

Remember Christ Draw Near to the Cross



5th Week

March 12 to March 18, 2018

Monday, March 12, 2018

Matthew 26:69-75

Peter denies Christ three times

Time: A.D. 30, early Friday, pre-dawn

Peter was the disciple who confessed that Jesus is the Christ (Mt 16:16), and Jesus said that he would build his church upon Peter who is a real believer, and on all like him who are real believers. Yet three times Peter fulfills Jesus prediction that he would deny him (Mt 26:34).

1. Peter denies the Lord Jesus three times. How is each denial increasingly shameful and painful?
2. When the rooster crowed, Peter remembered what Jesus had said, and he went out and wept bitterly. List out as many reasons as you can as to why Peter wept bitterly.
3. What does it tell you about the gospel that this account of Peter's failure would be included in the gospel story?
4. Peter was later brought back in humility and repentance, and recommissioned by Jesus. What does this say about weakness and failure in the lives of redeemed saints like you and me?

Pray: Most of our lives are a history of both breakthroughs and failures, positives and negatives. Ask the Lord to help you take stock of your life, and to see and embrace what he is doing in both the good and the bad.

Tuesday, March 3, 2018

Matthew 27:3-10

Judas hangs himself

Time: A.D. 30, dawn on Friday

Both Peter and Judas realized that they had sinned against Jesus and each "turned" from their failure. Filled with remorse, Peter made a turn of repentance which led to a life restored by Christ and made fruitful. Judas, also filled with remorse, made a turn toward despair but not repentance, and so went on to destruction.

1. How were the actions of Peter and Judas similar? Different?
2. Do you think that what Judas did put him beyond redemption?
3. If you had met Judas right after he had thrown the money into the temple, what would you have said to him?
4. Have you ever felt like you were beyond redemption? Why? To whom did/can you turn in this situation?

Pray: We have all sinned – our gravest sin of all is our rejection and betrayal of Jesus Christ. Give thanks that "while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom 5:8). "For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life" (Rom 5:10).

Wednesday, March 14, 2018

John 18:28-38

Jesus before Pilate for the first time

Time: A.D. 30, dawn on Friday

Few of us have been put on trial for our lives. Jesus is now brought before Pilate the governor who had the power to put him to death. Bewilderingly, a possible death sentence seems to hang on the jealous reasons of the Jews or the self-serving reasons of Pilate.

1. Why did the Jews refuse to enter the governor's headquarters? In view of their goal of having Jesus put to death, how does this show the hypocrisy between their hearts and their actions?
2. Think about Jesus words: How does verse 36 shed light on the account of Jesus' arrest in vv. 1-11? In what way is Jesus' understanding of kingdom and his kingship different from Pilate, the Jews, and Peter?
3. Pilate asked, "What is truth?" Did he care about truth in this trial of Jesus? Why or why not?
4. Jesus does not seem to say or do much in his own defense at his trial. Why do you think this is? What do Jesus' actions teach us when it comes to being accused when we stand for the truth?

Pray: Jesus was accused, ultimately on our behalf, for our sin and deserved punishment. Give thanks that he took the accusations for our good. Ask for strength and steadfastness to stand for truth when you find yourself on trial when wrongfully accused or misunderstood.

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Luke 23:6-12

Jesus before Herod

Time: A.D. 30, dawn on Friday

Galilee, which was under Herod's jurisdiction, was a region where there were rebels against Rome. By sending Jesus, Pilate was showing honour to Herod by consulting him and acknowledging that he had rebels to deal with. By not going over Herod's authority even though he could have, Pilate smoothed the relationship between them. They also by shared some sort of agreement that Jesus had done nothing to deserve death.

1. What was Herod's interest in Jesus? How did he assess the threat of Jesus to the religious establishment? How do we know this?
2. Who (which persons or groups) contributed to Jesus' punishment and crucifixion?
3. What kind of attitude towards Jesus do Pilate and Herod share? How is such an attitude just as much a rejection as the attitude of those who call for Jesus' execution?

4. When was the last time you felt an intense pressure to make a decision you knew was wrong? How can you keep and speak your mind when others are pressuring you?

Pray: Indifference to Jesus, or even interest in him just for the sake of curiosity, is the same as rejection of Jesus. Pray for the strength to stand up and speak for Jesus at every opportunity rather than bend to the pressures of the world to ignore or ridicule him for our own comfort.

Friday, March 16, 2018

John 18:39-19:16

Is He your King?

Time: A.D. 30, Friday morning

The Jews chose to release Barabbas but gave up Jesus. Pilate found no guilt in Jesus, but the Jews demanded to crucify Jesus because He claimed to be the Son of God.

1. Because Jesus claimed He was the Son of God, what did Jesus suffer?
2. What was Jesus' response to this suffering? Why?
3. Jesus died on the cross for our salvation. How should you respond to what the King of Kings has done for you?

Prayer: O Lord, please grant me courage and strength to be your witness.

Saturday, March 17, 2018

Matthew 27:27-32; Luke 23:26-31

The way to Golgotha

Time: A.D. 30, Friday morning

After mocking Jesus, the soldiers took Him out to be crucified. On the way to Golgotha, they found a man of Cyrene, named Simon. They made Simon carry Jesus' cross. A great crowd followed Jesus. Among them, many women mourned for Him.

1. Simon of Cyrene was made to carry Jesus' cross. Do you think this was a difficult task or an honor? Why?
2. To you, what does it mean to 'take up your cross to follow Jesus'?
3. In your daily life, have you 'taken up your cross to follow Jesus'?

Prayer: O Lord, please help me to willingly take up my cross to follow You.

Sunday, March 18, 2018 – Worship with God's people in the Lord's house!