

EASTER

**REFLECTING ON THE LOVE AND
SACRIFICE OF CHRIST IN MARK
AND OTHER PASSAGES**



MARCH 2024

Day 1

When you think about Easter, what part of the story is the first thing that comes to mind? Why has that been so impactful to you?

What are ways in which our world has taken Easter and made it about worldly pleasures and things?

Easter Bunny. The Masters Golf Tournament. Coloring Easter Eggs. Easter Egg Hunts. Candy and more candy. There are a lot of fun things that we do and think about when it comes to Easter. And often those very things take our attention off of what Easter really means, the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. How easily we are distracted and forget. This month we want you to think about your faith and the impact on it because of Jesus death and resurrection. You will also interact with the Easter story from the Gospel of Mark later on in the month. Ask God to help you think through this important event in our faith and in the life of the church.

Read Isaiah 53

If you were to summarize this chapter, how would you summarize it in your own words?

Pick 4 things from this chapter, write them down and write how they point us forward to Jesus.

1.

2.

3.

4.

How do we see in verse 10, that it was the will of God for Jesus to suffer for us on the cross? Why is that important to see?

How would you describe to a non-Christian who Jesus is?

PRAYER – Give thanks for the life and work of Jesus for His people.

Day 2

What are the different reasons people mourn the death of someone?

When I was in high school I had an uncle die. Based on what I saw in his life I do not believe he knew Jesus Christ. At his funeral, of which most people did not grace the inside of a church, there were all the traditional Bible verses read. I found myself mourning not only the death of my uncle but also how lost most of my family members were. I was mourning because they heard important scripture verses and paid no attention to what they were saying. Today we look at the death of Lazarus and how Jesus used that opportunity to teach and encourage the people around him. Ask God to teach you how to apply His word to your life.

Read John 11:17-27

What was the situation surrounding our story today?

What did Martha believe about Jesus when you think about her statement in verses 21 to 24?

In your own words what did Jesus say to Martha in verses 25 to 26.

What do we see about the power of Christ from his statement?

How can we use verses like these to show people that there is only one way to heaven and not many?

How does reading this verse encourage you and give you hope as you think about your life and faith?

PRAYER – Give thanks for life in Christ.

Day 3

What is hard for you as you see the suffering in our world, suffering of people in general but also suffering of Christians?

In *Aladdin* Jasmine snuck out of the palace for a little while to see what life was like in the world. She was awestruck at the poverty and how the people were treated by the palace guards. When she got back to the palace she wanted things to be made right. It really bothered her that her father, the Sultan, had no idea the injustices going on in his own kingdom. How do you react to injustices in our world? Does it make you mad? As Christians, the Bible is full of injustices done to believers just because they claim the name of Christ. Peter and Paul both promise us that these kinds of things will happen if we want to follow Jesus. Ask God to help you wrestle with important truths from His word today.

Read Isaiah 26:16-19

According to verse 16, how badly did God's people want to see God work in and through them?

How can you see from this verse that they are dealing with the consequences of their own actions?

What illustration are we given to help us see the struggle of God's people?

What descriptive words are we given for that struggle in verses 17 & 18?

Yet even in their distress, how do we see hope in verse 19? How is that encouraging to you?

As you face your own death, what is your hope?

PRAYER – Thank God for hope in Christ.

Day 4

What is the most outrageous thing someone has ever told you that you had a hard time believing? Why couldn't you believe it?

Smallville is the story of Superman growing up and discovering his powers and abilities and the impact that has on the family, friends and people around him. When Clark first revealed his secret to his best friend Pete that he was an alien from another planet it was hard for Pete to accept and believe. Who would believe their best friend was an alien? That was outrageous. The Bible has many statements and stories that would fall into this category and yet they are true. Ask God to help you know His word better today.

Read John 2:13-22

Describe the situation described in verses 13 to 17.

What was outrageous statement number one found in verse 16? What would have made it outrageous to the people?

What is the Jews reaction to this statement in verse 18?

What is the next outrageous thing that Jesus tells the people in verse 19?
What is their reaction to this statement?

What was Jesus really talking about?

How did this statement serve to encourage and strengthen the disciples, especially much later?

As Christians we believe some pretty outrageous stuff. What are 4 things we believe that the world rejects and thinks is crazy.

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

PRAYER – Pray and thank God for the gift of faith He has given you.

Day 5

Describe your salvation experience in a way you would explain to someone who did not know you.

I was born into a non-Christian family. We were religious and went to church, but it was what you were supposed to do, not something we did because we loved God. My 8th grade year God used a musical about the life of Christ as told by Peter to show me my sin and my need for salvation. It took 3 more years of hearing God's word and going to church for me to fully understand what it meant to surrender my whole life to Jesus Christ. It was a process but one I look at and fully acknowledge that God did all that work and not me. God is awesome and works miracles. I hope as you wrote down your story that it is a good reminder of the good things God did for you. Ask God to grow you in your faith as you study the Bible today.

Read I Peter 1:3-5

What did Jesus do for us according to His great mercy?

As you look at verse 3, how are we saved?

How does Peter describe the gift of eternal life in verse 4?

When you think about that description, how should that encourage you as a follower of Jesus?

What important thing does God do for all his people in verse 5? Why should that give you full assurance of your salvation?

We all have times of doubting our faith. How can you use these verses to encourage yourself or someone else in times of doubting?

PRAYER – Pray for confidence in your faith and also for someone else you know who is doubting.

Day 6

I want you to write down 3 words you would use to describe Jesus Christ. Next to each one write why that came to mind.

1.

2.

3.

There are a lot of words we could use to describe Jesus. As I think of Christ, I think of Prince of Peace. In my sin and rebellion, I knew anything but peace but through Christ I now know peace even when hard situations are happening. I also think of sacrifice. The God of the universe took on flesh so he could die for my sins on the cross. There are so many sacrifices wrapped up in that statement alone. Lastly, I think of submission. Jesus submitted to the will of the Father even though it meant a painful and humiliating death. It is so awesome to be able to serve King Jesus. Ask God to encourage and strengthen you as you read His word today.

Read Romans 1:1-6

What important things are we told about Jesus in these six verses?

I want you to pick two things that especially encourage you as you consider your faith and walk with Jesus. Write them and why they encourage you.

1.

2.

When you think about all these verses, how do we see here that our faith is not something we did but something God did in us?

As we talk about Easter and Jesus resurrection, how is that event important to this passage of scripture?

What is something from this passage that you would want to use to encourage other people in their faith? Why would you use that?

PRAYER – Pray for open doors to share God's truths with other people.

Day 7

I want you to pick someone you know loves you. What are ways in which you know they love you?

I know my children love me. The first important thing they do is that they say that they love me. They use words. Other ways they show their love is some nice hugs, tight snuggles, thoughtful gifts at different times of the year, asking me to do things with them, wanting to help me in the yard whether raking or doing garden work. These are all ways in which I experience my children's love. I hope you were able to think about someone who loves you. God loves us so much more than any human could ever love us. His love is beyond comprehension. Ask God to help you understand the depth of His love as you study the Bible today.

Read Romans 5:8-11

How does God show his love for us in verse 8?

God did not wait until we were perfect to send His son, but while we were rebelling. What does that show you about God's love?

What does Jesus do for us according to verse 9?

What other things does Jesus do for us in verses 10 and 11?

We have been reconciled to God through Jesus Christ. What does it mean that we have been reconciled to God? Why is that important?

Who are 3 people you know that need to be reconciled to God? Next to each name write one way you can pray for their reconciliation.

1.

2.

3.

PRAYER – Pray for the three people you just wrote down up above.

Day 8

Why was Jesus resurrection so important? Think about this and write down your answer.

People in our society are trying their best to stay alive as long as they can. Why? There are so many people who have no hope past this life. They do not know what awaits them on the other side. They think there is no life after death. Do they live it up today because tomorrow they die and that is it? That is depressing. As Christians we have hope. We face death with a confidence that those who do not know Christ do not have. Ask God to encourage you in your faith as you read and study the Word of God today.

Read Romans 6:8-11

What do these verses say about our death as humans?

What do they say about our life?

In verses 9 to 11, what do we see about Christ's death, his power over it and what he accomplished for us as his followers?

What does that show us about Jesus Christ?

How should that encourage and strengthen you in your faith?

How do you need to put your faith in the proper perspective according to verse 11? What does this tell us about our power?

PRAYER – Thanks for making you alive in Christ and forgiving your sin.

Day 9

What is something that you have gained in your life that came with great sacrifice on your part? What kinds of things did you have to sacrifice?

In the original *Men in Black* movies, for J to become an agent it meant he had to get rid of everything that made him who he was. Everything was erased from data banks, all credit cards and bank statements, fingerprints and driver license, family history. He became a new person and had to break all ties he had with other people. This was a great sacrifice to be able to serve as a Men in Black special agent to protect the world. Becoming a follower of Jesus is similar. It comes at a great cost. The question is do you embrace that cost or complain about it? Ask God to challenge how you follow Jesus through the study of His word today.

Read Philippians 3:7-12

Look a couple verses earlier. What was Paul willing to lose and consider as rubbish for the sake of knowing Jesus Christ? List them all here.

In verses 9 to 11, what did Paul want most as a Christian?

Paul is willing to accept even “bad” things in this new desire like suffering. What does this show you about the faith of Paul?

Think about his words in those 3 verses. When you think about your faith, is that your attitude? Explain your answer.

In verse 12 we see as Christians Jesus Christ made us his own. How incredibly encouraging is that to you as you think about it?

PRAYER – Use all these verses and pray them and about them.

Day 10

What is a cause you have seen people put all their time and energy into, only to think they are wasting away their lives? Explain your reason.

In the Battle of the Alamo about 200 Texans defended their little fort against at least 1600 Mexicans. It was a fight that seemed futile since the Texans were grossly outnumbered. They could have run or surrendered early on, but they chose to stay, fight, and defend their country. Most of them died. They delayed the Mexicans long enough that their countrymen bulked up to defeat the Mexicans later on in a different place. The seeming futility of their defense was used for good later on. This is what it is like in our faith. Why would Christians stand up for their faith in a God that nobody can see, against so many people that speak against their faith. It seems futile. Today we look at how important the resurrection of Jesus is to our faith. Ask God to instruct you in His truths today.

Read I Corinthians 15:12-19

If there is no resurrection from the dead, what would that mean according to Paul in these verses?

What does Paul mean your faith is futile?

What does Paul mean you are to be pitied most of all men if Jesus did not raise from the dead?

If Christ did not raise from the dead, what should we be doing with our lives instead?

But Christ did raise from the dead. If you believe this fact, what are 3 ways it should impact your life?

1.

2.

3.

PRAYER – Ask God to strengthen your faith and give you opportunities to stand up for who He is and what He has done.

Day 11

What do people hate about Christians?

How do they show this hatred?

The world does not like our message. A message of you can only get to heaven by grace through faith in one person, Jesus Christ, is very narrow minded and the world does not like it. "So, you are saying that there are no other gods, that my religion is futile, that I can do nothing to get to heaven?" These are things that turn people off to Christianity and make them angry. Yet that is what we believe as followers of Jesus Christ. Our only hope is through Jesus, who died and rose from the dead, taking our sin upon himself and that through faith in him and not in your own works can you have hope of being saved. Not a popular message. Ask God to take His words and lay them on your heart as you read today.

Read Acts 24:14-21

What does Paul believe according to verses 14 and 15?

Paul believed all the law and prophets, what are 5 truths he believed?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

What does Paul tell us about his situation in verses 16 to 20?

What does Paul say in verse 21 is the real reason he is being persecuted by the Jews?

Why did the Jews not like his message about the resurrection of Jesus?

What are ways in which you have dealt with persecution of your faith in your life?

PRAYER – Ask for strength to stand strong in the face of persecution.

Day 12

If someone were to give a million dollars to your church, what impact would that have on your church and what they could do? Take a minute and write down everything you can think of.

There are those that believe if everybody in the church gives their tithe faithfully, the 10% of our earnings, then the church would never lack for money to pay their staff and sustain their ministries. There is some truth to that. But we need to make sure we don't put all of our faith and hope in money. We need to make sure our hope is only in the living God. Today we look back to the beginnings of the church. Ask God to encourage you in your faith and what He is doing in the church as you read the Bible.

Read Acts 4:32-37

What important thing do we see about the Christians in verse 32?

Why is it important for the church to be unified?

Verse 33 is most important to unity and the church. What is most important? Why?

As the people believe the truth of the resurrection, it says God's grace was on all the church. In verses 34 to 37, how do we see that God's grace was on the church?

Would you say these people loved each other? Why? What is the evidence?

What kinds of things can you sacrifice of yourself to show your love for God and for others?

PRAYER – Ask God to help you serve him by living sacrificially.

Day 13

What is an event that has occurred in our history that continues to have negative consequences? What are some of those consequences?

September 11th is a date that will always be remembered. That is the day 4 planes were used as weapons. Two hit the twin towers in New York City. One hit the pentagon on Washington DC. The last one crashed in remote field in Pennsylvania most likely targeting the US Capitol. Since that date there are families who have dealt with losing a loved one: father, mother, child, sibling, friend, etc. We also deal with tighter security at airports, train stations, big athletic events, museums, big races, and celebrations. We have seen new terrorist organizations sprout up and try to spread fear and terror. The impact of that day continues on. Today we look at long lasting consequences of man's fall in the Garden of Eden and also the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. Ask for a heart that understands the Word of God today.

Read I Corinthians 15:21-22

Who was Adam? Give a summary of his life, what he did, etc.

What does Paul say in these verses that the impact of Adam's sin in the Garden of Eden has had on ALL of mankind?

What implication does that have for all of us as human beings and the power that we have or do not have?

That is a real downer. But Paul makes a comparison to Jesus here. What does Paul have to say about hope in Christ in these two verses? Why is that hopeful?

Our only hope is through Christ and his work and not by anything I can do myself. Is your hope in Christ today? How do you know?

PRAYER – Pray you and your loved ones hope to only be in Jesus.

Day 14

How would you describe something that is dead?

How can you make something dead alive again?

That last question is a trick question. There is nothing you can do yourself to take something dead and make it alive again. It is impossible. Dead means done, gone without any hope of life. It leaves us with a sense of powerlessness. We are not as great as we think we are. When considering Christ's resurrection and our own resurrection from death to life, we are left with that same sense of powerlessness. We cannot save ourselves from sin. We need something outside of us to bring us life. Ask God to apply His word to your heart as you read it today.

Read Romans 8:9-11

As Christians how do we know we are alive according to these verses?

What is still going to happen to us because of sin in verse 10?

Why don't we let that keep us down as believers according to the other half of that same verse?

The power that gives us life as followers of Jesus also did what according to verse 11?

How is that an encouraging thing as you think about your faith?

If you have been given this gift of eternal life, what are some things you need to be taking more seriously in your life and in your walk with Christ? List 3 things.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

PRAYER – Pray for the 3 things you just listed above.

Day 15

What is the most memorable thing you have ever done? How do you know that it is memorable?

That can be a hard question to answer. The follow up question might be, "Memorable to who?" Does it matter? It is memorable even if only to one person. I hope the opportunity I have had to lead students to a relationship with Jesus Christ, even if it is only memorable to that person and myself. I think of activities and conversations with my wife and children, and I hope that many of those are memorable even if only to our family. Some of us may be remembered for something big, whether good or bad. What will people remember you for? May that be a question we think about as we begin an Easter journey through the Easter account of Mark. Ask God to open your eyes to His truths today.

Read Mark 14:1-9

Why did the Pharisees want Jesus dead?

How were they going about it according to verses 1 and 2?

How did the woman show her love for Jesus in this passage?

What does Jesus say about her sacrifice? What is she doing for him?

What was the disciples initial reaction? What does this show about where their eyes were focused? How can we be like the disciples?

Jesus said the act of this woman would be remembered. We get to read about it today in the scriptures. Take a moment, write down 2 things that you can do to serve king Jesus that show your love and sacrifice for Him.

1.

2.

PRAYER – Pray for the opportunity to do the 2 things above in service of God and not yourself.

Day 16

What is a way in which you have thought about or actually betrayed someone who was close to you? Why did you do it?

Hollywood is full of movies and TV shows that depict betrayal. I think it is any plot in a show and most movies. It adds to the drama and often times surprises the viewer. Sometimes we yell, “noooooo!” Yet we can be quick to betray the confidence of a family member or friend and often times do not think anything of it. Do you yell, “noooooo!” in that situation. Today we read about the betrayal that was within the ranks of Jesus followers. Ask God to open your eyes to your own actions and attitudes as you read the scriptures.

Read Mark 14:10-21

What do we see about Judas from verses 10 to 11?

Why would his betrayal be hard for Jesus and the disciples?

What does Jesus show about his being totally God in verses 12 to 16?

How would that have “surprised” the disciples that he could say what would happen?

How did Jesus then surprise the disciples in verses 17 to 21? Why was this a surprise?

What do you think would have been your questions if you were sitting at that table and heard Jesus words?

PRAYER – Pray for relationships you have harmed through betrayal or for ways in which maybe you feel betrayed.

Day 17

What is something you do just because this is part of the routine, and you never think about it?

In your faith, what are things you do that often times become part of a routine and you never really think about them?

What a list we could have on both accounts. Eating meals, going to my children's activities, watching tv, reading my Bible, going to church, writing youth group lessons are just a few things that I can go through the motions and do and not really stop and think about why I am doing them. We are creatures of habit, and it is easy to just do things because that is what we do and never stop to think why I am doing them. Pray that as you read about Communion today, that God would teach and instruct your heart in His truths.

Read Mark 14:22-25

Was this supper just about eating bread and drinking wine? What was it about?

What was Jesus preparing His disciples for in this Last Supper? When do you think they really understood the symbolism?

How would it be something that would remind them over and over again of Christ and His love for His people?

How did Jesus encourage the disciples it was not the end in verse 25?

Do you really think about communion when it is observed in church? Why or why not?

PRAYER – Pray for your attitude towards communion and thinking about what Christ did for you on the cross.

Day 18

What is your general reaction when someone predicts you are going to make a mistake or fail in some way? Why do you react that way?

When I minister to high schoolers who are dating, I pretty much tell them that their relationship is not going to last after high school, that their relationship will end at some point. Of course, I don't know that. I am not God. But chances are it will not last. I do this to help them see things a little more realistically and to make sure their focus is on Jesus and not just being in a relationship for the sake of being in a relationship. Most give me weird looks when I give my prediction. We read about a hard time in the life of Peter. Ask God to help you serve and follow Him as you read today.

Read Mark 14:26-31

What news bomb does Jesus drop on his disciples in this passage?

What is the picture he gives them in verse 27? Why is that a powerful picture?

How does Peter react to this news? Why?

What does Jesus say specifically about Peter at that point?

How did Peter and all the disciples respond?

What thoughts & emotions do you think went through Peter's mind?

Do you think you are in a place where you could deny Jesus at any moment? Why or why not?

PRAYER – Ask God for strength to make a stand for Him.

Day 19

Would you consider yourself a person of prayer? Why or why not?

What are the barriers in your life that keep you from praying as much as you should be praying?

It is so hard to talk to God sometimes. You have media distractions: beeping, ping, ringing, and other goofy sounds to let you know people are trying to get a hold of you. Then there are the relationship distractions: parents, nosy siblings, classmates from school or friends. Then there are the physical things: I am tired from school or work; I am not a good reader or good at praying. We have a lot of excuses as to why we don't pray. This should not be. Today we are going to look at Jesus and his disciples in Gethsemane. Ask God to reveal His truths to you.

Read Mark 14:32-42

Look at verses 33 to 36, what are the things we are told about Jesus and His prayer to the Father?

What kept the disciples from praying? Was this wrong or right? Why?

What is Jesus reaction to his sleeping disciples? Why did he react that way?

What does Jesus own words say about us as humans in verse 38? Why is that so humbling?

What are 3 things you can change in your life so you can be better at prayer, so you can be more watchful?

1.

2.

3.

PRAYER – Pray about the 3 things you listed above.

Day 20

Describe a time when you observed an arrest, real or on TV. What went through your mind as you observed this event take place?

I had a small group at my apartment when I first got married. Across the hall the man and woman who lived there had a very loud fight. Someone called the police, and they came and took away the guy. They had the cuffs, led him to the car and put him in the back seat. It is an event that really got the adrenaline pumping. Of course, we were all talking about it for weeks afterwards. Today we take a look at the arrest of Jesus. Ask God to help you put into practice His word.

Read Mark 14:43-52

I want you to describe in your own words the actions of the following people in this story:

Judas –

Crowd with swords and clubs –

Man with the sword –

Jesus –

Which of these characters make you angry? Why?

In what ways is Jesus example inspiring to you when you think about your own walk with Him?

What happens in verse 50 that had to happen in order to fulfill scripture?

When you think of Jesus last statement, what does that say about the importance and power of God's word?

PRAYER – Give thanks for Christ's sacrifice for our sin.

Day 21

When is a time when you made something up to get someone in trouble? Did it work? How did you feel about what you did or tried to do?

In the animated movie *The Incredibles* people do not like the things superheroes are doing. They call for their secret identity to be their only identity and to blend in with everybody else. The government came to this conclusion because people blamed the heroes for injuries, peeping in windows and a bunch of other actions. People wanted to see the heroes go away so they went to whatever lengths to see them run and hide. And they did. Many people did not like Jesus, and they did whatever they could to make him go away, including killing him on the cross. Ask God to help you read and understand His word today.

Read Mark 14:53-65

What did the teachers of the law want to do to Jesus?

What kinds of things did people say against Jesus to try to get him arrested and killed?

How did Jesus react to these accusations according to verse 61? Why do you think he said nothing?

This got the teachers angry and so they ask him point blank, are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed. How does Jesus answer their question?

What were all the different reactions to Jesus statement about who he is? Why did they react so strongly?

Do you find it hard to stand up for the truth when you feel like the only one who believes it? Why or why not?

PRAYER – Ask God for boldness like Christ to speak the truth to those God has put in your life.

Day 22

Who is someone you know, that if someone asked you if you knew them, you would say no way? Why would you deny knowing them?

At Christmas, my family likes to watch the movie *Elf*. It is a story about Buddy, a human raised by elves. He dresses, eats, and thinks like an elf. He wants to reunite with his blood father. His father wants nothing to do with him for many reasons. The guy thinks he is an elf, wears green tights, acts like a little child all the time, and is growing on his son and wife. Even when told by a doctor he is the father, he still continues to deny Buddy. Today we will see Peter's denial of knowing Jesus. Ask God to help you look at your own heart and life as you read His word.

Read Mark 14:66-72

We see Peter lurking around in our story. Why do you think he was staying so close to the action surrounding Jesus?

Who were the people who asked if Peter knew Jesus?

Why do you think Peter denied knowing Jesus?

After the rooster crows 2 times, Peter realizes Jesus was right about him. How would that have been so humbling and humiliating for Peter?

How does this very story show us that Jesus who was fully man was also fully God? (See verse 30)

When you think about the times you compromise your faith or even deny you know Christ, do you feel guilty or filled with remorse or do you not care? Explain your answer.

PRAYER – Ask God to strengthen your faith so you won't deny him but stand strong in your faith.

Day 23

Who are 2 people, if others asked for their release, would be unfair because of their crimes? Write why next to their names.

1.

2.

We read stories online or hear it on the news of people who have committed some pretty heinous crimes. There are your serial killers, people who hurt children or women, or commit acts of terror. What would the reaction in our culture be if we listened to people who said we should free those people and put someone in jail who was innocent, just because they did not like them. We would call that ridiculous and we would fight to keep it from happening. Yet, this is what happened in the life of Christ. He was innocent and yet the people wanted him to die. Ask God to help you understand this story and how to apply it to your life.

Read Mark 15:1-15

How much did the Jewish leaders hate Jesus? How do you see it here?

Why do you think Pilate was amazed at Jesus reaction to their accusations?

How was Barabbas a champion to the Jews compared to Jesus?

What was ridiculous about the fact that a Roman official gave into the request of the Jews here?

How do we know Pilate did not believe Jesus was guilty? What swayed him to give Jesus over to death, an innocent man?

Who are 3 non-Christians you know who reject Jesus as Son of God? Next to each name write one thing you can pray for them about besides salvation.

1.

2.

3.

PRAYER – Pray for the 3 people you just listed above.

Day 24

When you think about torture what are the first 2 things that come to your mind? Why?

1.

2.

There are a variety of pictures that come to my mind. One is someone tied down on a board with a drip of water dripping slowly on their forehead. That is torture. I think of the stories of persecuted Christians in the Middle East who are beat on the bottoms of their feet, electrocuted, threats made against their families and the list goes on. It is not pleasant to think about torture which is maybe why you had a tough time answering the question above. Today we look at the ultimate act of torture, Jesus crucifixion on the cross. Ask God to help you learn new things about this familiar story.

Read Mark 15:16-32

When you read verses 16 to 20 what kinds of things do you think and feel as you envision the soldiers torture of Jesus?

What does this show you about those soldiers?

Pick 3 people from verses 21 to 32 who were mentioned in this account.
What do we learn about those people?

1.

2.

3.

What would have made the leaders believe in Jesus according to their own words? How was this a form of mockery?

What are some things about your faith that you say you will only believe if you see it for yourself?

If you know Christ, this sacrifice was for you. Let that sink in. Christ died a humiliating death on the cross for you. How does that encourage you in your walk with Jesus?

PRAYER – Thank God for Christ's sacrifice for you on the cross.

Day 25

Who is someone you look at and say, “there is a Godly man or woman”?
What is it about them that allows you to say that?

There are all kinds of people that we have in mind when thinking about a question like this. It could be a: pastor, teacher, parent, sibling, friend, coach, or some hero of the faith. We see their sacrifice, love and how they live with conviction in all areas of their lives, and we are left thinking, “What a godly example. I hope you were able to think of somebody. Today we look at the death of Jesus. Ask God to challenge you in your faith as you read the Bible today.

Read Mark 15:33-41

After you read this account, close your eyes. What kinds of things do you see? What do you feel as you envision this picture? Write down all your observations.

What two “awesome things happen in verses 38 and 39? Next to each thing write what makes them miraculous or awesome?

1.

2.

How can we tell from Jesus own words that he was bearing the weight of our sin on himself on that cross?

How does that encourage you when you pause and think about it?

Can you say truly Jesus was and is the Son of God? Why or why not?

PRAYER – Pray for the salvation of 3 people in your life.

Day 26

Who is someone close to you who has died?

What stands out to you about their funeral and burial services?

I remember the first time I went to an open casket funeral of a girlfriend's grandfather. I was captivated by the body. I did not want to look at it but had a hard time taking my eyes off of it. It was a weird experience. Unfortunately, since the fall, death is a normal part of life. Look in the papers or on the internet and see how many thousands of people are dying every day. I know, kind of morbid. Today we look at the burial of Jesus Christ. Ask God to grow you in wisdom and knowledge as you read His word today.

Read Mark 15:42-47

From what we are told about Joseph in verses 42 to 44, what kind of man was he?

How do we see he was most likely a loyal follower of Jesus?

What was surprising to Pilate about Jesus death?

How did he show that he doubted the report given to him of Jesus death?

After Jesus death was verified he let Joseph have Jesus body. How did Joseph take special care of Jesus body? What does this show you about his love for Jesus?

Jesus died and was buried. He did that for you. When you really stop and think about that, how does that encourage you? Wow you? Challenge you in your faith?

PRAYER – Give thanks for Christ's total humiliation in dying and being buried for our sins.

Day 27

Describe a time when you arrived to something expecting to see one thing only to be totally floored by what you saw and experienced? Why were you so surprised?

In *Independence Day*, the humans need to destroy the alien host ship so they can bring down all the little ships that are heading to earth. To do that they have to dock a stolen alien ship with the host piloted by the humans. As they are being drawn into the host ship they are filled with awe at how big and vast the ship is. It was not what they expected. We can often find ourselves in situations like this or observing something we have heard in the news, and they are much bigger and different than what we pictured. This was the case with that resurrection Sunday. Ask God to encourage you in your faith as you consider His truths from the Bible.

Read Mark 16:1-11

Write down at least 4 ways in which people in this Easter account are in awe or surprised by what they see or experience. Next to each one write down why.

1.

2.

3.

4.

In verse 7 the women had not actually seen Jesus. Why could they have had a hard time doing what the angel said to do?

What was the reaction of the women in verse 8? Why?

Mary eventually tells the disciples. How do they treat her news of Jesus resurrection? Why?

Jesus resurrection is miraculous. Who are 3 people you can pray for to believe in Jesus and to start following him. Write down their names and one detail you can pray for them about in addition to their salvation.

1.

2.

3.

PRAYER – pray for the 3 people you just listed.

Day 28

When is a time you shared something with a person or people, and they did not believe you? How did you react to their unbelief? How did you get them to believe you eventually?

In *Prince Caspian* Lucy sees Aslan and tells her siblings. None of them believe her and dismiss her as being a child who is seeing things that are not there. She is hurt and upset that her own siblings do not believe her. She stops talking about it. Aslan later rebukes Lucy for not being persistent in seeing him and in the others for not believing her. Jesus crucifixion was a traumatic event for his followers. How would they ever recover from those horrible events? What would now happen to them in their lives? Many did not believe the news that some people had seen Jesus alive. Today we look at the last account in the Gospel of Mark. Ask God to open your eyes to His truths today.

Read Mark 16:12-20

What do we see about the disciples hearts in verses 12 and 13?

Jesus appears to them. What does he say to them? How do you think the disciples felt at his rebuke?

How do we see in the verses that follow that Jesus was graceful and merciful to his followers even in their unbelief?

What are 4 things Jesus said that they were going to go out and do for Him and for the Kingdom of God?

1.

2.

3.

4.

Jesus ascends into heaven before their very eyes. What are some of the thoughts and questions you think the disciples entertained as Jesus disappeared from their sight?

Verses 15 to 18 are your orders in following Jesus. Describe how you are doing in following these orders from your Commander in Chief.

PRAYER – Pray for open doors to do the things in verses 15 to 18.

Day 29

If you were to summarize for someone what they have to do to have true and genuine salvation what would it be?

This is a question that we need to think about. There are too many Christians that would just say, “Believe in Jesus and you will be saved” or “Ask Jesus to be your Lord and Savior.” These are fine things to say but if that is the extent of what you say to someone you are leaving out some important details like why should they ask Jesus to be their Savior? Why do they need a Savior? What did Jesus do anyways that can save me? These are questions you need to be able to answer so you know what you believe but so you can also share with non-Christians what it means to really know and follow Christ. As you read the verses of study today, ask God to help you know and understand your salvation.

Read Romans 10:9-13

What is the importance of the mouth in our salvation?

What is the importance of the heart in our salvation?

Both of these have to be together. It is not one or the other. If you are able to do both of these things what promises does Paul give us in verses 11 and 13?

What verse shows us that this promise can be for all people? Why is that important as we think about our faith and our outreach?

How do we see when it comes to salvation that the resurrection of Jesus Christ is the key? Where would we all be without Jesus raising from the dead?

List 2 people you can pray to come to faith in Christ this week. Next to each name write one way you will try to start talking and reaching out to them.

1.

2.

PRAYER – Pray for open doors to share your faith with the above people.