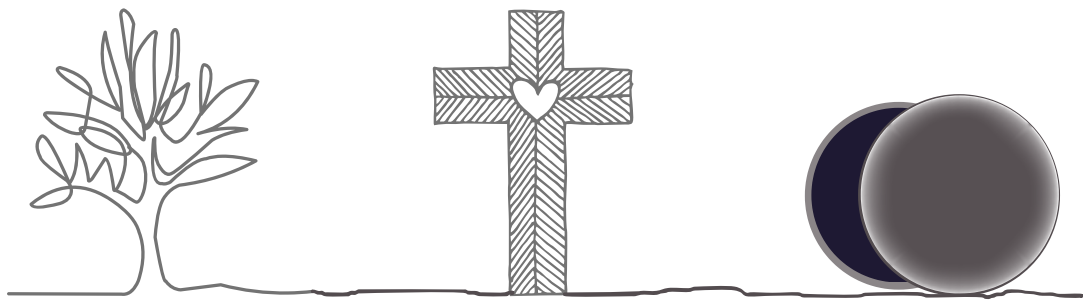


Garden to the Grave



STATIONS OF THE CROSS SENSORY EXPERIENCE

Good Friday

rolling hills church



Journey Guide

Good Friday

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1

Six days before the Passover celebration began, Jesus arrived in Bethany, the home of Lazarus—the man he had raised from the dead. A dinner was prepared in Jesus’ honor. Martha served, and Lazarus was among those who ate with him. Then Mary took a twelve-ounce jar of expensive perfume made from essence of nard, and she anointed Jesus’ feet with it, wiping his feet with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance. But Judas Iscariot, the disciple who would soon betray him, said, “That perfume was worth a year’s wages. It should have been sold and the money given to the poor.” Not that he cared for the poor—he was a thief, and since he was in charge of the disciples’ money, he often stole some for himself. Jesus replied, “Leave her alone. She did this in preparation for my burial. You will always have the poor among you, but you will not always have me.” (John 12:1-8)

Experience:

Roll the scent onto your wrist and take in the fragrance of the nard.

Reflect:

Let the scent stay with you on this journey. Let it remind you of Mary's extravagant love of the Lord. Share in her sentiment of adoration to the Savior.

LAST SUPPER 2

On the first day of the Festival of Unleavened Bread, when it was customary to sacrifice the Passover lamb, Jesus' disciples asked him, "Where do you want us to go and make preparations for you to eat the Passover?"

So he sent two of his disciples, telling them, "Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you.

Follow him. Say to the owner of the house he enters, 'The Teacher asks: Where is my guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?' He will show you a large room upstairs, furnished and ready. Make preparations for us there."

The disciples left, went into the city and found things just as Jesus had told them. So they prepared the Passover. When evening came, Jesus arrived with the Twelve. While they were reclining at the table eating, he said, "Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me—one who is eating with me." (Mark 14:12-17)

Experience:

Take in the sights and sounds of this dinner party. Partake in a tasty bite from the table.

Reflect:

What do you notice about the seating arrangements? (The placements are according to what scripture tells us and historical designation of that time period for where the "host" sits, where "family" sits, and where "guests of honor" sit.)

GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE

3

Then, accompanied by the disciples, Jesus left the upstairs room and went as usual to the Mount of Olives. There he told them, "Pray that you will not give in to temptation." He walked away, about a stone's throw, and knelt down and prayed, "Father, if you are willing, please take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet I want your will to be done, not mine." Then an angel from heaven appeared and strengthened him. He prayed more fervently, and he was in such agony of spirit that his sweat fell to the ground like great drops of blood. At last he stood up again and returned to the disciples, only to find them asleep, exhausted from grief. "Why are you sleeping?" he asked them. "Get up and pray, so that you will not give in to temptation." (Luke 22:39-46)

Experience:

Sit down in the garden. Take in the stars, the smell, and the sounds while you reflect. Listen to the Lord's prayer in Aramaic, Jesus' language.

Reflect:

1. What is causing you to be "asleep?" What temptations do you give into that separate you, not only from Jesus, but from those close to you?
2. The "Garden" is God's creation. The distractions are Man's creation. God's creation worships Him. Man's creation worships self.

JUDAS' BETRAYAL

4

The one called Judas Iscariot—went to the chief priests and asked, “What are you willing to give me if I deliver him over to you?” So they counted out for him thirty pieces of silver. From then on Judas watched for an opportunity to hand him over. (Matthew 26:14-16) While he was still speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, arrived. With him was a large crowd armed with swords and clubs, sent from the chief priests and the elders of the people. Now the betrayer had arranged a signal with them: “The one I kiss is the man; arrest him.” Going at once to Jesus, Judas said, “Greetings, Rabbi!” and kissed him. Jesus replied, “Do what you came for, friend.” Then the men stepped forward, seized Jesus and arrested him. (Matthew 26:47-50)

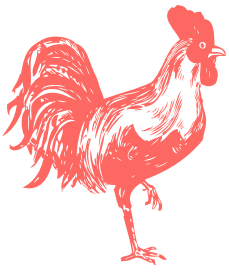


Experience:

Lift the bag of silver and feel its weight.

Reflect:

The priests gave Judas the equivalent of 5 weeks' work, or the equivalent of a paid purchase price of a slave. It seems Judas was constantly chasing after money. Why is it so easy to compromise our values for money?



PETER'S DENIAL 5

Meanwhile, Peter was in the courtyard below. One of the servant girls who worked for the high priest came by and noticed Peter warming himself at the fire. She looked at him closely and said, “You were one of those with Jesus of Nazareth.” But Peter denied it. “I don’t know what you’re talking about,” he said, and he went out into the entryway. Just then, a rooster crowed. When the servant girl saw him standing there, she began telling the others, “This man is definitely one of them!” But Peter denied it again. A little later some of the other bystanders confronted Peter and said, “You must be one of them, because you are a Galilean.” Peter swore, “A curse on me if I’m lying—I don’t know this man you’re talking about!” And immediately the rooster crowed the second time. Suddenly, Jesus’ words flashed through Peter’s mind: “Before the rooster crows twice, you will deny three times that you even know me.” And he broke down and wept.

Experience:

Take a seat by the fire. Take notice of the comfort it provides. Peter was upset, afraid, and looking for solace as he tried to escape confrontation.

Reflect:

- Think of the times you, like Peter, have denied your faith or Christ.
- What do you think the difference is between Judas' betrayal and Peter's denial?

JUDGMENT 6

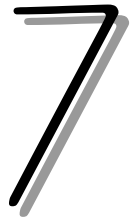
Now it was the governor's custom each year during the Passover celebration to release one prisoner to the crowd--anyone they wanted. This year there was a notorious prisoner, a man named Barabbas. As the crowds gathered before Pilate's house that morning, he asked them, "Which one do you want me to release to you--Barabbas, or Jesus who is called the Messiah?"... The crowd shouted back, "Barabbas!" Pilate responded, "Then what should I do with Jesus who is called the Messiah?"

They shouted back, "Crucify him!" "Why?" Pilate demanded. "What crime has he committed?" But the mob roared even louder, "Crucify him!" Pilate saw that he wasn't getting anywhere and that a riot was developing. So he sent for a bowl of water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, "I am innocent of this man's blood. The responsibility is yours!" (Matthew 27:15-24)

Experience & Reflect:

Pick up a handful of sand and pay attention to how it feels as it runs through your fingers back into your bowl, uncontrollably. Have you ever felt in control of a situation and then had it slip away?

SCOURAGE



So Pilate ordered Jesus flogged with a lead-tipped whip, then turned him over to the Roman soldiers to be crucified. (Matthew 27: 26)

Reflect:

Before He was nailed to a cross, Jesus was violently scourged by Roman soldiers. The whip consisted of leather straps with pieces of bone and metal attached to the ends. He was tied to a post and stripped. The whipping struck Jesus' back, shoulder, and legs. The whip's thongs pulled against His skin, sometimes reaching around to his ribs and stomach, ripping the skin from the bones. The blood loss was enough to send Jesus' body into shock. Flogging was so vicious that by the time the punishment was over, strips of skin could be hanging from the body. In Jewish law, flogging was limited to a maximum of forty lashes, so they stopped at thirty-nine as to not break their law. However, the Romans did not adhere to this law.

Experience:

Dip a paint brush into the paint and splatter the paint onto the garment, using a whipping motion.



CROWNED + MOCKED 8

Then the governor's soldiers took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole company of soldiers around him. They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, and then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on his head. They put a staff in his right hand. Then they knelt in front of him and mocked him. "Hail, king of the Jews!" they said. They spit on him, and took the staff and struck him on the head again and again. After they had mocked him, they took off the robe and put his own clothes on him. (Matthew 27:27-31a)

Experience & Reflect:

Examine the Crown of Thorns. Think of the thorns as representing our sin. Our transgressions were placed on the head of Jesus.

Jesus had told Pilate that His kingdom was not of this world. The soldiers mocked Him and spit on Him. The God Who created the universe - the Savior of the world - has spit on His face.

SHARED BURDEN

9

As they led Jesus away, a man named Simon, who was from Cyrene, happened to be coming in from the countryside. The soldiers seized him and put the cross on him and made him carry it behind Jesus. (Luke 23:26)

Reflect:

By this time, Jesus has been up all night. He's been ridiculed, mocked, beaten and whipped. He's lost a lot of blood and fluids. The pain and brutality of Jesus' torture likely put his body in shock. Jesus' condition is serious and He needed help.

Experience:

Lift the crossbar. Feel the weight that Jesus had to endure and that Simon carried for Him. Pick up a tiny cross to take home with you to remember Good Friday.

Reflect:

The Bible instructs us not to carry our burdens alone. God promises to never leave us, to sustain us, and to give us rest. Reflect on those who have carried a cross with you. Or perhaps it is a cross that you are carrying for another. Do you see it as a blessing and that God is using you in a plan bigger than yourself?

CRUCIFIXION 10

When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him there, along with the criminals—one on his right, the other on his left. Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.”

(Luke 23:33-34)

Reflect:

Jesus talked a lot about loving enemies and forgiving others. But here, at the cross, he goes beyond words and ideals and teaches us with an example:

*With the nail digging into his flesh and the hammer hovering...
He offers forgiveness.*



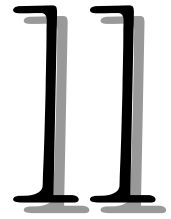
Experience 1:

- Examine the large nails that are similar to the ones used on Jesus.

Experience 2:

- Grab a hammer and drive one small nail into the cross.

IT IS FINISHED



It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, for the sun stopped shining. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Jesus called out with a loud voice, “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.” When he had said this, he breathed his last. (Luke 23:44-49)

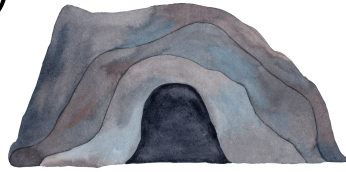
Experience & Reflect #1:

Jesus takes his final breath. Inhale and exhale. Did you smell the aroma coming from your wrist? Do you think that Jesus could smell the perfume that Mary had broken over him a few days earlier? The scented reminder of the overwhelming love Mary felt, mixed with the stench of his own suffering.

Experience & Reflect #2:

Extinguish one candle as a symbol of Jesus dying and the darkness that has now spread over the earth. God uses nature to convey messages to us. There is an earthly finality in death. There's sorrow, helplessness, and confusion. Feel the weight of darkness. Realize that for a short time, the earth was without the presence of God. The Holy Spirit has not yet come and Jesus has left His earthly body.

BURIED



12

Now there was a good and righteous man named Joseph. He was a member of the Jewish high council, but he had not agreed with the decision and actions of the other religious leaders. He was from the town of Arimathea in Judea, and he was waiting for the Kingdom of God to come. He went to Pilate and asked for Jesus' body. (Luke 23:50-52) With him came Nicodemus, the man who had come to Jesus at night. He brought about seventy-five pounds of perfumed ointment made from myrrh and aloes. Following Jewish burial custom, they wrapped Jesus' body with the spices in long sheets of linen cloth. The place of crucifixion was near a garden, where there was a new tomb, never used before. (John 19:39-41)

Experience:

Run your hands through the fresh herbs and spices. Take in the fragrance and imagine 75lbs worth.

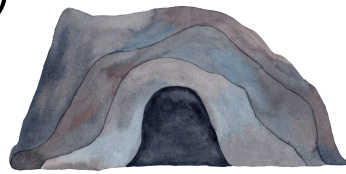
Reflect:

The extravagant offering of Nicodemus' herbs was 4x's the amount in Jewish custom for burial and would be valued at over \$150,000 today. Joseph and Nicodemus are another example of a "shared burden." When those closest to Jesus scattered after His death, these two stepped in courageously to offer a dignified burial for our Savior, when those closest to Him couldn't bare it.

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BURIED



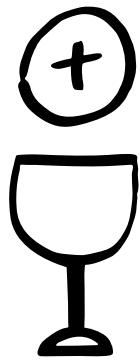
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Reflect:

Our sins are buried in Christ's death. To bury our sins with Christ means that we are now finished with them. We put them away and never dig them up again. Sin is meant to stay dead. We don't want to exhume our old nature, with all its smell and filth and rottenness, but we want to be done with sin forever.

Experience:

1. Take a strip of linen and the myrrh oil.
2. Squeeze a drop of myrrh onto your burial cloth.
3. Now bury your linen into the herbs.



COMMUNION

13

Reflect:

What is God saying to you tonight?

Experience:

Conclude your journey by taking Communion.

Join us on Sunday for our Easter service!

