

**FROM
PREPARATION
TO
CELEBRATION**

**READYING OUR HEARTS
FOR RESURRECTION SUNDAY**



FROM PREPARATION TO CELEBRATION

On Sunday, April 21st, 2019, Christians worldwide will celebrate the one event that serves as, in the words of Josh McDowell, “the cornerstone to a world view that provides perspective to all of life.”

That event is the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

As we anticipate that celebration, we have an opportunity to engage our hearts, bodies, souls and spirits in preparation to take in all that God has for us as we focus on the life, death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the one and only Son of God.

This guide is intended to assist you in your walk through 40 days of instruction, worship, introspection and meditation from March 6th through April 21st. Perhaps you will walk the path with this guide individually. Perhaps with a spouse or family members. Maybe with a friend or group of classmates or co-workers during a break. According to the examples in scripture, you may incorporate prayer, fasting, memorization of scripture, silence, solitude or other spiritual disciplines as a way to **“fix your eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith** [Hebrews 12:2].”

The historical religious observance in the liturgical calendar of many denominations refers to these 40 weekdays as “lent.” The details of this observance may be debated amongst well-intentioned people. However, the practice of concentrating our thoughts, works and actions on

The humble life...

The sacrificial death...

The literal burial...

And the spectacular resurrection of Christ...

[and how these truths impact us on a daily basis throughout the year] are deeply scriptural, need not be debated but passionately embraced.

“The benefits [of the resurrection] are innumerable. To list a few: Our illnesses don’t seem nearly so final; Our fears fade and lose their grip; Our grief over those who have gone on is diminished; Our desires to press on in spite of the obstacles is rejuvenated... Our identity as Christians is strengthened as we stand in the lengthening shadows of saints down through the centuries, who have always answered back in antiphonal voice: ‘He is risen, indeed!’” — Charles Swindoll

Enjoy the journey!

MARCH 6-10

JESUS' HUMBLE OBEDIENCE

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 6

VERSE OF THE DAY: "Then I said, 'Here I am—it is written about me in the scroll—I have come to do your will, my God.'" *Hebrews 10:7*

QUOTE OF THE DAY: "Obedience is not to be done slavishly, out of servile fear or out of some rigid, stoical desire for rule-keeping, but rather from a profound desire to express our love for the Father." — *RC Sproul, Ephesians*

PASSAGE OF THE DAY: Hebrews 10:1-10

THOUGHT OF THE DAY: Fasting is a spiritual discipline associated with this season of the year. It is simply the suspension of a "normal" activity (a meal, nighttime snack, TV watching even for 1-2 hours per day, playing video games for a specified part of the day, etc.) and replacing that activity with time spent focusing on God through reading, prayer, meditation or worship. **THE KEY:** Don't talk about it, don't congratulate yourself for fasting, because it is between you and God. JUST DO IT! (See Matthew 6:16-18)

THURSDAY, MARCH 7

VERSE OF THE DAY: "but he comes so that the world may learn that I love the Father and do exactly what my Father has commanded me." — *Jesus, John 14:31*

THOUGHT OF THE DAY: Jesus' obedience to God the Father is recorded a number of times in Scripture. Notice in this passage [John 14:31], Jesus' obedience is not based on duty or obligation. His obedience is based on His love for the Father and therefore, He does whatever the Father wants Him to do.

QUESTION OF THE DAY: Is love a reasonable motivation for obedience to a parent, a "boss," a teacher, another person in authority or God? Why or why not?

PASSAGE OF THE DAY: John 14:15-31

FRIDAY, MARCH 8

VERSE OF THE DAY: "Then he [Jesus] went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. But his mother treasured all these things in her heart." Luke 2:51

QUOTE OF THE DAY: "Christ is our great example in all things—even in that of obedience to the Father and His will. As the perfect Son, He obeyed His Father in all things... Had He been disobedient, as was Adam, we could never have known salvation. "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous" [Romans 5:19]. Jesus was, indeed, always perfectly obedient to His Father's word, "leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps"[1 Peter 2:21]. — *Henry Morris*

EXERCISE OF THE DAY: Disobedience has its consequences. Can you think of a time when you disobeyed? What was the result? Obedience, even if we don't understand why, brings blessing. Is there an occasion when you obeyed [even though you didn't want to] and something really good resulted?

PASSAGE OF THE DAY: Luke 2:41-52

SATURDAY, MARCH 9

VERSE OF THE DAY: "And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!" *Philippians 2:8*

PASSAGE OF THE DAY: Matthew 26:36-46

SONG OF THE DAY:

"It may not be on the mountain height
Or over the stormy sea,
It may not be at the battle's front
My Lord will have need of me.
But if, by a still, small voice he calls
To paths that I do not know,
I'll answer, dear Lord, with my hand in thine:
I'll go where you want me to go.
I'll go where you want me to go, dear Lord,
Over mountain or plain or sea;
I'll say what you want me to say, dear Lord;
I'll be what you want me to be."
— *Mary Brown, "I'll Go Where You Want me to Go," 1891*

QUESTION OF THE DAY: Jesus was obedient even to death on a cross. How would you rate your obedience to God? What can you do to make your obedience even more complete?

SUNDAY, MARCH 10 Resurrection Day

Every Sunday could realistically be called "Resurrection Day." Throughout the day, remind yourself and those with whom you gather that **"HE IS RISEN. HE IS RISEN INDEED!"**

QUOTE OF THE DAY: "The devil, darkness, and death may swagger and boast, the pangs of life will sting for a while longer, but don't worry; the forces of evil are breathing their last. Not to worry...He's risen!" — *Charles Swindoll*

MARCH 11-17 JESUS' UNLIMITED POWER

MONDAY, MARCH 11

VERSE OF THE DAY: "I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come." *Ephesians 1:18-21*

QUOTE OF THE DAY: In Ephesians 1, "Paul is telling us that the Resurrection of Christ is not only a historical event that we look back to with satisfaction and joy. It is the greatest event in the history [past, present or future] of the entire cosmos! The greatest event that the universe will ever see is also one of the most difficult to understand. We mention it so casually, but here is the hinge upon which all history hangs and is forever divided." — *Dave Hunt*

PASSAGE OF THE DAY: Ephesians 1:15-23

EXERCISE OF THE DAY: Name 10 powerful, REALLY powerful entities in the universe (e.g. tornado, the President). Compare them to the power of God in Christ.

TUESDAY, MARCH 12

VERSES OF THE DAY:

"Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made." *John 1:3*

"He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him." *John 1:10*



“He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.”
Colossians 1:17

“The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.”
Hebrews 1:3

SONG OF THE DAY:

“Where two or more are gathered in His name He is there
For all who come who run to Him in faith
He is there, He is there
There is power In the name of Jesus,
There is power, power in His name
No fear, no lie can stand against us now
He is here, The Word has come
To silence every doubt, He is here
One name, one name can save,
One name breaks every chain
One name, always, One name, Jesus
One name, one name remains,
One name, we will proclaim
One name, always, One name
— *Lincoln Brewster, “There Is Power,” 2014*

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 13

VERSE OF THE DAY: “The men were amazed and asked, “What kind of man is this? Even the winds and the waves obey him!” *Matthew 8:27*

QUESTION OF THE DAY:

Is there anyone with greater power than THE ONE who

- Has power to forgive sins?
- Has power to bless those who believed in Him?
- Has power to condemn those who rejected Him?
- Has power to know what people are thinking?
- Has power to know people’s past and future?
- Has power to raise people from the dead?

- Has power to lay down His life and take it up again?
- And so much more!!

NO! Only Jesus Christ, the great “I AM.”

PASSAGE OF THE DAY: Matthew 9:1-8

THOUGHT OF THE DAY: “A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic—on the level with a man who says he is a poached egg—or he would be the devil of hell. You must take your choice. Either this was, and is, the Son of God, or else a madman or something worse. You can shut him up for a fool, you can spit on Him or kill Him as a demon; or you can fall at his feet and call him Lord and God. But let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about his being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to.” — *C.S. Lewis*

THURSDAY, MARCH 14

VERSE OF THE DAY: “The one who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil’s work.” *1 John 3:8*

PASSAGE OF THE DAY: Revelation 20:1-10

THOUGHT OF THE DAY: “If you see yourself as the helpless victim of Satan and his schemes, you will live like his victim and be in bondage to his lies. But if you see yourself as the dearly loved and accepted child of God that you really are, you will live like a child of God.” — *Neil Anderson, The Bondage Breaker*

ENCOURAGEMENT OF THE DAY: “You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.” *1 John 4:4*

“Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might break the power of him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil...” *Hebrews 2:14*

FRIDAY, MARCH 15

VERSE OF THE DAY: “I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.” *John 16:33*

PASSAGE OF THE DAY: John 15:18-27

SONG OF THE DAY:

While life’s dark maze I tread, and griefs around me spread,
be thou my guide; bid darkness turn to day,
wipe sorrow’s tears away, nor let me ever stray
from thee aside.

When ends life’s transient dream,
when death’s cold, sullen stream
shall o’er me roll;
blest Savior, then in love, fear and distrust remove;
O bear me safe above, a ransomed soul!

— *Ray Palmer, “My Faith Looks Up to Thee,” 1830*

SATURDAY, MARCH 16

VERSE OF THE DAY: “And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.” *Colossians 2:15*

QUOTE OF THE DAY: “It was this same Jesus, the Christ who, among many other remarkable things, said and repeated something which, proceeding from any other being would have condemned him at once as either a bloated egotist or a dangerously unbalanced person... when He said He himself would rise again from the dead, the third day after He was crucified, He said something that only a fool would dare say, if he expected longer the devotion of any disciples—unless He was sure He was going to rise. No founder of any world religion known to men ever dared say a thing like that!” — *Wilbur Smith*

THOUGHT OF THE DAY: “I am,” said Jesus. “And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven.” *Mark 14:62*

SUNDAY, MARCH 17 Resurrection Day

“Up from the grave he arose;
with a mighty triumph o’er his foes;
he arose a victor from the dark domain,
and he lives forever, with his saints to reign.
He arose! He arose! Hallelujah! Christ arose!”
— *Robert Lowry, “Christ Arose,” 1874*

Another resurrection Sunday...
HE IS RISEN! HE IS RISEN INDEED!

MARCH 18-24 JESUS’ LAVISH GRACE

MONDAY, MARCH 18

VERSE OF THE DAY: “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast.”
Ephesians 2:8-9

QUOTE OF THE DAY: “Without a heart transformed by the grace of Christ, we just continue to manage external and internal darkness.” — *Matt Chandler, The Explicit Gospel*

EXERCISE OF THE DAY: Considering the above quote, what does it mean to “manage the external and internal darkness?”

THOUGHT OF THE DAY: Billy Graham said, “God’s mercy and grace give me hope—for myself and for our world.” How have you experienced the grace [undeserved favor] of Christ in your life today?



TUESDAY, MARCH 19

VERSE OF THE DAY: “For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.” *II Corinthians 8:9*

EXERCISE OF THE DAY:

In which ways was Christ rich?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Explain what “became poor” means.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

PASSAGE OF THE DAY: Philippians 2:5-11

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20

VERSE OF THE DAY: “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.”

Romans 3:23-24

PASSAGE OF THE DAY: Ephesians 2:1-10

QUOTE OF THE DAY: “Every time I see my brother, I just praise God for God’s grace in his life. Because if God can change Franklin from a prodigal into a man of God, he can do it for anybody.” — *Anne Graham Lotz*

EXERCISE OF THE DAY:

This might be a good day to pray for God to demonstrate His grace through Jesus Christ in the life of an unbelieving friend or family member. It’s by grace—through faith—plus nothing that anyone can become a new creation.

THURSDAY, MARCH 21

VERSE OF THE DAY: “But the gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God’s grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many!” *Romans 5:15*

QUOTE OF THE DAY: “I wrote a book on grace, and grace is a free gift, but to receive the gift you have to have your hands open. And a lot of people don’t have their hands open, there’s something they’re grasping because there’s a lot of things to grasp in a prosperous country.” — *Philip Yancey*

EXERCISE OF THE DAY: Take a few minutes to honestly converse with God...HANDS OPEN. Ask Him if you’re holding on to something or someone that prohibits you from freely experiencing His undeserved favor in your life.

THOUGHT OF THE DAY: “Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me, I once was lost but now am found, was blind, but now, I see.”

FRIDAY, MARCH 22

VERSE OF THE DAY: “So do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord or of me his prisoner. Rather, join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God. 9 He has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time,” *II Timothy 1:8-9*

PASSAGE OF THE DAY: Romans 6:1-4

QUOTES OF THE DAY:

“I do not know any way to explain why God’s grace touches a man who seems unworthy of it.” — *Whittaker Chambers*

“The meaning of life. The wasted years of life. The poor choices of life. God answers the mess of life with one word: Grace.” — *Max Lucado*

SATURDAY, MARCH 23

VERSE OF THE DAY: “The grace of the Lord Jesus be with God’s people. Amen.” *Revelation 22:21*

QUOTE OF THE DAY: God’s Riches At Christ’s Expense
“The free and unmerited favor of God, as manifested in the salvation of sinners and the bestowal of blessings.” — *Oxford Dictionary*

THOUGHT OF THE DAY: “God’s grace is available to us at all times, for every problem and need we face. God’s grace frees us from slavery to sin, guilt, and shame. God’s grace allows us to pursue good works. God’s grace enables us to be all that God intends us to be. God’s grace is amazing indeed.” — *Mary Fairchild*

PASSAGE OF THE DAY: Titus 2:11-15

SUNDAY, MARCH 24 Resurrection Day

“The meaning of the resurrection is that God is for us. He aims to close ranks with us. He aims to overcome all our sense of abandonment and alienation.” — *John Piper, What the Resurrection Means*

HE IS RISEN! HE IS RISEN INDEED!

MARCH 25-31 JESUS’ ABSOLUTE DIVINITY

MONDAY, MARCH 25

VERSE OF THE DAY: “while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ,” Titus 2:13

THOUGHT OF THE DAY: Jesus said, “I and the Father are one.” Jesus is fully human. He got thirsty and drank. He got hungry and ate. He got tired and slept. He walked, rode a donkey, talked, wept and prayed. Jesus is also fully God.

- He claims to be God [John 8:58, Mark 14:61-62]
- He receives worship [Matthew 4:10, 28:17]
- He forgives sin [Mark 2:1-12]
- He claims to be equal with God [John 5:17, 18]
- He performs miracles [Luke 9:10-17, 37-45]

He is the God-Man.

PASSAGE OF THE DAY: Mark 2:3-7

QUOTE OF THE DAY: “My Lord and my God.” These are the words “doubting Thomas” spoke after Jesus told him to put his finger into His side following the resurrection.

TUESDAY, MARCH 26

VERSE OF THE DAY: “The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.” *Hebrews 1:3*

SONG OF THE DAY:

“In Christ alone, Who took on flesh,
Fullness of God in helpless babe!
This gift of love and righteousness,
Scorned by the ones He came to save.
Till on that cross as Jesus died,
The wrath of God was satisfied;
For ev’ry sin on Him was laid—
Here in the death of Christ I live.”

— *Townend and Getty, “In Christ Alone,” 2001*

PASSAGE OF THE DAY: Hebrews 1:1-14

QUOTE OF THE DAY: “The New Testament specifically confirms that Jesus ultimately possessed every qualification of deity, including omniscience, omnipresence, omnipotence, eternity and immutability.” — *Lee Strobel, The Case for Christ*



WEDNESDAY, MARCH 27

VERSE OF THE DAY: “Beyond all question, the mystery from which true godliness springs is great:

He appeared in the flesh, was vindicated by the Spirit, was seen by angels, was preached among the nations, was believed on in the world, was taken up in glory.”

1 Timothy 3:16

QUOTE OF THE DAY: “To be ‘in Christ’ is to trust His goodness, not our own; to trust that His sacrificial death on the cross paid the complete debt of death we owe for our sin; to trust that His resurrection gives us eternal life instead of relying upon our own ability to please God. To be ‘in Christ’ is to claim, by faith, the free gift of salvation. To be ‘in Christ’ is to enjoy a completely restored relationship with our Father in heaven by virtue of His Son’s righteous standing.” — *Chuck Swindoll*

PASSAGE OF THE DAY: Ephesians 1:3-14

“In Him we live and move and have our being.”

THURSDAY, MARCH 28

VERSE OF THE DAY: “To those who through the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ have received a faith as precious as ours: Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.” II Peter 1:1-2

PASSAGE OF THE DAY: Matthew 1:18-25

EXERCISE OF THE DAY: In the above passage, there are several subtle and several obvious indications that the birth of this baby was not the birth of an ordinary child. Can you identify them in the space below?

THOUGHT OF THE DAY: “When both God and man were joined together in Jesus, God was finally able to break into the human scene for the purpose of redemption. It is difficult to imagine how else God could have brought divinity into the world without destroying the world or without defacing divinity.” *Gilbert Bilezikian, Christianity 101*

FRIDAY, MARCH 29

VERSE OF THE DAY: “For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given,
and the government will be on his shoulders.

And he will be called

Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,

Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” *Isaiah 9:6*

THOUGHT OF THE DAY: “As far as the case for the Messiah in the Old Testament is concerned, the relationship between the Old and New Testaments is one of strong continuity and a progressive revelation. The seminal seeds of the doctrine of the person and work of Jesus bloom and blossom in the New Testament even though the Old Testament often carried in seminal seed form much that eventually developed out of the Old. What a gracious, revealing God, and what a wonderful gift of a Savior who has come to earth once, but who is due to return once more in all his fullness and glory!” —*Dr. Walter Kaiser, Jesus in the Old Testament*

EXERCISE OF THE DAY: Note the names of Jesus found in the Old Testament:

- Lily of the Valley [Song of Solomon 2:1]
- Man of sorrows [Isaiah 53:3]
- Messiah [Daniel 9:25]
- Rose of Sharon [Song of Solomon 2:1]
- Anointed [Psalm 2:1-3]
- Branch [Zechariah 6:12]
- Prince of Peace [Isaiah 9:6]
- Desire of all nations [Haggai 2:7]
- Everlasting light [Isaiah 60:19-20]
- Holy One of Israel [Psalm 89:18]
- Immanuel [Isaiah 7:14]
- King of Glory [Psalm 24]

SATURDAY, MARCH 30

VERSE OF THE DAY: “What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are--the Holy One of God!” *Mark 1:24*

PASSAGE OF THE DAY: John 17:1-5, 24-26

THOUGHT OF THE DAY: I Peter 1:15-16 says “But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; 16 for it is written: “Be holy, because I am holy.” Only the Godhead [the Father, Son and Holy Spirit] are holy [separate from all that is sin]. But think on these scriptures:

- Acts 3:14
- Acts 4:27, 30
- I John 2:20
- Hebrews 7:26
- I Peter 1:19

SONG OF THE DAY:

“Who shall we say You are? You’re the living God
Who shall we say You are? You’re the great I Am
The highest name of all You’re all You say You are
You are holy, holy, holy
God most high and God most worthy
You are holy, holy, holy
King Jesus You are, Jesus You are”
— *Matt Redman, Holy, 2011*

SUNDAY, MARCH 31 Resurrection Day

“Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; 26 and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?” John 11:25-26

HE IS RISEN! HE IS RISEN INDEED!

APRIL 1-7 JESUS’ INCOMPARABLE LOVE

MONDAY, APRIL 1

VERSES OF THE DAY:

“But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” *Romans 5:8*

“Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.” *John 15:13*

QUOTE OF THE DAY: “God proved His love on the cross. When Christ hung and bled and died, it was God saying to the world, ‘I LOVE YOU.’” — *Billy Graham*

PASSAGE OF THE DAY: John 15:9-17

SONG OF THE DAY:

“In Christ alone my hope is found;
He is my light, my strength, my song;
This cornerstone, this solid ground,
Firm through the fiercest drought and storm.
What heights of love, what depths of peace,
When fears are stilled, when strivings cease!
My comforter, my all in all—
Here in the love of Christ I stand.”
— Townend and Getty, “In Christ Alone,” 2001

TUESDAY, APRIL 2

VERSE OF THE DAY: “The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.” *I Timothy 1:14*

QUOTE OF THE DAY: “The word ‘radical’ means going to the root, getting down to essentials. People who get down to essentials and stay with them, no matter what the changes around them, are and remain radical. They are rooted in something that endures. The most



radical element of our faith is the unconditional love of God. The more we internalize this truth, the greater the transformation that happens within us. Transformation has to do with freedom, freedom to live and love like Christ.” — *Max Oliva, Free to Pray, Free to Love*

THOUGHT OF THE DAY: As we get closer to the week when we “celebrate” the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, let’s consider the fact that “God so loved the world that He gave His only Son” (John 3:16). When we place our trust in Christ as Savior, He makes us His children. He comes to live within us. A lifelong companion who is there with us no matter what we are going through. And His love never fails. “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.” *Romans 8:35, 37*

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 3

VERSE OF THE DAY: “Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them.” *John 14:21*

SONG OF THE DAY:

“I’ll never be the same, I stepped out of the dark
And into the light, When He called my name
I couldn’t run, couldn’t run from His presence
I couldn’t run, couldn’t run from His arms
Jesus, He loves me, He loves me, He is for me
Jesus, how can it be, He loves me, He is for me”
— *Chris Tomlin, “Jesus Loves Me,” 2014*

PASSAGE OF THE DAY: John 3:16-21

THOUGHT OF THE DAY: “At best we are but clay, animated dust; but viewed as sinners, we are monsters indeed. Let it be published in heaven as a miracle that the Lord Jesus should set His heart’s love upon people like us.” — Alistair Begg

THURSDAY, APRIL 4

VERSE OF THE DAY: “So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts. Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, and they are full of greed.” *Ephesians 4:17-19*

THOUGHT OF THE DAY:

Four ways the depth of Christ’s love is revealed:

- by the greatness of what it cost Him.
- in relation to how undeserving are the objects of his love.
- by the greatness of benefits we receive in being loved by him.
- in His freedom: “No one takes my life from me; I lay it down of my own accord.

— *John Piper, The Depths of Christ’s Love*

QUESTION OF THE DAY: Should the love of Jesus displayed by going to the cross impact the way I live? The answer from scripture: “The life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God WHO LOVED ME AND GAVE HIMSELF FOR ME.” *Galatians 2:20b*

SONG OF THE DAY:

“Love so amazing, so divine demands my soul, my life, my all.” — *Isaac Watts, “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross,” 1707*

FRIDAY, APRIL 5

VERSE OF THE DAY: “This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.” *1 John 4:10*

SONG OF THE DAY:

"In the morning, when I rise, In the morning, when I rise
In the morning, when I rise, give me Jesus
Give me Jesus, Give me Jesus,
You can have all this world,
But give me Jesus
When I am alone, When I am alone
When I am alone, give me Jesus
Give me Jesus, Give me Jesus,
You can have all this world,
But give me Jesus
When I come to die, When I come to die
When I come to die, give me Jesus"
— *Fernando Ortega, "Give Me Jesus," 1999*

QUOTE OF THE DAY: "The Apostle Paul knew what it was like to discard everything that had given him worth in the world's eyes, to misunderstand—and be misunderstood by—others, to have his ministry plans thwarted and altered. But while imprisoned in Rome with the end of his life in sight, he said with confidence, "For me, to live is Christ...and to die is gain." Were Paul with us today, he would say, "Just give me Jesus." — *Marilyn Ehle*

EXERCISE OF THE DAY: Go back to the verse of the day [1 John 4:10] and then read 1 John 4:11: "Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another."

SATURDAY, APRIL 6

VERSE OF THE DAY: "Follow God's example, therefore, as dearly loved children and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God." Ephesians 5:1-2

PASSAGE OF THE DAY: John 19:28-37

QUOTE OF THE DAY: Read, meditate, ponder on this portion of a Charles Spurgeon Sunday sermon from January 24, 1858.

Understand, then, the sense in which Christ was made a sacrifice for sin. But here lies the glory of this matter. It was as a substitute for sin that he did actually and literally suffer punishment for the sin of all his elect. When I say this, I am not to be understood as using any figure whatever, but as saying actually what I mean.

Man for his sin was condemned to eternal fire; when God took Christ to be the substitute, it is true, he did not send Christ into eternal fire, but he poured upon him grief so desperate, that it was a valid payment for even an eternity of fire. Man was condemned to live forever in hell. God did not send Christ forever into hell; but he put on Christ, punishment that was equivalent for that. Although he did not give Christ to drink the actual hells of believers, yet he gave him a quid pro quo—something that was equivalent thereunto.

He took the cup of Christ's agony, and he put in there, suffering, misery, and anguish such as only God can imagine or dream of, that was the exact equivalent for all the suffering, all the woe, and all the eternal tortures of every one that shall at last stand in heaven, bought with the blood of Christ. And you say, "Did Christ drink it all to its dregs?" Did he suffer it all? Yes, my brethren, he took the cup, and "at one triumphant draught of love, He drank damnation dry."

SUNDAY, APRIL 7 Resurrection Day

"Low in the grave He lay, Jesus my Savior
Waiting the coming day, Jesus my Lord
Up from the grave he arose
With a mighty triumph o'er his foes!"

HE IS RISEN! HE IS RISEN INDEED!



APRIL 8-14

JESUS' SELFLESS SACRIFICE

MONDAY, APRIL 8

VERSE OF THE DAY: "But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God... For by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy." *Hebrews 10:12, 14*

QUOTE OF THE DAY: "The sacrifice of Jesus Christ is effective forever. It replaces the old inadequate system. It sanctifies the believer. It removes sin and replaces it with righteousness. It destroys the enemy and all who follow him. It brings with it eternal security and it fulfills the promise of God and thus convinces us of His faithfulness. It is so perfect that nothing can be added to it and all we are ever asked to do is believe in it." — *John MacArthur, The Sufficiency of Christ's Sacrifice*

PASSAGE OF THE DAY: Hebrews 10:1-14

EXERCISE OF THE DAY: Sacrifice involves giving up something that is cherished. What did Jesus "give up" when he died on Calvary's cross?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

TUESDAY, APRIL 9

VERSES OF THE DAY: "In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins..." *Ephesians 1:7*

"...without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness."
Hebrews 9:22

THOUGHT OF THE DAY: In his book *Written in Blood*, Robert Coleman tells the story of a little boy whose sister needed a blood transfusion. The doctor explained that she had the same disease the boy had recovered from two years earlier. Her only chance for recovery was a transfusion from someone who had previously conquered the disease. Since the two children had the same rare blood type, the boy was the ideal donor.

"Would you give your blood to Mary?" the doctor asked. Johnny hesitated. His lower lip started to tremble. Then he smiled and said, "Sure, for my sister." Soon the two children were wheeled into the hospital room--Mary, pale and thin; Johnny, robust and healthy. Neither spoke, but when their eyes met, Johnny grinned. As the nurse inserted the needle into his arm, Johnny's smile faded. He watched the blood flow through the tube.

With the ordeal almost over, his voice, slightly shaky, broke the silence. "Doctor, when do I die?"

Only then did the doctor realize why Johnny had hesitated, why his lip had trembled when he'd agreed to donate his blood. He thought giving his blood to his sister meant giving up his life. In that brief moment, he'd made his great decision. Johnny, fortunately, didn't have to die to save his sister. Each of us, however, has a condition more serious than Mary's, and it required Jesus to give not just His blood but His life. — *Thomas Lindberg*

QUESTION OF THE DAY: Why did God the Father will the death of His only beloved Son, and in so painful and shameful a form?

"Because the Father had "laid on him the iniquity of us all" [Isa. 53:6]. Jesus' death was vicarious [undergone in our place] and atoning [securing remission of sins for us and reconciliation to God]. It was a sacrificial death, fulfilling the principle of atonement taught in connection with the Old Testament sacrifices: "without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins" [Heb. 9:22; Lev. 17:11]." — *James Packer, Your Father Loves You*

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 10

VERSE OF THE DAY: “just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” *Matthew 20:28*

PASSAGE OF THE DAY: Romans 3:21-26

SONG OF THE DAY:

“Here stripped of all but blood and shame,
The Lord of Lords, Christ crucified!
Here crowned with thorns and robed with pain,
The King of Kings, Christ crucified!
Now hung upon His throne,
Rejected, cursed, alone,
In hatred hoisted high
Against a blackened sky,
Our dying God, the glorious Son!

Our Way, our Truth, our Life Divine,
Our Broken Bread, Christ crucified.
Our Light, our Door and Living Vine,
Our Servant King, Christ crucified.
Our calling now is clear.
The life we seek is here.
Our standard is the cross.
We follow, gain or loss.
Our goal: to glorify His name.”
— *Ken Bible, “Christ Crucified,” 2015*

THOUGHT OF THE DAY: It is by Christ’s sacrifice that our relationship with God the Father is restored...and by the shedding of Christ’s blood, we are offered abundant and eternal life with God the Father.

THURSDAY, APRIL 11

VERSE OF THE DAY: “For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your ancestors, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.” *1 Peter 1:18-19*

THOUGHT OF THE DAY: What the blood of Christ does.

- It remits sin. [Matthew 26:28]
- It causes us to dwell in Christ and He in us. [John 6:56]
- It justifies and saves us from wrath. [Romans 5:9]
- It brings us near to God. [Ephesians 2:13]
- It brings peace and reconciliation to God. [Colossians 1:20]

EXERCISE OF THE DAY: Read the following texts and add to the list above what the blood of Christ does.

- Hebrews 13:12
- Hebrews 13:20-21
- I John 1:7
- Colossians 1:14
- I John 5:8
- Romans 5:9

Taken from [Jesus Now](#), by Frank Viola

FRIDAY, APRIL 12

VERSE OF THE DAY: “How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!”
Hebrews 9:14

QUOTE OF THE DAY: “The atonement in Jesus Christ’s blood is perfect; there isn’t anything that can be added to it. It is spotless, impeccable, flawless. It is perfect as God is perfect.” — *A.W. Tozer, The Radical Cross*

THOUGHT OF THE DAY: A Max Lucado fictional story of an angel trying to find another way for salvation.

He looked around the hill and foresaw a scene. Three figures hung on three crosses. Arms spread. Heads fallen forward. They moaned with the wind.

Men clad in religion stood off to one side...arrogant, cocky.



Women clad in sorrow huddled at the foot of the hill...faces tear-streaked.

All heaven stood to fight. All nature rose to rescue. All eternity poised to protect. But the Creator gave no command.

"It must be done ..." he said, and withdrew.

The angel spoke again. "It would be less painful ..."

The Creator interrupted softly. "But it wouldn't be love."
— Max Lucado, *God's Inspirational Promise Book*

SATURDAY, APRIL 13

VERSE OF THE DAY: "The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" John 1:29

EXERCISE OF THE DAY: The Lamb of God

- Consider the major role of the lamb in Old Testament sacrifices: Read Exodus 29:38-46
- Consider the sacrificial lamb in the story of Abraham and Isaac: Read Genesis 22:1-14
- Consider Jesus the Passover Lamb: Read Exodus 12 and I Corinthians 5:7

SONG OF THE DAY:

"Thank you for the cross Lord,
Thank you for the price You paid
Bearing all my sin and shame,
In love You came and gave amazing grace
Thank you for this love Lord,
Thank you for the nail pierced hands
Washed me in Your cleansing flow
Now all I know Your forgiveness and embrace
Worthy is the Lamb, Seated on the throne
Crown You now with many crowns, You reign victorious
High and lifted up, Jesus, Son of God
The Darling of Heaven crucified
Worthy is the Lamb, Worthy is the Lamb"
— Hillsong, "Worthy Is The Lamb," 2008

SUNDAY, APRIL 14 Resurrection Day

"The tomb of Christ is famous because of what it does NOT contain." — Samuel Morris

He is not here...
HE IS RISEN! HE IS RISEN INDEED!

APRIL 15-21 JESUS' UNJUST SUFFERING

MONDAY, APRIL 15

VERSE OF THE DAY: "He told them, 'This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day,'" Luke 24:46

QUOTE OF THE DAY: "The sufferings of Jesus Christ were no accident. The sufferings of Jesus Christ were no miscalculation. They were no surprise to Him. They were no shock at all, but rather He gives here detail by detail precisely and exactly what is going to happen to Him. In fact, the first recorded words we have spoken out of the mouth of Jesus were, "I must be about My Father's business," and the last words before His death, "It is finished." It's very clear that He knew what He was about and He knew when He had finished it. And He finished it in His death." — John MacArthur, *The Sufferings of Christ*

PASSAGE OF THE DAY: Isaiah 53:1-2

EXERCISE OF THE DAY: As we approach the final days before the sufferings of Christ culminate in His death and burial, take a few minutes to review and discuss your general impressions as you reflect on where we have been:

- Jesus' Humble Obedience
- Jesus' Unlimited Power
- Jesus' Lavish Grace

- Jesus' Absolute Divinity
- Jesus' Incomparable Love
- Jesus' Unjust Suffering

“What a friend we have in Jesus... all our sins and griefs to bear, What a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer.”

Take time to praise Him for who he is and what He has done.

TUESDAY, APRIL 16

VERSE OF THE DAY: “because he was teaching his disciples. He said to them, ‘The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men. They will kill him, and after three days he will rise.’” *Mark 9:31*

QUOTE OF THE DAY: “The suffering heaped on Jesus is the ultimate example of the hatred and rage sinful man feels toward a Holy God.” — *S. Michael Houdmann*

PASSAGE OF THE DAY: Romans 3:10-18

THOUGHT OF THE DAY: Few men of this century have understood better the inevitability of suffering than Dietrich Bonhoeffer. He seems never to have wavered in his Christian antagonism to the Nazi regime, although it meant for him imprisonment, the threat of torture, danger to his own family and finally death. He was executed by the direct order of Heinrich Himmler in April 1945 in the Flossenburg concentration camp, only a few days before it was liberated. It was the fulfillment of what he had always believed and taught: “Suffering, then, is the badge of true discipleship. The disciple is not above his master.”

Following Christ means *passio passiva*, suffering because we have to suffer. That is why Luther reckoned suffering among the marks of the true church, and one of the memoranda drawn up in preparation for the Augsburg Confession similarly defines the Church as the community of those “who are persecuted and martyred for the gospel’s sake”...Discipleship means allegiance to the

suffering Christ, and it is therefore not at all surprising that Christians should be called upon to suffer. In fact, it is a joy and a token of his grace.” — *John R.W. Stott, Christian Counter-Culture: The Message of the Sermon on the Mount*

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 17

VERSE OF THE DAY: “He was despised and rejected by mankind, a man of suffering, and familiar with pain. Like one from whom people hide their faces he was despised, and we held him in low esteem.” *Isaiah 53:3*

SONG OF THE DAY:

A demon or the Holy Lord? Deluded fool or King adored?
You’ve heard His claims. What have you done With Jesus Christ, God’s only Son?

They jeered and mocked Him as He died. They washed their hands or tried to hide.

But here He stands! What have you done

With Jesus Christ, God’s only Son?

Take My body, Take My blood poured out for you?

Bread of heaven, Wine of life forever new! I come to you as loving Lord.

I will not go or be ignored. I spread my arms. I reach to you.
O hungry one, what will you do?

— *Ken Bible, What Will You Do With Jesus, 2006*

PASSAGE OF THE DAY: Psalm 22



THURSDAY, APRIL 18

VERSE OF THE DAY: “Then Jesus told them, “This very night you will all fall away on account of me, for it is written: “I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.”” *Matthew 26:31*

PASSAGE OF THE DAY: Matthew 26:36-46

THOUGHT OF THE DAY: Gethsemane is where we go when there’s no place to go but God. It is where Jesus goes the night of his betrayal... Jesus leaves the warm, intimate setting of the upper room to lead his disciples down a shoulder of a hill that crumbles into the Kidron valley. A Roman sentry calls out his watch. To the disciples it is merely the rending of the silence and a reminder of the time. To Jesus it is the rending of his heart and a reminder that time is running out. Jesus stations the disciples nearby to watch and to pray. As he makes his way to the heart of the garden, the weight of his destiny bears down on him. He wrestles in prayer. His wrinkled brow wrings sweat from his face. And he looks least likely of all to be the one who will lead the Creation back to Paradise. This is the place he must wrestle alone. Where he must sweat alone. And pray alone.
“Abba, Father.”

His words are underscored with sobs — “Everything is possible for you” — and punctuated with long periods of silence.

“Take this cup from me.”

But on this night good gifts from Heaven don’t come. Neither does an answer.

Jesus pushes Himself up from the ground and lifts His eyes toward Heaven. “Yet not what I will, but what you will.”
— *Ken Gire, Moments with the Savior*

“Have thine own way, Lord, Have thine own way
Thou are the potter, I am the clay
Mold me and make me after thy will
While I am waiting, yielded and still.”
— *Adelaide Pollard, “Have Thine Own Way, Lord,” 1907*

GOOD FRIDAY · APRIL 19

VERSES OF THE DAY: “And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, He gave up His spirit.” [Matthew] “With a loud cry, Jesus breathed His last.” [Mark] “Jesus called out with a loud voice, ‘Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.’” [Luke] “When He had received the drink, Jesus said, ‘It is finished.’” [John]

THOUGHT OF THE DAY:

“[Jesus] tilted His head back, pulled up one last time to draw breath and cried, “Tetelestai!” It was a Greek expression most everyone present would have understood. It was an accounting term. Archaeologists have found papyrus tax receipts with “Tetelestai” written across them, meaning “paid in full.” With Jesus’ last breath on the cross, He declared the debt of sin canceled, completely satisfied. Nothing else required. Not good deeds. Not generous donations. Not penance or confession or baptism or...or...or...nothing. The penalty for sin is death, and we were all born hopelessly in debt. He paid our debt in full by giving His life so that we might live forever.” — *Charles Swindoll*

THOUGHT OF THE DAY: “But rejoice inasmuch as you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed. So then, those who suffer according to God’s will should commit themselves to their faithful Creator and continue to do good.” *1 Peter 4:13, 19*

SATURDAY, APRIL 20

VERSE OF THE DAY: “As was his custom, Paul went into the synagogue, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, explaining and proving that the Messiah had to suffer and rise from the dead. ‘This Jesus I am proclaiming to you is the Messiah,’ he said.” Acts 17:2-3

THOUGHT OF THE DAY: “He Died? Oh no!”

In 1929, young Elsie Viren was the efficient, capable new secretary to the pastor of Bethlehem Baptist Church. By the time we Pipers arrived 51 years later in 1980, her days were filled with teaching Sunday school, visiting the church’s elderly and shut-ins and working 2 days a week at her manual typewriter in the office blessing all of Bethlehem’s missionaries with regular letters.

After more than 60 years devoted to the Lord and Bethlehem, it was a sad day when Elsie knew she wouldn’t be driving anymore—and later, sadder still when she couldn’t come in to the office. In the months that followed, sometimes she found my name on her “important numbers” list and called me from her room at the nursing home, wondering whom she had been visiting and when someone was coming to pick her up and take her home or back to the office.

During Elsie’s last Easter season, my husband went to visit her as she lay in bed, weak and fading. He read an old familiar story to her. But it wasn’t familiar anymore. She looked as if she might be asleep, until she heard the words, “Then Jesus, calling out with a loud voice, said, ‘Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!’ And having said this he breathed his last.”

Her eyes flew open in horror. “Oh no! They killed Jesus?”

My husband told me later that she was comforted when he gave her the news that Jesus did not stay dead.

I thank God that although Elsie may have forgotten what happened to Jesus and someday I may forget, Jesus will never forget nor lose the ones he died for. Praise the Lord, the power of the cross is not dependent on my memory. The power of the cross depends on our Jesus who said, “My

Sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one [and nothing, not even lost memory] will snatch them out of my hand” (John 10:27-28). — *Noel Piper*

PASSAGE OF THE DAY: John 19:31-42

QUOTE OF THE DAY: “It was not nails that held Jesus to that wretched cross; it was His unqualified resolution, out of His love for His Father, to do His Father’s will—and it was His love for sinners like me.” — *D.A. Carson*

EASTER SUNDAY • APRIL 21

The Resurrection

“There in the ground His body lay
Light of the world by darkness slain:
Then bursting forth in glorious Day
Up from the grave He rose again!
And as He stands in victory
Sin’s curse has lost its grip on me,
For I am His and He is mine -
Bought with the precious blood of Christ.”
— *Townend and Getty, “In Christ Alone,” 2001*

He is not here...
HE IS RISEN. HE IS RISEN INDEED!

CELEBRATE!



WHAT ABOUT YOU?

Easter Sunday is a time to celebrate because Jesus showed His power as the Savior over sin and death. If you search your heart, can you honestly say that you can celebrate this resurrection?

Have you trusted in Jesus Christ as your Savior? If not, there is no better day than today. Romans 10:9 explains that if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Jesus from the dead, you will be saved by God's grace. It's that simple.

This is what we celebrate on Easter. You can call on the name of the Lord right now where you are. Call out to Jesus in prayer and ask Him to save you. Confess to Him that you are a sinner, and repent of the things you have done in the past. Believe in your heart that God raised Christ from the dead in order to save you from your sins and from an eternity apart from Him.

If you have any questions about this, we'd love to have a conversation with you about Jesus, salvation, faith and the truth of God's word. Please reach out to us by calling 616.662.8955 or send us an email at church@wellspringcc.org. We will walk with you through the next steps and be there to answer any questions you may have.

There's no greater joy than celebrating God's redeeming power in the life of a new believer!





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