

Remember Christ Draw Near to the Cross



6th Week

March 19 to March 25, 2018

Monday, March 19, 2018

Prayer on the Cross

Luke 23:32-43

Time: A.D. 30, Friday morning

While Jesus hung on the cross, suffering great pain, He still asked His Father to forgive those who hurt Him because they did not know what they were doing. The rulers, soldiers, people and one of the two criminals continued to mock Jesus. The other criminal asked Jesus to remember him when Jesus came into His kingdom. Jesus promised him that he would be with Him in paradise.

1. Jesus suffered great pain on the cross and continued to be mocked. Do you think Jesus could have saved Himself?
2. Suffering from such great pain and insults, Jesus did not save Himself. What do you think Jesus was thinking?
3. Have you ever prayed for those who hurt you? Why or why not?

Prayer: God, please help me to love those who have hurt me and pray for them.

Tuesday, March 20, 2018

My God, why have you forsaken me?

John 19:25-30; Mark 15:33-37

Time: A.D. 30, Friday

Before dying, Jesus was thinking of His mother, Mary. He asked the disciple whom He loved to take care of His mother. On the cross, Jesus cried out loud, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" Jesus bore our sins. He had no sin but was made to be sin for us. Finally, Jesus said, "It is finished." He knew He had completed God's plan for salvation. Dying on the cross seemed to be a failure, but He knew He had won.

1. Psalm 66:18, "If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened." Are you still living in sin in your daily life?
2. In order to bring salvation, Jesus had to bear shame and pain and died on the cross. How should you respond to His love?
3. "It is finished." is a shout of victory. Jesus obeyed God and was willing to fulfill God's plan. Are you willing and obedient to do God's will in your daily life?

Prayer: Thank you Jesus for bringing us salvation, so that we can be forgiven. Grant me strength and willingness to resist sin.

Wednesday, March 21, 2018

Jesus Breathed His Last

Luke 23:45-54

Time: A.D. 30, Friday 3 to 6 p.m.

Note: The tearing of the curtain signifies that Jesus opened a new and living way for us (Hebrews 10:20). He endured the mocking, flogging, and torture by the people.

Finally, Jesus called out with a loud voice, “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!” This showed his intimacy, trust, and surrender to the Father.

1. When we are humiliated, do we entrust ourselves to the God who judges people with righteousness?
 2. Luke 23: 34, 43 and 46 record three of Jesus’ seven sayings on the cross. Having seen this, the centurion acknowledged that Jesus was a righteous man and that he was the Son of God. Do we see what the centurion saw?
 3. Why did Luke repeatedly use “what had taken place” (v. 47 and 48), and “these things” (v. 49) to describe the reactions of the four types of observers? How does this contrast with v. 35-39? Do you see what they saw? What is your response? (See Luke 23:54-55, John 12:31-32, Matthew 26:56.)
 4. Why did Luke describe in detail the character of Joseph of Arimathea and what he did for Jesus? What is the significance of what he did in God’s kingdom? (See Matthew 27:60, John 19:38-42, Isaiah 53:9.)
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Thursday, March 22, 2018

John 19:31-42

The Pitch-Black Tomb

Note: The purpose of breaking the legs was to hasten death by making the person being crucified not able to support the weight of the body and therefore unable to breathe and suffocate to death. The practice of the Romans was to leave the body on the cross for the vultures. Although the Jews violated many principles of faith, they still wanted to follow the ceremonial laws of their religion. (See Deuteronomy 21:22-23.)

1. From what had happened, John recognized the fulfillment of two Old Testament passages. (See Exodus 12:46, Zechariah 12:10.) Jesus said “No one takes my life from me, but I lay it down of my own accord.” Do you think Jesus’ enemies had achieved their originally determined plan? What was the outcome?
2. Blood is the sign of salvation. Water is the sign of re-birth. “There came out blood and water” meant the flow of blood and serum, which confirmed that Jesus was dead. Why did John point out the fulfillment of “they will look on him whom they have pierced”? What does this have to do with us?
3. Nicodemus and Joseph, who were members of the Sanhedrin, appeared to have yielded to the power of evil in the past and followed Jesus in secret. But at this point, they took great risks and expenses to bury Jesus. Was it worth it? Who changed them? Do we have similar difficulties and breakthroughs in following Jesus? (See v. 38-42, Luke 23:50-54, Matthew 27:60, Mark 15:43.)

Prayer: V. 31-37 and v. 38-42 describe two different ways of handling the body of Jesus. Are there any unjust or, conversely, touching aspects that stir our hearts. How will I receive the resurrected Lord today?

Note: Mary Magdalene was the last one to stay behind on the day Jesus was crucified and buried. She was also at the tomb while it was still dark. This shows how much she loved the Lord.

1. When Mary Magdalene found that the stone was taken away from the tomb, what was she most concerned about? Then, in v. 3 to 7, when Peter and John went together with Mary, what were they trying to find out? What background does this provide for John's feelings in v. 9?
 2. John hinted in v. 8 that he believed after he saw. Why did he marvel that they did not understand the Scripture? Was his belief by faith, or by sight? What do we need to do so that we won't believe too late? (See John 20: 11, 13, 14; 20:29.)
 3. The authors of the Gospels all faithfully report the actual situations at the time. Had Mary, Peter or John suddenly exclaimed, "the Lord really has risen!", would you consider this the human nature you are familiar with? Are there lessons we need to learn just like they did?
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Note: Based on v. 9 and John 20:1, Mary Magdalene was probably not part of the group referred to in v. 2-3, because she had gone to the tomb earlier than the other women. It is remarkable that, even at such time, these women were still so courageous, faithful and devoted.

1. What did the women expect? What did they find? What results did this lead to?
2. This passage repeatedly mentions that they were afraid. They fled from the tomb and said nothing to anyone. (But we know that they then quickly told others. See v. 10 and Matthew 28:8.) What was the reason?
3. What did the angel tell them about the Jesus whom they were looking for? Did Jesus understand their fear?
4. Peter was a leader, but had considered the cross terrifying. As a result, he betrayed Jesus and was fallen. The angel specifically asked the women to inform Peter. What was the intent? Besides Jesus, was there anyone who cared for and supported Peter? (See Luke 22:32, John 20:1-10; 21:15-17.)

Prayer: Lord, you know that I love you. Thank you that in the midst of my failure, you still rely on me. Please enable us to love and care for one another in you, and seek to please you.
