. We engage in this practice because it fosters within us a longing for God to one day set all things right. It drives us toward the promise God has made to restore and heal the brokenness of the world. Thus, we can echo David's resolve: "I will praise him in the presence of many. For he stands at the right hand of the needy..."

## REFLECTION

*What areas of this broken world are you mourning this Lent? How are they making you long for Jesus' second coming?*

*Is it ok for us to pray to God like David does in this psalm? How might praying like this be helpful in painful situations?*

*List some ways you can remain hopeful for Jesus' second coming during moments of difficulty and pain.*



## PRAYER

*God, one day You will return to make all things  
right. In the middle of this broken world help  
me remember and reflect upon this truth. I give  
You the difficulty and pains in my life and ask  
that You would use them to make me  
more like Jesus.*

*Amen.*

# DAY 15

## SCRIPTURE

*Psalm 22:1-18, 29-31*

## CONTEMPLATION

During the life of Jesus, if an Israelite recited the first phrase of a scripture, anyone around would know they were referencing the entire portion of that scripture. So, when Jesus uttered from the cross, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” those around Him would have immediately recognized that He was referring to what we now call Psalm 22.

We cannot fully comprehend the pain, betrayal, loneliness, humiliation, and the mental, spiritual, and emotional agony of the cross. The Creator was being crushed by His creation. The Savior was being slaughtered by those He came to save. The Christ was being condemned by those He came to set free. It’s the most tragic of betrayals, but its beauty is revealed when we experience our deepest hurts.

When we face anguish, loneliness, the pain of loss, or the sting of defeat, it is then that we can find comfort knowing that the Savior and Creator understands how we feel. He has empathy and compassion for us because He KNOWS the pain too.

## REFLECTION

*Are you carrying unbearable pain?*

*In what way did Jesus share a similar pain?*

*What might be the “beauty from ashes” that could come from your suffering?*



## PRAYER

*Jesus, it seems unbelievable that the one who created the universe would allow Himself to suffer so tremendously at the hands of those He created. Humiliation, betrayal, ridicule, and despair are not foreign to You. They characterized Your life and death here on earth.*

*We, too, have pain. We face hardships that we don't understand, we don't have answers for, we don't know how to overcome. So, Jesus, we ask for Your help. We ask for Your comfort, knowing that You understand what we are feeling. Jesus, would You heal our hearts?*

*Father, we also understand that many around us are suffering. Will You give us the strength to reach out to others and offer a listening ear, a helping hand, or a shoulder to cry upon? As You help us, may we be willing to help and comfort others, realizing that we gain strength when we walk together through our struggles.*

*For the sake of Jesus and Your glory,*

*Amen.*

# DAY 16

## SCRIPTURE

*Psalms 68: 7-18*

## CONTEMPLATION

In Psalm 68, David recounts the faithfulness of God to make a way to the Promised Land. As He leads His people through the wilderness, through all their doubts and fears, His absolute power is displayed. What a reminder that the same God who knows you better than anyone ever could is the same God before whom the earth trembles and quakes. The same God who hears your every request is the same God who is capable of creating a downpour in the desert. The same God who controls the whole universe is reliable to provide for the needy. God has not faltered in His faithfulness once, since the events of this passage or before it, and He never will.

Regardless of what you are needing, praying, hoping, or longing for, you can count on this: you will not be the first believer in history who God fails. His track record of fulfilling His promises is perfect. How can you know this? These stories from the past display God's power and reliability. But living on this side of the cross, what greater sign that God will make good on His promises than the one He kept in Jesus? "He who did not spare His own Son but gave Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him graciously give us all things?" (Romans 8:32)

## REFLECTION

*The Israelites carried the ark of the covenant throughout this wilderness journey as a symbol of the presence of God being with them and going before them. How do you think this reminder that God was with them affected their sense of safety, comfort, and confidence as they lived their lives?*

*If the Spirit of that same God lives in you now, do you live as if that's your reality?*

*In what ways are you struggling to believe God will be faithful to fulfill His promises in your life?*





## PRAYER

*God help me to believe that You can and will be faithful to me. You are all powerful and mindful of those who need You. Help me to look to Your willingness to sacrifice Yourself in my place on the cross, and Your victory over death and the grave. May it convince my heart that You are more committed to being faithful, than I am sinful.*

*Amen.*

# SUNDAY

Every Sunday is a mini-Easter! The church assembles to live out and celebrate the reality of the resurrection. Gathered under a central confession that Christ has come, He has died, He is risen, and He will come again. Gathered to be edified through God's Word and to encourage God's people. Gathered to remind our hearts, souls, minds, and bodies what is true about God and what is true about ourselves, and to help others do the same. Today, before you gather, prepare your heart to receive and obey the Lord's instruction.

*For if we have been united with Him in the likeness of his death, we will certainly also be in the likeness of his resurrection. For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be rendered powerless so that we may no longer be enslaved to sin,*

**Romans 6:5-6**

# PRAYERS OF PREPARATION

## PREPARE TO HEAR FROM GOD

*Lord, on this Sunday, would You fill me with Your Spirit to be able to hear and understand all that You desire to say to me through Your Word and Your people? Help me to be aware of Your presence this morning and to gather expectantly with Your church.*

*Ask God to speak to you in any specific areas that you may need to hear.*

## PREPARE TO OBEY GOD'S WORD

*As I hear You this morning, would You empower me to obey every word You speak? I want to cooperate with everything You are doing. I love You, God. Help me to obey Your commands this morning.*

*Ask God to show you any steps of obedience you specifically need to take.*

## PREPARE TO ENCOURAGE GOD'S PEOPLE

*I thank You that I have the privilege to gather with my brothers and sisters in Christ this morning. In the same way that I ask You to work in me, would You work in them? Would You allow me to encourage, bear burdens, pray for, and serve others this morning? Use me to minister to Your church.*

*Pick a few people this morning and pray for them.*

# DAY 17

## SCRIPTURE

*Psalm 72:12-19*

## CONTEMPLATION

This psalm was likely written by King David as a prayer over his son, King Solomon's earthly kingship. It sought that Solomon's reign would reflect the justice and righteousness of God on earth. David prays for his son's kingship to rectify injustices, deliver the needy, and foster fruitful lands. However, David acknowledges that this type of kingship is solely found under the God of Israel. He acknowledges, "Blessed be the God of Israel, who alone does wondrous things" (v.18). No earthly ruler can bring about true and lasting peace, justice, or righteousness. This reveals that David's heart's longing (and ours) is for the only true and righteous King, Jesus, to come. His name will endure forever, and His rule and reign will not rely on physical strength or force; rather, He will perfect the kingship and rectify all that is wrong. As we look towards the cross, may we recognize that our true and righteous King paid a costly price for us—may we bless His glorious name forever!

## REFLECTION

*How is Jesus better than King David or King Solomon?*

*What does this psalm teach you about the character of our God and the only perfect king, Jesus?*

*How does this psalm encourage you to set your eyes on Jesus while living in an imperfect world, under the leadership of imperfect people?*



## PRAYER

*Thank You, Father, that You deliver the needy,  
You extend mercy to the weak, You redeem life  
out of oppression, and You give Your people  
an abundance. Your name, O God, endures  
forever! You alone do wondrous things. May  
the whole earth be filled with Your glory!  
Would You help me to set my eyes on Jesus,  
the only perfect, faithful King over all?*

*Amen.*

# DAY 18

## SCRIPTURE

*Isaiah 42:1-9*

## CONTEMPLATION

All of us live in a world broken by sin; a world torn apart by war, disease, and hate. Many have lived through devastating tragedies, extreme suffering, and immense loss. In this brokenness, we can feel trapped by the chains of darkness, hopelessness, injustice, and sin.

This passage of scripture reminds us that there is hope in Jesus, the Messiah, God's chosen servant. God has always had a plan to free His people from the prison of darkness and injustice. He would send His Son as a humble servant, bringing light to the world and justice to the nations. We find eternal freedom in God's promised Savior who came to restore gently and faithfully what was broken.

*"Behold, the former things have come to pass,  
and new things I now declare."*

## REFLECTION

*How has Jesus Christ freed you and brought light into your darkness?*

*Why do you believe it was so important for the Messiah to simultaneously embody justice and gentleness?*

*How can you reflect the encouraging and kind-hearted character of Christ in your own life?*



## PRAYER

*Heavenly Father,*

*Thank You for not leaving me in my hopelessness but sending hope and salvation through Your Son. When I feel trapped by darkness or chained by injustice, remind me that You have the ultimate authority over all. Remind me that You bring light to the world and justice to the nations.*

*Thank You for not leaving me in my sin, but providing a way for redemption and forgiveness. Father, forgive me for when my life looks more like the world instead of You. Help me to follow Your example of humility and gentleness as I go from day to day.*

*Amen.*

# DAY 19

## SCRIPTURE

*Isaiah 49:1-7*

## CONTEMPLATION

*“I will make you as a light for the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.”*

Today’s text is one of four that have come to be called the “Servant Songs” in Isaiah. Each song speaks to the character of the servant who will one day redeem God’s people.

This servant will speak as a prophet, and his words will pierce to the soul. This servant will embody all that Jacob and Israel were meant to be and will restore them. This servant will succeed where every man, woman, and people have failed.

In fact, in this servant, the light and hope of nations will dwell, and salvation will reach every corner of the earth. This will not be merely a human servant but one within who redemption exists.

Though this servant will be the hope of the world, the light for the nations, he will be despised and abhorred, rejected and cast out by the nations. In his rejection, all men will find their acceptance.

## REFLECTION

*What can we learn from the Promised One being described as a servant?*

*In what ways have we rejected this Servant?*

*What are some areas you need this “light of the nations” to bring light into your own life?*





## PRAYER

*God, my light and salvation. I come to You knowing that in many ways I have rejected You by what I have done and by what I have left undone. I thank You for accepting me because of the work of Your Servant Son, Jesus.*

*I ask that You help me to follow and obey You in Your mission to be the light and salvation to all nations. Help me to serve as You serve. Help me to follow the example You have set knowing that You did not come to be served but to serve.*

*Help me to cooperate with You in serving others and seeing Your Kingdom come and Your will done on earth as it is in heaven.*

*Amen.*

# DAY 20

## SCRIPTURE

*Isaiah 50:4-9*

## CONTEMPLATION

Jesus knows how to sustain the weary with His Word (v. 4a). Phrases from Scripture like “It is finished” and “Father, forgive them” resonate in the ears and hearts of the hopeless. The forgotten, desperate, and marginalized are “awakened morning by morning” (v. 4b) by the hope of Christ, Who speaks life into death and forgiveness into sin. Jesus was so committed to the task of being a Savior that He “offered His back to those who beat him,” His “cheeks to those who pulled out His beard,” and He “did not hide His face from mocking and spitting” while enduring the crucifixion (v. 6). The sacrifice of Jesus, Who was arrested, tried, and murdered for our sins, is foreshadowed in the words of Isaiah 50:4-9.

Because Jesus endured the cross, He gives us the courage to persevere in this sinful world as we await the eternity of heaven that He willingly purchased for us with His shed blood. The Good News that Jesus endured the cross and scorned its shame (Hebrews 12:2) reminds us to “set our faces like flint” as we will not be put to shame (v. 7). Jesus has vindicated us from the power of sin (v. 8a). When we are faced with the shame of our sin (v. 8b), we are comforted by Isaiah’s song, “It is the Sovereign Lord who helps me” (v. 9).

## REFLECTION

*How does Isaiah 50:4-9 bring hope?*

*What qualities of Christ do you see in this passage?*

*How does this Scripture help us deal with sin?*



## PRAYER

*Jesus, thank You for suffering on the cross to pay the penalty for my sin. The sorrow and affliction You endured brought me peace with God. When Satan accuses me of my sins, I have the confidence of Your crucifixion as proof of forgiveness. You are the Sovereign Lord who helped me do what I could not. I am eternally grateful that You died and rose again to free me from sin. In Jesus' name,*

*Amen.*

# DAY 21

## SCRIPTURE

*Isaiah 53:1-6*

## CONTEMPLATION

*“A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief”.*

During Lent, we are reminded of our own sufferings, pains, and griefs. The feeling of needing someone to help us and heal us is just under the surface of every human heart. Maybe you are feeling this pain today.

In today's reading, we are invited to cast our gaze on the Promised One who can heal and restore, but as our eyes land on this Savior, we do not see a valiant warrior but instead, a suffering servant. One who in the eyes of the world would be considered a failure. In fact, “one from whom men hide their faces,” one who is not praised but despised.

Jesus Christ is not one who stands far off from our pain but instead comes close and knows what it's like to grieve, suffer, feel exhausted, tired, and hurt. But his rescue isn't simply about sitting with us; it is about healing our griefs, mending our wounds, fixing our broken places, and saving our souls. This promised one will suffer so we do not, for with his wounds, we are healed.

## REFLECTION

*Where in your life do you feel like you need someone to come close?*

*What griefs do you currently have that you need to bring to God?*

*How can you thank Jesus, your suffering servant, for how he can meet you in your grief?*



## PRAYER

*Dear God, I come to You today with my  
wounds, my grief, and my sufferings. I know  
You care about them and want me to  
bring them to You.*

*I'm thankful You are not a God who cannot  
relate to me but became like me and took  
on flesh so I could become like You. That all  
my iniquities have been laid on You so I can  
experience an abundant life and though I still  
experience grief I'm thankful for the  
peace You give.*

*Though I may not always feel it or understand  
it I thank You for bearing my griefs and  
carrying my sorrows. You know what I need  
today. Will You show me all my broken places  
that You desire to heal?*

*I trust You. I love You. I thank You.*

*Amen.*

# DAY 22

## SCRIPTURE

*Isaiah 55:1-7*

## CONTEMPLATION

The Holy One of Israel (v. 5) invites all who are thirsty to come and drink freely from Him, the eternal life-giving water. Jesus alone satisfies. Drink deeply. He fulfills all those who hunger and thirst after His righteousness. There are no barriers to approaching His great feast. Come, eat, drink, and be fulfilled. No money? No worries. He's paid the price on Calvary. Step right up to His banquet table. Taste and see that the Lord is good. He desires to fill those who recognize their need for Him with the eternal sustenance of Himself. He is the Bread of Life. Listen to Him. Everything you could spend your money on to fill your spiritual hunger pangs and parched soul is worthless, tasteless, and rotten. He has provided the grandest gift, the richest of fare, through an everlasting covenant.

This season of Lent reminds us to seek the Lord while He may be found. We must call on Him while He is near. We must forsake our ways and thoughts, give ear to Him, and come His way. If you're thirsty, come drink. If you're hungry, come eat. Just as the woman at the well (John 4) desired and tasted His life-giving water, we must also turn to the Lord and allow Him to satisfy and sustain.

## REFLECTION

*Why do our best purchases fall short of satisfying our souls?*

*In what ways does this invitation to a free feast seem unreal?*

*What wicked ways and thoughts do you need to forsake that have turned you away from the Lord?*



## PRAYER

*Jesus, You alone satisfy. Thank You for purchasing and providing life-giving water that satisfies our souls. Thank You for being the Bread of Life that fills us with contentment and joy. I am sorry for thinking I could ever replace You with something greater.*

*Help me listen to You, come to You, seek You, and be satisfied in You. In Jesus' name,*

*Amen.*

# SUNDAY

Every Sunday is a mini-Easter! The church assembles to live out and celebrate the reality of the resurrection. Gathered under a central confession that Christ has come, He has died, He is risen, and He will come again. Gathered to be edified through God's Word and to encourage God's people. Gathered to remind our hearts, souls, minds, and bodies what is true about God and what is true about ourselves, and to help others do the same. Today, before you gather, prepare your heart to receive and obey the Lord's instruction.

*My goal is to know him and the power of his  
resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings,  
being conformed to his death,  
**Philippians 3:10***



# PRAYERS OF PREPARATION

## PREPARE TO HEAR FROM GOD

*Lord, on this Sunday, would You fill me with Your Spirit to be able to hear and understand all that You desire to say to me through Your Word and Your people? Help me to be aware of Your presence this morning and to gather expectantly with Your church.*

*Ask God to speak to you in any specific areas that you may need to hear.*

## PREPARE TO OBEY GOD'S WORD

*As I hear You this morning, would You empower me to obey every word You speak? I want to cooperate with everything You are doing. I love You, God. Help me to obey Your commands this morning.*

*Ask God to show you any steps of obedience you specifically need to take.*

## PREPARE TO ENCOURAGE GOD'S PEOPLE

*I thank You that I have the privilege to gather with my brothers and sisters in Christ this morning. In the same way that I ask You to work in me, would You work in them? Would You allow me to encourage, bear burdens, pray for, and serve others this morning? Use me to minister to Your church.*

*Pick a few people this morning and pray for them.*

# DAY 23

## SCRIPTURE

*Isaiah 61:1-3*

## CONTEMPLATION

The latter chapters of Isaiah (40-66) focus on the coming redemption of the people of God through the chosen Messiah. They describe, in a beautiful array of images, the future glory that will arise out of the great depths of painful exile. This glory will only come through the work of the Messiah.

Those who were afflicted and smitten by God in exile would call the Lord's anointed "smitten by God and afflicted" (53:4b). Yet through His affliction, He binds up the broken-hearted, proclaims liberty to the captives, opens the prisons of the bound, proclaims the year of the Lord's favor and the day of His vengeance. He comforts the mourners and crowns their heads, granting them the oil of gladness and the garment of praise. They are oaks of righteousness, planted to glorify their God (61:1-3).

In the synagogue at Nazareth, Jesus read the first half of these verses and declared them to be fulfilled. The time of favor has begun in Jesus. He is the Anointed One who has come to preach the good news to the poor, to bind up the broken-hearted, liberate the captives, and release the prisoners. Are you poor in spirit, broken-hearted, held captive, a prisoner? Hear the good news: Jesus has come for you.

## REFLECTION

*Where are you broken-hearted right now? Ask the Lord to come and bind up that area.*

*Where is it hard for you to see the favor of the Lord in your life right now?*

*The Lord has planted you that you may glorify Him where you are. How are you glorifying Him and how can you do so more and more?*



## PRAYER

*Father,*

*You have crowned my head with beauty and  
clothed me with blessing in Jesus. I rejoice in  
Your goodness towards me. I could do nothing  
to improve my situation, to raise myself from  
the depths, yet You chose to act on my behalf; to  
redeem me from my sin. For that I will  
praise and glorify You.*

*Today, may my eyes be fixed upon You, my  
salvation. When I feel broken-hearted help  
me to turn to You who can mend. Help me to  
receive Your oil of gladness in the place  
of my sorrows.*

*Have mercy on me today and be my strength.*

*Amen.*

# DAY 24

## SCRIPTURE

*Jeremiah 33:14-18*

## CONTEMPLATION

At the time of writing this, news headlines report a group of pirates raiding ships in the Red Sea, subvariants of a virus that shut down the world, and Christian hostages in Gaza. What terrible news! It can be overwhelming.

Next to these, other articles speak of two actors recreating a silly album cover, a woman selling antiques, and Mercedes adding a new color to their cars. These articles seem to overlook the issues of the day, appearing as mere distractions from the pain and brokenness of the world.

These two types of articles represent two ways we can respond to the brokenness of the world: obsess or ignore. These responses are understandable reactions to the fear and pain this world can bring. But in today's text, we read of a different response. Jeremiah tells a people in exile to "Look" toward God's righteous king! In the middle of a situation that should cause much fear and pain, he commands those in exile to look above their situation toward God's promise of Jesus.

Jesus is the righteous king now, and he will be king forever. He is currently spreading his righteousness through the Gospel message, and one day he will establish justice through His second coming! Our command in this passage is: Look to Him!

## REFLECTION

*What is your natural response to news about the brokenness of the world? Obsession or ignorance?*

*Why should Jesus' eternal kingship give us hope in this middle of a chaotic world?*

*How does Jesus' kingship impact the way you live among the brokenness of the world?*



## PRAYER

*God, even in the chaos of this broken world,  
You are King over all. Thank You that You are  
a faithful and unchanging King! Please help me  
to trust in Your kingship with a life obedient  
to Your commands. Knowing that such a life  
spreads Your righteousness into the world  
and those around me.*

*Amen.*

# DAY 25

## SCRIPTURE

*Ezekiel 34:23-31*

## CONTEMPLATION

There are places on earth that are incredibly beautiful, yet their splendor can't rival the unparalleled beauty we will witness in heaven—God's creation unmarred by brokenness and the burden of sin.

Likewise, Ezekiel's depiction of freedom and blessings would have stirred a profound longing in his audience for such peace. However, it pales in comparison to the eternal peace awaiting us when the Messiah ushers us into His everlasting Kingdom.

What an extraordinary day that will be! We'll encounter the fullness of what God has prepared for His children, free from the pain and disappointments that we endure in the present.

*"For now, we see indistinctly, as in a mirror, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I will know fully, as I am fully known."*  
*1 Corinthians 13:12*

## REFLECTION

*When thinking of eternity, what do you look forward to the most?*

*Are you longing for what Jesus promises, or are you satisfied with what the world offers?*

*These passages speak of freedom, rescue, safety, and provision. What areas of your life do you need Jesus to provide these things for you?*



## PRAYER

*Heavenly Father, You have blessed us so much that sometimes we become too satisfied with "less than." You offer blessings, but we pursue pleasure. You offer continuous joy, but we chase temporary happiness. You offer rest, but we resolve ourselves to busyness. You offer contentment, but we chase materialism.*

*Help us to realize all that the world has to offer are cheap substitutes for the wondrous things You have for Your children – and those can be ours right now, not simply after we die.*

*Father, we need Your freedom, Your rescue, Your redemption in our families and church and communities. Please show us a glimpse of the true blessings You have in store for us who serve You.*

*Thank You for Your amazing love for us,*

*Amen.*

# DAY 26

## SCRIPTURE

*Haggai 2:6-9*

## CONTEMPLATION

If we pay close attention, there is only one story told throughout the Bible and human history: God does good, humans sin, God rescues, and it shows Him as even more good and powerful than before. This is the pattern for every individual, for groups of people, for all mankind, and for the whole earth.

In Haggai, God promises to restore the temple in such a way that “the latter glory of this house will be greater than the former.” What a promise to the Israelites to know God was bringing restoration. But just as God does, He’s foreshadowing something even greater. Jesus, God Himself, was coming, to bring redemption and restoration through his life, death, and resurrection. No more sacrifices for the people of God; no more need for the temple. Something greater would come in Jesus.

The culmination of the Lenten season we are observing isn’t the end either. The Holy Spirit came, making everyone who would believe in Him temples of the Living God, carrying the same power, authority, and promise of God inside of them. And finally, we look forward to the ultimate glory to be revealed, when Christ will return, the earth will be made entirely new like the temple, God will dwell among us again, and “in that place, [He] will bring peace.”

## REFLECTION

*How have you seen this pattern of creation, sin, and redemption for God’s glory, in your own life?*

*What are some ways in which Jesus is a “greater glory” manifestation than God’s displays of power in the Old Testament?*

*Read 2 Corinthians 4:16-18. How does the promise of a greater, eternal weight of glory provide hope in the midst of our current struggles, trials, and temptations?*





## PRAYER

*God, thank You that Your glory knows no end.  
Its victory is sure, powerful, and guaranteed.  
When life is challenging or sin is overwhelming  
me, help me to remember that with Your glory,  
You always bring peace.*

*Restore hope to my heart that this current  
reality is not the end. Just like for millennia  
past, You will bring restoration again and  
again. May we look back at the greater glory  
revealed in the coming of Christ with gratitude  
and use it to fuel our hope for even  
greater glory ahead.*

*Amen.*

# DAY 27

## SCRIPTURE

*Zechariah 9:9-10*

## CONTEMPLATION

About 500 years prior to the first Palm Sunday, Zechariah 9:9-10 was written—a prophecy regarding the future Messiah. This astounding prophecy foretold a king arriving on a donkey, bearing salvation and peace for the nations. When Christ entered Jerusalem riding on a donkey (Matthew 21, Luke 19), the Jewish people likely connected Jesus to Zechariah 9. However, what they might not have anticipated or comprehended was that Jesus was entering Jerusalem to face death—approaching the cross in the final week of His life.

Contrary to expectations of seizing power through force or politics, He inaugurated God's rule on earth through a painful, sacrificial, and brutal death on the cross. His mission to bring peace to the nations, salvation to all, and establish dominion from sea to sea—prophecies made about Him almost 500 years earlier—would be fulfilled through a Roman crucifixion. As we reflect on Palm Sunday, let us remember this as the day Jesus entered Jerusalem—the King on the path to save us.

## REFLECTION

*What do you think the original readers of this Zechariah 9 prophecy would've thought or expected of the one coming on a donkey, carrying peace and salvation?*

*How does the fulfillment of this prophecy after 500 years encourage you to keep believing that God keeps His promises?*

*Are you trusting in Christ Jesus to be your peace and salvation?*



## PRAYER

*Thank You, Father, that You keep every promise  
You make to us. Thank You that You kept Your  
word in fulfilling this prophesy about Christ.*

*Thank You that He is the One Who carries  
salvation and brings peace to the nations—  
thank You that He carries my salvation and  
brings peace to me.*

*May the significance of this text not be lost  
on me today—help me to focus on the impact  
of these verses and their fulfillment in Jesus.  
I praise You that Your plan for us is salvation  
and peace through Christ!*

*Amen.*

# DAY 28

## SCRIPTURE

*Zechariah 12:10-14*

## CONTEMPLATION

Today's scripture delves into mourning and loss, weighing heavily on the soul as it highlights the cost of our sin: death and despair. Our sin demands the payment of death. Every person who has lived or will ever live deserves to pay the price of sin, yet Jesus willingly died, carrying the unfathomable weight of sin and shame so that we may live.

Through the Resurrection, we discover boundless joy from Jesus' sacrifice. It should also prompt us to pause and contemplate the depth of unconditional love our Lord holds for us. On our own, we could never comprehend the magnitude of the evil we have done, the hopelessness of sin, the suffering Jesus endured, and thus the enormity of God's grace toward us. God sent His Spirit of Grace to open our hearts and help us grasp not only the depth of our sinful betrayal but also the significance of what the Messiah has done for us.

*"And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so that, when they look on me, on him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him."*

## REFLECTION

*What is the importance of each individual's mourning over Christ's death emphasized rather than only the entire clan or house?*

*How might the depth of the Israelites' sorrow influence the magnitude of their joy at Jesus' resurrection?*

*What does it mean for you that God has given His followers a spirit of supplication that intercedes for us when we do not know what to pray?*



## PRAYER

*Heavenly Father,*

*My heart is heavy as I consider my sins'  
contribution to the debt Jesus paid on the cross.*

*All of my failures, mistakes, poor choices,  
and wrongdoings add to the suffering Christ  
endured, and yet He still chose to die  
on the cross to save me.*

*I cannot comprehend Your love for me. I will  
never be able to understand what depths of  
unconditional love You have for Your children  
that You would sacrifice so much to save those  
who deserved death. Jesus is the only evidence I  
need to know that You are Love. Open my heart  
and help me to love You and those around me  
with the unending love You have given to us.*

*Amen.*

# SUNDAY

Every Sunday is a mini-Easter! The church assembles to live out and celebrate the reality of the resurrection. Gathered under a central confession that Christ has come, He has died, He is risen, and He will come again. Gathered to be edified through God's Word and to encourage God's people. Gathered to remind our hearts, souls, minds, and bodies what is true about God and what is true about ourselves, and to help others do the same. Today, before you gather, prepare your heart to receive and obey the Lord's instruction.

*Now may the God of peace, who brought up from the dead our Lord Jesus—the great Shepherd of the sheep—through the blood of the everlasting covenant, equip you with everything good to do his will, working in us what is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.*  
**Hebrews 13:20-21**

# PRAYERS OF PREPARATION

## PREPARE TO HEAR FROM GOD

*Lord, on this Sunday, would You fill me with Your Spirit to be able to hear and understand all that You desire to say to me through Your Word and Your people? Help me to be aware of Your presence this morning and to gather expectantly with Your church.*

*Ask God to speak to you in any specific areas that you may need to hear.*

## PREPARE TO OBEY GOD'S WORD

*As I hear You this morning, would You empower me to obey every word You speak? I want to cooperate with everything You are doing. I love You, God. Help me to obey Your commands this morning.*

*Ask God to show you any steps of obedience you specifically need to take.*

## PREPARE TO ENCOURAGE GOD'S PEOPLE

*I thank You that I have the privilege to gather with my brothers and sisters in Christ this morning. In the same way that I ask You to work in me, would You work in them? Would You allow me to encourage, bear burdens, pray for, and serve others this morning? Use me to minister to Your church.*

*Pick a few people this morning and pray for them.*

# DAY 29

## SCRIPTURE

*John 1:29-34*

## CONTEMPLATION

*“Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.”*

The sacrifice of the Passover lamb was God's final command to His people who were in bondage in Egypt (Exodus 12). It would be through this sacrifice and its covering that God's people would ultimately be freed. The lamb was not spared so that their families could be saved, illustrating the cost required and the provision God could offer in redeeming His people.

In this text, we learn that the Passover lamb has become the Promised Son, reminding us of the cost needed for the sins of the world to be absolved and the love of the Father to provide salvation.

It invites us to reflect on the weight and seriousness of our sin. Jesus, being like us, had to come and conquer death through His own death so that we could have life. The Lamb would not be spared.

Though our sin is great, God's grace is greater. While we were sinners, the Father demonstrates His love for us by allowing the Lamb to die for us.

## REFLECTION

*What comes into your mind and heart when you reflect on the weight of your sin?*

*In your own words, why did the Lamb of God, Jesus, have to come?*

*How can you thank God today for providing all you need in Christ Jesus?*





## PRAYER

*God, thank You for the sweet conviction of sin.  
I do not want to be comfortable in what grieves  
You and what ultimately harms me.*

*I ask that You not simply show me any areas  
where I am dishonoring You but would You  
grow my desire to actively do good and actively  
avoid that which is sin. Empower me through  
Your Spirit to flee sin and to run towards You.*

*Thank You that I have full assurance that You  
will meet me with grace and forgiveness even in  
my worst moments because the Lamb  
has been provided.*

*Help me to hate what You hate, love what You  
love, and walk in the freedom that has been  
purchased for me in Christ Jesus.*

*Amen.*

# DAY 30

## SCRIPTURE

*Matthew 4:1-11*

## CONTEMPLATION

Peter writes about how not just anyone could “redeem us from the empty way of life” (1 Peter 1:18). It would require “the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect” to atone for sin (v. 19). Jesus was the perfect and sinless sacrifice for our sins. Just before Jesus began his earthly ministry, he was led away by the Spirit to be tempted by the devil (Matthew 4:1-11). After fasting for forty days, Jesus was tempted to sin by the devil three times, and each time, he overcame temptation.

Why was it important for Jesus to be tempted and display his sinlessness? Hebrews 2:17 says, “He had to be made like them, fully human in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people.” Led by the Spirit in a divine plan, God’s Son and perfect Man entered the wilderness and “was in every way tempted, yet without sin” (Hebrews 4:15). Our hope of salvation and forgiveness lies with the sinless suffering Savior who alone could destroy the devil’s power and free those who were held in slavery by their fear of death (Hebrews 2:15).

## REFLECTION

*Why was it important for Jesus to be tempted and overcome sin?*

*As you read Matthew 4:1-11, how do Jesus’ temptations match those found in 1 John 2:16?*

*What did Jesus do each time he was tempted to sin? How does that encourage us when we are tempted?*



## PRAYER

*Thank you, Jesus, for being the perfect  
and sinless sacrifice for sin. Only You could  
atone for our sins. Your example of resisting  
temptation encourages me that I, too, can resist  
the devil's temptation and overcome the desires  
of the flesh. I realize I must saturate my heart  
and mind with the truth of Your Word as I am  
in a spiritual battle. Thank You for giving me a  
way out when tempted to sin.*

*In Jesus' name,*

*Amen.*

# DAY 31

## SCRIPTURE

*Mark 1:40-45*

## CONTEMPLATION

*“Show yourself to the priest and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded.”*

When Jesus began his earthly ministry, he did many things to show he was the Promised One that the world had been looking for. In today’s reading, we see Jesus demonstrate His power through the miraculous healing of a man with leprosy.

Jesus always found himself around those who the world had discarded. He still does! In this healing, Jesus demonstrates His power as God, for who but God could heal in this way? Jesus is the offering for our cleansing.

According to Old Testament law, when one was healed, they were to go to the temple to offer sacrifices, and the priest would declare the sick person clean (Lev. 14:2-32). In this text, Jesus declares the leper clean, for Jesus is the greater priest and the greater offering that will cleanse all mankind. The temple and the cleansing rituals were shadows of the true cleansing that would come in the Promised One’s offering of Himself. As Peter would later write, “by His stripes, we are healed.”

## REFLECTION

*What does it tell us about Jesus that he was “moved with pity” for the sick man?*

*How could that bring you hope today?*

*How can you thank Jesus for being your greater priest and your greater offering today?*



## PRAYER

*God, it is easy to be overcome by the sickness and pain that I experience. Would You help me today fix my eyes on You, the One who can heal? The One who can save.*

*In You is all I need and through Your offering I am redeemed. Thank You for being the One who intercedes for me before God and thank You for being the perfect sacrifice for my sins. Search me today for any ways I am not trusting You and help me to give those over to You the Physician of my soul.*

*As the people came to You to be healed from every area, I come to You today to say I love You and trust You.*

*Amen.*

# DAY 32

## SCRIPTURE

*John 8:1-11*

## CONTEMPLATION

C.S. Lewis said, “To be a Christian means to forgive the inexcusable because God has forgiven the inexcusable in you.” How quick we are to ask for forgiveness for ourselves but slow to sometimes offer it to others. In John 8, Jesus forgave the woman caught in adultery when those who brought her to Him in the very act of it were ready to stone her. According to the Law of Moses, they had every right to do so, although they had disregarded the Law by only arresting the woman and not the man as well. They were using this woman as a trap to trick Jesus. Jesus never uses people. His motive is never to deceive us. When others stand with accusations in condemnation to harm, Jesus humbly kneels with authority in compassion to heal and save.

Even when caught, even when deserving of wrath, even in the very moment of sin, Jesus desires to extend mercy and forgive us for our sins. He commands us to leave our lives of sin while forgiving us for our current sin (v. 11). Jesus is powerful enough to forgive sin and loving enough to extend compassion while in sin to lead us out of it. Look to Him today for mercy and forgiveness. Thank Him. Worship Him.

## REFLECTION

*Are you as quick to forgive as you are to desire forgiveness?*

*How does Jesus help you with condemnation in sin?*

*Where do you need His forgiveness? His mercy? His grace?*



## PRAYER

*Jesus, thank You for Your forgiveness and compassion. Thank You for not throwing me away when I sin but lovingly walking me out of sin towards Your marvelous grace. Help me forgive others as You have forgiven me. Keep me focused on walking in Your forgiveness that leads us to walking out Your holiness.*

*In Jesus' name,*

*Amen.*

# DAY 33

## SCRIPTURE

*Luke 9:18-27*

## CONTEMPLATION

Everything rises and falls on how we answer Jesus' question, "Who do you say that I am?" While you may find this question simple to answer, the answer requires more than words.

Jesus immediately tells the disciples not to tell anyone because his work was not yet complete. He still had many things to suffer, to die, and ultimately to rise again. Can you imagine the disciples' feelings in that moment? The Christ just told them that he was going to die and rise. We know the disciples did not fully understand Jesus' pronouncement because of their response to the crucifixion. Yet, this response obviously would not have been congruent with their understanding of the Messiah's work. They would have been shocked!

However, the shock is not over. Not only is Christ going to suffer and die on the cross, but to follow him, you must carry your cross to the same fate. This continues to be one of the most potent sayings of Jesus. Jesus knew the sinfulness of mankind manifested itself in trading the Creator for the creation, seeking gain from the world, and losing our eternal gain with God. To confess Jesus as Lord in word only, while daily living for the gain of the world, is perhaps the most chronic problem we face.

## REFLECTION

*How are you currently confessing Jesus as the Christ in your life?*

*What does it look like in your life to pick up your cross daily and follow Jesus?*

*What does it look like for you to help others follow Jesus considering this passage?*





## PRAYER

*Jesus Christ, Son of God, thank You for willingly suffering and dying for me. Help me today to crucify my sinful desires for which You died. As Your follower, help me to confess You as Christ in word and deed today. May the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be pleasing to You today.*

*Amen.*

# DAY 34

## SCRIPTURE

*John 12:20-33*

## CONTEMPLATION

In today's text, Jesus describes the pattern for an honorable life that glorifies God: death and resurrection. Through Jesus' death and resurrection, He has brought eternal and abundant life. We must die to ourselves and be raised with Jesus. Here, Jesus shows us the story a seed tells: it must die before it can produce fruit.

This type of self-sacrifice is exactly what Jesus' life taught us. Philippians 2 instructs us about Jesus' humility in taking on human nature. In His humanity, Jesus obediently followed God's commands perfectly and eventually died a sacrificial death on a cross. Then, in verses 9-11, Paul tells us that God exalted, glorified, Jesus above every other name. Note the sequence: death, resurrection, then honor.

This is now the kind of life Jesus teaches His followers. He teaches us to live a life that sacrifices what I believe to be best for what God believes to be best. He guides us to live a life that sacrifices personal preferences for the well-being of others. He instructs us to live a life that mirrors the pattern set by our Lord, Savior, and example, Jesus Christ.

Remember His words, "If anyone serves me, he must follow me. Where I am, there my servant also will be."

## REFLECTION

*Has there been a difficult season in your life that God has used to grow you? How has that growth helped you in subsequent situations?*

*Have you ever held on to something too tightly? How would you describe your emotions during that season? Would you describe it as "life"?*

*What areas of your life are you currently struggling to sacrifice for Christ and others?*



## PRAYER

*God, through Your son, Jesus, You have shown us the way to eternal and abundant life. Jesus is our Lord, Savior, and example. Help us to believe that the same pattern that gave us eternal life in Christ will also give us abundant life in Christ. Please reveal to me the areas of my life to which I am holding tightly. Help me to sacrifice those to You for the abundant life that You offer.*

*Amen.*

# PALM SUNDAY

Every Sunday is a mini-Easter! The church assembles to live out and celebrate the reality of the resurrection. Gathered under a central confession that Christ has come, He has died, He is risen, and He will come again. Gathered to be edified through God's Word and to encourage God's people. Gathered to remind our hearts, souls, minds, and bodies what is true about God and what is true about ourselves, and to help others do the same. Today, before you gather, prepare your heart to receive and obey the Lord's instruction.

*"See, we are going up to Jerusalem. The Son of Man will be handed over to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn him to death. They will hand him over to the Gentiles to be mocked, flogged, and crucified, and on the third day he will be raised."*

**Matthew 20:18-19**

# PRAYERS OF PREPARATION

## PREPARE TO HEAR FROM GOD

*Lord, on this Sunday, would You fill me with Your Spirit to be able to hear and understand all that You desire to say to me through Your Word and Your people? Help me to be aware of Your presence this morning and to gather expectantly with Your church.*

*Ask God to speak to you in any specific areas that you may need to hear.*

## PREPARE TO OBEY GOD'S WORD

*As I hear You this morning, would You empower me to obey every word You speak? I want to cooperate with everything You are doing. I love You, God. Help me to obey Your commands this morning.*

*Ask God to show you any steps of obedience you specifically need to take.*

## PREPARE TO ENCOURAGE GOD'S PEOPLE

*I thank You that I have the privilege to gather with my brothers and sisters in Christ this morning. In the same way that I ask You to work in me, would You work in them? Would You allow me to encourage, bear burdens, pray for, and serve others this morning? Use me to minister to Your church.*

*Pick a few people this morning and pray for them.*

# DAY 35

## SCRIPTURE

*Mark 14:3-9*

## CONTEMPLATION

*“Care more than others think wise.*

*Risk more than others think safe.*

*Dream more than others think practical.*

*Expect more than others think possible.”*

**Howard Schultz**

Although originally intended to encourage those in the business world, the above quote holds true to this passage. Onlookers would have thought, “The audacity of this woman....”

Truly, she cared more about Jesus than the expensive perfume she sacrificed for Him; so much so that others called her act unwise and rebuked her. As a woman during that time, she risked much by simply approaching a teacher or prophet in someone’s home. It could have been seen as unsafe by some.

Her worship showed how much she loved Jesus, and she did it in a most impractical, yet significant way. After all, she could have sold the perfume for a year’s wages. (Think about how impractical that would be for you right now.) Do you notice her expectations? She didn’t expect anything from the Savior. She simply wanted to worship Him. However, Jesus did make sure that we would know about her even today – that woman who worshipped with such audacity.

## REFLECTION

*How would you rate your worship?*

*Do you risk your reputation by speaking of Jesus, or do you keep it practical and safe?*

*What might Jesus be asking you to sacrifice for Him? Are you willing?  
What would you expect in return?*



## PRAYER

*Heavenly Father, You are worthy of more than I could ever sacrifice. But often I find that I am not truly willing to sacrifice for You. I often keep my actions “safe” - not drawing too much attention by the way I talk about You, the way I praise You, toning down the way I truly feel.*

*But Father, I want to move beyond such lukewarm indifference to a point where You are truly the only thing that matters. So that Your praise, Your glory, and Your majesty are the only things that receive my attention. Father, help me lead others to worship You by the audacity of my worship.*

*All the saints and angels; They bow before Your throne; All the elders cast their crowns; Before the Lamb of God and sing.*

*You are worthy of it all; You are worthy of it all; For from You are all things; And to You are all things; You deserve the glory.*

*Amen.*

# DAY 36

## SCRIPTURE

*Mark 11:15-19*

## CONTEMPLATION

*"He entered the temple..."*

In Jesus' time, it was common for people to beg outside the temple entrance, hoping God's people would reflect His generous heart. These were generally the blind, paralyzed, disabled, the marginalized, the overlooked - those essential to Jesus' heart and stated mission (Luke 4:18-19). Countless opportunities to love God by loving your neighbor literally lined the temple's outer wall. Imagine Jesus' compassionate gaze shift from these people, to the exploitative business happening inside the temple walls, in the name of sacrifice. He overturned the tables of the money changers and chairs of those who sold pigeons...Put yourself in the scene. "Who does He think He is, keeping us from making sacrifices to God?" Jesus chose to boldly expose sins that were easily some of the most justifiable - ones seemingly harmless, practical, and "for God." Jesus' anger and actions were entirely without sin. He drives out both sellers and buyers - the sin and the allowance of sin. Is it not written...This place of prayer had been replaced by self-interest and convenience. His words echo 1 Sam. 15:22, "What is more pleasing to the Lord: your sacrifices or your obedience to His voice? Listen! Obedience is better than sacrifice." In righteous anger, Jesus is saying, "You are MISSING it." So often we can feel justified in doing or participating in things "for God" without truly letting the Spirit clean house in our hearts. In turn, we may be ignoring the very things that matter most to God.

## REFLECTION

*If you were in the temple that day, what about Jesus' message, method, or both would you have judged or labeled dangerous, rather than be amazed by? What do you think this reveals about your willingness to respond when God has a difficult but important word for you?*

*What do you seek to justify in your life at the expense of your neighbor and God's glory? (See Gen. 4:1-11, Luke 10:29, and Matt. 25:31-46 for further study)*

*What or who deeply matter to God's heart, that you have overlooked?*





## PRAYER

*Jesus, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, teach us to be like You. Thank You for disciplining those You love. Help us to remember we are now the temple of the Living God, if the Spirit of God lives inside of us. Give us curious, humble hearts during this season of Lent and for the rest of our lives, to let You cleanse the temple inside of us.*

*Convict us of the sins we justify, of the neighbors we ignore, and of the prayers we don't pray. Let our response be astonishment and obedience when Your conviction seems to threaten our comfort or self-righteousness. God, fill us with humility so that we remember what matters most and obey it.*

*Amen.*

# DAY 37

## SCRIPTURE

*Matthew 26:1-5, 14-25*

## CONTEMPLATION

The time of the Passover meal had come, and even as preparations for his betrayal had been made by a ‘close’ friend, Jesus intentionally reclined at the table with his disciples one last time. Judas had betrayed him to the chief priests for a lowly sum, perhaps because Jesus hadn’t turned out to be the type of Messiah Judas hoped for—humble and thoughtful instead of one of political force and power.

Nonetheless, Jesus intentionally dines with his disciples in fulfillment of his Father’s plan, and he wants them to know that his time is coming. Just before he institutes the Lord’s Supper, Jesus calls Judas out on what was meant to be a quiet betrayal. What Judas didn’t understand was that he was betraying the only true, sufficient, and final Passover Lamb when he handed Jesus over.

Jesus submitted to the Father’s plan in these moments, while Judas pursued wealth and the ways of the world. May Judas’s betrayal of the Passover Lamb, who is Christ Jesus, cause us to examine our own hearts—how are we pursuing wealth, selfish gain, approval of man, or anything else in the place of the One who gave His life for us?

## REFLECTION

*Why is it significant that Jesus kept the Passover with His disciples?*

*What do you think the other disciples were thinking during this meal?*

*Do you identify with Judas in any ways? Are you tempted to “betray” Christ for lesser affections?*



## PRAYER

*Thank You, God, that Jesus came to be the true, final, and sufficient Passover Lamb. Thank You that in His death, You gave me life. Please help me to search my own heart and affections. Call out any space in my heart that is not fully set on Christ. Remind me of the truth of the Gospel, that Christ died in my place and has given me everything I need for life and godliness.*

*Amen.*

# DAY 38

## SCRIPTURE

*John 13:1-15*

## CONTEMPLATION

This passage exemplifies the call of believers to continually serve those around us. Jesus knew those He loved would betray and deny Him, yet He still served them by washing their feet. At the time, Jesus knew what Judas was planning, knew that He would die on the cross, and knew the disciples would all desert Him when He needed them most.

Still, He chose to humble Himself and serve Judas as well as the other disciples. If the Savior of the world chose to take on the role of a servant and wash the feet of those who would betray Him, how much more should we take every opportunity to serve others? In big ways, in small ways, even in everyday ‘will you grab me a drink from the fridge’ ways.

*“For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you.”*

## REFLECTION

*How does this passage reveal the character of Christ?*

*What are some practical ways you can follow Jesus’ example of humble service?*

*Who in your life could you choose to serve in love?*



## PRAYER

*Dear Jesus,*

*I am not any better than the disciples; I am not more worthy than Judas. My sin placed You on the cross and my flesh has betrayed and denied You. But as You loved those whose feet You washed two thousand years ago, somehow You also love me. Even when I stumble and fall, You walk with me.*

*May I love You back by continually using every opportunity to serve You and Your Kingdom. Help me to imitate You by always serving those around me: no matter the cost, the amount of time spent, how big it is, how small it may be, who they are, or what they have done. As You humbled Yourself from the Throne of Heaven to Earth, to the floor of a home to wash feet, help me to chose a life of humble service.*

*Amen.*

# DAY 39

## SCRIPTURE

*John 19:1-37*

## CONTEMPLATION

*“They will look on him whom they have pierced.”*

The sin and brokenness of humanity find their culmination in the broken body of Christ. On the cross, we see the Divine One’s humanity put on full display. We witness Christ thirst, despair, weep, and ultimately die.

But this was no simple death. This was the death that would swallow every death. This was the death that would break the power of sin. This was the death that paid the penalty. This was the death that would one day end all deaths.

This was the death that every human deserved, and yet, on the cross, it’s the righteous, perfect, holy Son of God who experiences this death.

Why? So we won’t. Christ died so we can live. The goodness of this Good Friday is that we have a Savior who was willing to be pierced so we wouldn’t have to.

*“But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed.”*

*Isaiah 53:5*

## REFLECTION

*How can knowing Christ experienced the same sufferings that we do comfort us in our pain?*

*How would you describe God’s love for you that He displayed on the cross?*

*In what ways can you thank God considering the crucifixion?*



## PRAYER

*O Lord, I come to You on this Good Friday  
and remember Your great love and sacrifice  
for me. I grieve and repent of the ways that I  
have shouted “Crucify Him” with my words  
and my actions.*

*I want to skip to the resurrection because  
remembering Your pain is painful to me. But  
it’s in this sacrifice that I have hope. It’s in this  
darkness that Your light shines.*

*Help me to feel the weight of my sin as I reflect  
today. You had to die for me.*

*Help me to feel the deepness of Your love for me  
as I reflect today. You did die for me.*

*Thank You that even in the darkness of death  
there is hope and life because of Your sacrifice.  
Help me today to experience and extend Your  
love that You have always shown me.*

*Amen.*

# DAY 40

## SCRIPTURE

*Matthew 27:57-66*

## CONTEMPLATION

In our Lent devotions, we've journeyed to the cross together. Today, we pause at the tomb. Although we know Jesus rose, assume the position of Mary and Mary Magdalene. Picture yourself seated across from the tomb with them. Jesus lies inside, dead, and the stone has been rolled into place. What might be their thoughts and emotions? How about yours?

Simultaneously, two other encounters unfold. Joseph of Arimathea, a disciple of Jesus, approaches Pilate, requesting Jesus' body for an honorable burial. Pilate agrees. The Pharisees, on the other hand, call Jesus a deceiver and ask Pilate to secure the tomb until the third day, recalling Jesus' words, "After three days, I will rise again". Honor and contempt - two contrasting perspectives.

As the Marys had heard Jesus' claim of a third-day resurrection, mentioned 21 times in the Gospel accounts, they would return soon to find an empty tomb, but not today. While you sit with them in contemplation, consider your faith in Jesus' resurrection claim. Perhaps, in this segment of the gospel journey, especially in this text, we're meant to be still, wait, and trust in God's timing. Sometimes, God, who will eventually move the stone, conceals the light in the darkness. We're urged to trust God, even when the other side of the tomb remains unseen.

## REFLECTION

*How would you respond to hearing Jesus' claim to resurrect after three days?*

*What's your honest evaluation of your emotions as you sit with the Marys?*

*How is your faith in the waiting?*

**DAY 40: SILENT SATURDAY**





## PRAYER

*Jesus, I trust You at Your word. Even when I  
cannot see it, I believe You are always at work.  
Your promises are true. Help me when I am  
“sitting across from the tomb” to be hopeful  
and trusting. Increase my faith and  
help me worship in the waiting.  
In Jesus’ name,*

*Amen.*

# EASTER SUNDAY

*See, what a morning, gloriously bright  
With the dawning of hope in Jerusalem  
Folded the grave-clothes, tomb filled with light  
As the angels announce, "Christ is risen"  
See God's salvation plan  
Wrought in love, borne in pain, paid in sacrifice  
Fulfilled in Christ, the man  
For He lives, Christ is risen from the dead  
See Mary weeping, "Where is He laid?"  
As in sorrow she turns from the empty tomb  
Hears a voice speaking, calling her name  
It's the Master, the Lord raised to life again  
The voice that spans the years  
Speaking life, stirring hope, bringing peace to us  
Will sound till He appears  
For He lives, Christ is risen from the dead  
One with the Father, Ancient of Days  
Through the Spirit who clothes faith with certainty  
Honor and blessing, glory and praise  
To the King crowned with pow'r and authority  
And we are raised with Him  
Death is dead, love has won, Christ has conquered  
And we shall reign with Him  
For He lives: Christ is risen from the dead  
**Resurrection Hymn***



*On the first day of the week,  
very early in the morning, they came to the  
tomb, bringing the spices they had prepared.*

*They found the stone rolled away from the  
tomb. They went in but did not find the body  
of the Lord Jesus. While they were perplexed  
about this, suddenly two men stood by them in  
dazzling clothes. So the women were terrified  
and bowed down to the ground.*

*“Why are you looking for the living among the  
dead?” asked the men. “He is not here, but he  
has risen! Remember how he spoke to you when  
he was still in Galilee, saying, ‘It is necessary  
that the Son of Man be betrayed into the hands  
of sinful men, be crucified, and rise on the third  
day’?” And they remembered his words.*

*Returning from the tomb, they reported all  
these things to the Eleven and to all the rest.  
Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother  
of James, and the other women with them  
were telling the apostles these things. But these  
words seemed like nonsense to them, and they  
did not believe the women. Peter, however, got  
up and ran to the tomb. When he stooped to  
look in, he saw only the linen cloths. So he went  
away, amazed at what had happened.*

**Luke 24:1-12**



THE SUMMIT  
CHURCH