

THE
JOURNAL

SPRING 2024

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INTRODUCTION

JOURNAL

A journal is a simple tool intended to bring about a regular rhythm, or habit, in our lives. The purpose isn't simply to complete the journal, but rather to allow the journal to open a conduit between us and God. And that conduit could become an opportunity for the Spirit to transform our hearts and minds to be more like Jesus.

DISCIPLESHIP

Discipleship is an apprenticeship of sorts. In the Christian faith, for the past 2,000+ years, disciples have been those who have looked to Jesus as the Lord (KING) of their lives. Disciples have wanted to speak more like Jesus, hear more like Jesus, see more like Jesus, act more like Jesus, and love more like Jesus. This journal was designed to help us become more aware of and respond to the Holy Spirit, and move us in that direction.

COMMUNITY

The best way to journey with Jesus is to do so within a community. While most of us will engage this journal primarily in our own private, quiet times, it is good to have conversations about our experiences with a community of people. God designed us to live in deep, meaningful, healthy relationships. We need to gather for worship in community each week. And we need to have regular conversations about faith and practice and Jesus and questions with others. We need each other. Our perspectives and understanding will grow as we have these conversations in community.

JESUS

At the center of it all is Jesus. If we miss Jesus in the rhythms and activities of our lives, we miss everything.

May God's Spirit work in us, among us, and through us as we are formed into the image of Jesus.

Grace + Peace

HOW TO USE THIS JOURNAL

SERMON NOTES

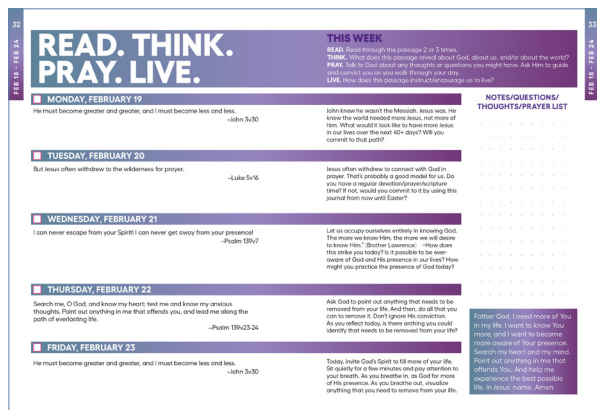
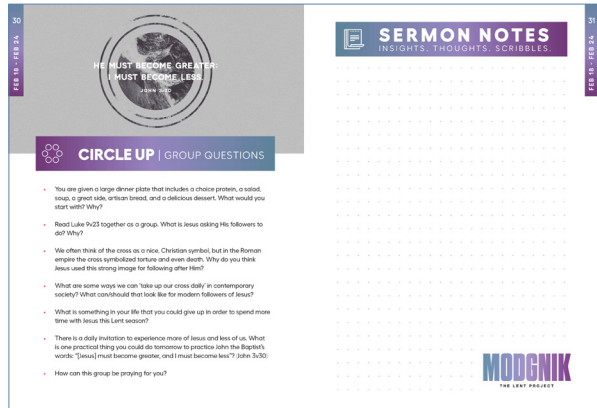
Each week, you'll find a space to take sermon notes. If you miss the sermon on Sunday, jump online and watch.

CIRCLE UP

You'll also find a page of questions connected to the section of scripture we've been in together. Use this as a guide for your family or group—but feel free to deviate from these questions if something else jumps out to you from the week's scripture/sermon/themes.

CHAIR TIME

Chair Time pages are here to spur some personal time with God. The scripture we provide each day is intended to be a starting point. You can go further, by opening the passage in your Bible (paper or digital) and read as much or little as you'd like. You can also use the scripture as a prayer. As you read and pray, consider how God's Spirit might be leading you to think, speak, or act differently.





THE WEIGHT OF WORDS



Sticks and stones. And WORDS.

Often more dangerous than we think. They are not tangible, but extremely powerful.

Words have often moved people to do great things. And they've also paralyzed people in fear.

Our words are capable of so much—both good and evil, healing and pain, life and death.

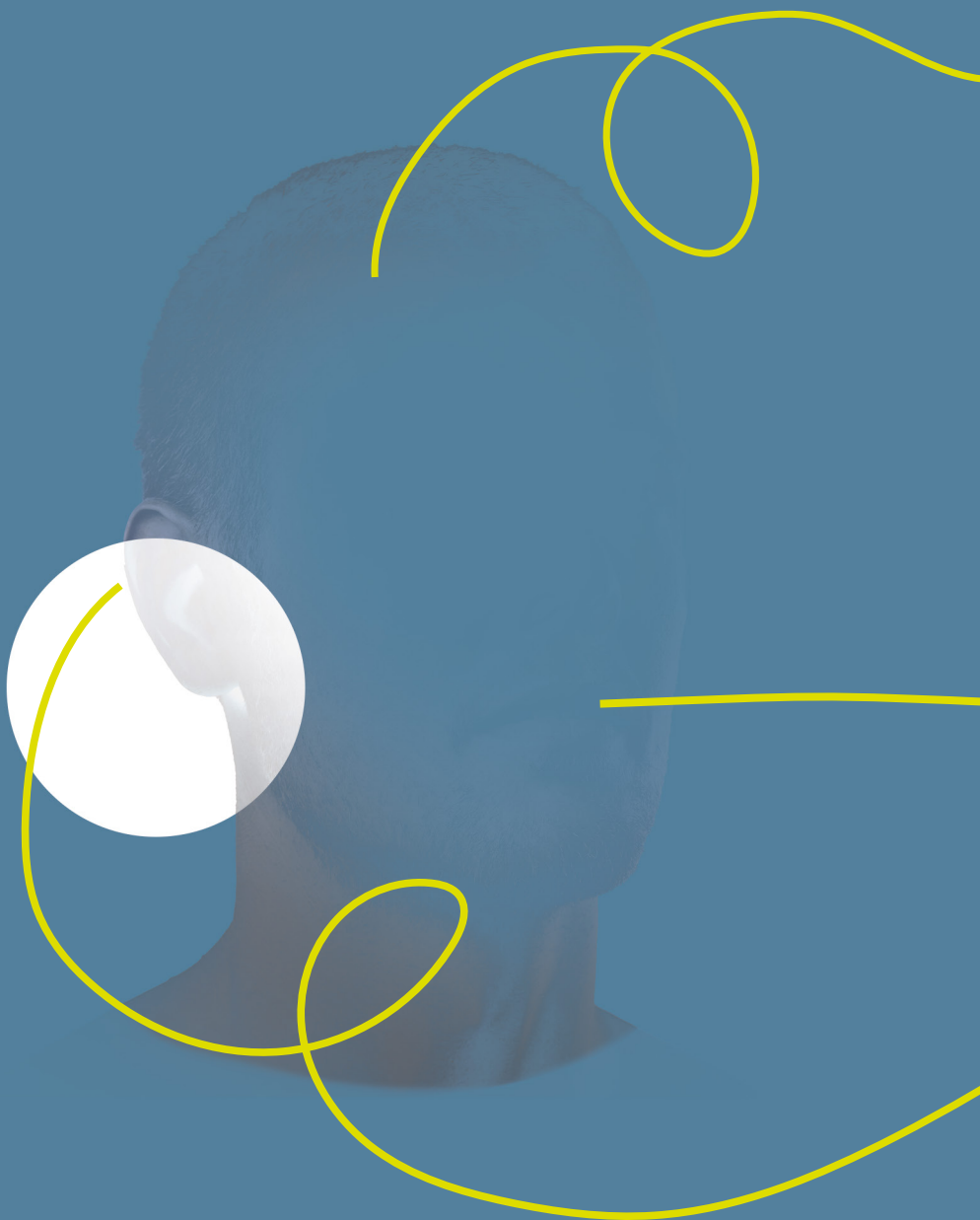
And even more powerful than our words are His. He spoke, and it was created.

The Word (Jesus), sent from God, brought hope and peace and light.

And He is still speaking. He speaks to and over you and me.

The right words, at the right time can bring exactly what is needed.

That's the weight of words.



FROM THE MIND

“Words are themselves sacred, God’s tool for creating the universe, and our tools for bringing holiness—or evil—into the world” (Abraham Heschel). Words matter more than we often think. If this is true, we should think before we speak. We’ve all been guilty of allowing our emotions to spark a flurry of words that we eventually wish we could take back. But it’s too late. The weight of our words has been felt.

PRACTICE: Think before you speak. If caught up in an emotional conversation, step away and gather your thoughts before you say something you might regret. And remember, not everything you think should make it out of your mouth.

FROM THE MOUTH

Do you tend to criticize or encourage other people more? Not just directly to them, but also about them. Be honest. Some are natural and born encouragers. It comes easy, and their words do so much good. Others naturally pick things, and others, apart, which can often bring pain and division. Solomon said that our words have the power to bring life to others, or destroy the lives of others. We have the power of life and death in our words.

PRACTICE: Work to encourage at least one person per day for the next few weeks of this series. Whether that encouragement is via text, phone call, or face to face, use your words to build someone up intentionally. And do so genuinely as well as specifically.

FROM THE EAR

James said we should be quick to listen. (And slow to speak.) That’s more than just good advice—it’s wisdom. So many times, our minds are focused on what we want to communicate, what we deserve to say, what we know is right. One of the disconnects and primary forces of division in our world is our lack of listening to understand. In conversation, we halfway listen as we prepare the perfect response. Listening is an act of compassion and humility.

PRACTICE: Listen to understand, not simply to respond. Listen for someone’s experienced pain, disappointment, or shame. And even in situations where you deserve to speak or respond, choose to simply listen.



are like honey—sweet to the soul and healthy for the body.

—Proverbs 16v24



CIRCLE UP | GROUP QUESTIONS

- As a group, try to say the well-known slogan/tagline from these companies: Nike / Disney / CapitalOne / Wheaties / Lay's Chips / Allstate / BMW / Gatorade / Kentucky Fried Chicken / M&Ms
- Read James 3v3-12 together as a group. What does this passage say about the power of the words we speak?
- Share an example from your life where words were encouraging to you and really helped you. Then share an example where words were harmful and hurtful toward you. What makes those memories so prominent?
- Why do you think it can be so difficult to 'tame our tongue' and change the habits of the way in which we communicate?
- The words we say are often the sign of something much deeper in our hearts. Do you believe that? Why or why not?
- Brainstorm together some ways in which you can encourage one another in changing some communication habits. What would you personally like to change or practice? How can you do that?
- How can this group be praying for you?



SERMON NOTES

INSIGHTS. THOUGHTS. SCRIBBLES.

THE
WEIGHT
OF WORDS

READ. THINK. PRAY. LIVE.

☐ MONDAY, JANUARY 22

Words kill, words give life; they're either poison or fruit—you choose.

–Proverbs 18v21 (MSG)

☐ TUESDAY, JANUARY 23

Then God said, “Let us make human beings in our image, to be like us. They will reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, the livestock, all the wild animals on the earth, and the small animals that scurry along the ground.” So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

–Genesis 1v26-27

☐ WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 24

Finally, brothers and sisters, rejoice. Become mature, be encouraged, be of the same mind, be at peace, and the God of love and peace will be with you.

–2 Corinthians 13v11

☐ THURSDAY, JANUARY 25

Don't use foul or abusive language. Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them.

–Ephesians 4v29

☐ FRIDAY, JANUARY 26

So encourage each other and build each other up, just as you are already doing. Encourage those who are timid. Take tender care of those who are weak. Be patient with everyone.

–1 Thessalonians 5v11 + 14

THIS WEEK

READ. Read through the passage 2 or 3 times.

THINK. What does this passage reveal about God, about us, and/or about the world?

PRAY. Talk to God about any thoughts or questions you might have. Ask Him to guide and convict you as you walk through your day.

LIVE. How does this passage instruct/encourage us to live?

NOTES/QUESTIONS/ THOUGHTS/PRAYER LIST

This is a great memory verse for the series. Do you believe it's true? Why or why not? Name two examples from your life, one good and one bad.

In this Genesis 1 poem, we read that God spoke creation, and humanity, into being. Do you believe you can, metaphorically, speak life into the people around you? Why or why not?

Be joyful. Mature. Encourage each other. Live in harmony and peace. The order of these instructions seems intentional. How do they build on each other? What can you do today to encourage someone?

On a scale from 1-10, how would you rate your words based on this verse? Why? What specific things could you do to change that for the better?

Your words are powerful. How are you using them these days? For good? For encouragement? To build others up? Or ...?

Father God, I want my words to bring life to others. I want to encourage and build up those I encounter today. I don't want to tear down, deflate, or destroy others with my words. Lead and guide me today. Convict me where I need to be convicted. In Jesus' name. Amen.



*WORDS KILL,
WORDS GIVE LIFE;
THEY'RE EITHER POISON
OR FRUIT—YOU CHOOSE.*

—PROVERBS 18v21 (MSG)



CIRCLE UP | GROUP QUESTIONS

- What was your favorite song in high school, college, or early adulthood? Who was the artist? Can you still sing along to the chorus of the song? What are the words?
- Read James 4v1-12 together as a group. What stands out to you in this passage?
- James links the negative patterns of our speech with having friendship with the secular world/culture. Have you found that to be true? Why or why not?
- Have you been negatively impacted by someone's words? If comfortable, share an experience where someone's words have hurt you.
- This passage also links humility to our words and actions. Why is humility an important component of how we communicate with people? How might your words/habits of communicating be harmful or disrespectful to God and/or others?
- What specific thing can you work on (or continue to work on from last week) in speaking words of encouragement and love and kindness toward others?
- How can this group be praying for you?



SERMON NOTES

INSIGHTS. THOUGHTS. SCRIBBLES.

13

JAN 28 - FEB 3

THE
WEIGHT
OF WORDS

READ. THINK. PRAY. LIVE.

MONDAY, JANUARY 29

Words kill, words give life; they're either poison or fruit—you choose.

—Proverbs 18v21 (MSG)

TUESDAY, JANUARY 30

Do everything without complaining and arguing, so that no one can criticize you. Live clean, innocent lives as children of God, shining like bright lights in a world full of crooked and perverse people.

—Philippians 2v14-15

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 31

So stop telling lies. Let us tell our neighbors the truth, for we are all parts of the same body.

—Ephesians 4v25

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 1

A fool is quick-tempered, but a wise person stays calm when insulted. An honest witness tells the truth; a false witness tells lies. Some people make cutting remarks, but the words of the wise bring healing. Truthful words stand the test of time, but lies are soon exposed.

—Proverbs 12v16-19

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 2

Don't use foul or abusive language. Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them.

—Ephesians 4v29

THIS WEEK

READ. Read through the passage 2 or 3 times.

THINK. What does this passage reveal about God, about us, and/or about the world?

PRAY. Talk to God about any thoughts or questions you might have. Ask Him to guide and convict you as you walk through your day.

LIVE. How does this passage instruct/encourage us to live?

Read this verse a few times and see if you can memorize it. Keep coming back to it throughout the day.

Constant complaining and arguing is no fun to be around. Overall, are you a complainer? Paul contrasts this with being a bright light in the world. How do our words help us live as a light?

When we become Christians, our old selves are removed, and we take on a new self, with new habits. Paul mentions lying here. Do you ever struggle with lying? To look important? To act as though you know something you don't? To hide? If so, how might you put on your new self, and begin telling the truth?

What jumps out at you from this passage?
Why do you think that jumped out?

How would you define foul or abusive language? Do you struggle with language like this? Do you feel as though our language as Christians should be different than the rest of the world? Why or why not?

NOTES/QUESTIONS/ THOUGHTS/PRAYER LIST

Father God, I want to honor you with the words that I speak. This week, as I look at some ways my words could be harmful or dishonest, convict me and lead me toward a better way. Give me the courage to tell the truth. Help me speak words that are life-giving and words that bring healing. In Jesus' name. Amen.



UNDERSTAND THIS, MY DEAR BROTHERS AND SISTERS: YOU
MUST ALL BE QUICK TO LISTEN, SLOW TO SPEAK, AND SLOW
TO GET ANGRY.

—JAMES 1v19



CIRCLE UP | GROUP QUESTIONS

- When you're on a road trip, what do you tend to put on the stereo? What have you been listening to in the car lately?
- Read James 1v19-26 together as a group. What stands out to you in this passage? Why?
- Why do you think James encourages us to be quick to listen, but slow to speak? What is the danger of not working this into our daily interactions with others?
- Can you share a time you wish someone would have been quicker to listen to you instead of speaking? What about a time you wish you had been quicker to listen to someone else instead of speaking?
- James moves from the practical listening we do with others to the spiritual listening we do with God. How do you think these two kinds of listening/speaking are similar and/or different?
- What does it look like to really spend time listening to God? Have you thought about how you can learn to better listen in prayer?
- How can this group be praying for you?



SERMON NOTES

INSIGHTS. THOUGHTS. SCRIBBLES.

FEB 4-10

THE
WEIGHT
OF WORDS

READ. THINK. PRAY. LIVE.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 5

Understand this, my dear brothers and sisters: You must all be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry.

—James 1v19

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 6

Then Jesus said, “Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.”

—Matthew 11v28

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 7

Don’t sin by letting anger control you. Think about it overnight and remain silent.

—Psalm 4v4

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 8

The heart of the godly thinks carefully before speaking; the mouth of the wicked overflows with evil words.

—Proverbs 15v28

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 9

Take control of what I say, O Lord, and guard my lips.

—Psalm 141v3

THIS WEEK

READ. Read through the passage 2 or 3 times.

THINK. What does this passage reveal about God, about us, and/or about the world?

PRAY. Talk to God about any thoughts or questions you might have. Ask Him to guide and convict you as you walk through your day.

LIVE. How does this passage instruct/encourage us to live?

Is your tendency to talk more or listen more?
Why do you think James encourages us to be quick to listen, but slow to speak?

Jesus invites us to rest with Him. Escape the noise. Do you tend to fill your life with noise –music, tv, games, etc? Why or why not? Is it difficult for you to sit in silence?
CHALLENGE: Sit in silence for 5 minutes today, with no words and no distractions.

The psalmist connects controlling anger with remaining silent. Brilliant. How have you experienced your anger and words getting you into trouble? Why is it so difficult for us to step away from a situation, before we say something we regret? How might following the instruction from this verse help in your relationships?

Think before you speak. Think about a time you wish you would have done this better. What was the outcome?

Invite God to help guard your words. We all need wisdom when it comes to listening and speaking, hearing, and saying. How has God convicted you over the past few weeks? What do you want to take with you as we close out this series?

NOTES/QUESTIONS/ THOUGHTS/PRAYER LIST

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Father God, help me be
quick to listen, slow to
speak, and even slower to
get angry. In Jesus' name.
Amen

SUNDAY



Let us hold tightly without wavering to the hope we affirm, for God can be trusted to keep his promise. Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.

Hebrews 10v23-25



Why is SUNDAY marked as the day for gathered community worship for the church?

For Jews, Saturday was known as Sabbath, a day of rest. From sundown on Friday to sundown on Saturday, God's people were to rest from everything. It was a beautiful day set apart for the good of humanity.

Many scholars and historians suggest that by the end of the first century, Sunday had been set apart as a day for Christians to gather in community for worship celebrations, teaching, communion, prayer, and shared meals (were these the original potlucks???). This wasn't simply changing the day of Sabbath; it was a completely different celebration and observance.

There were two main reasons why SUNDAY was THE DAY. First, Sunday was the day of Jesus' resurrection, which marked a whole new world for all of humanity. Gathering on Sundays was a day to remember, celebrate, and share the GOOD NEWS about Jesus. And the beginning of Creation was thought to have occurred on the first day of the week, most often recognized as Sunday. Taken together, Sunday was the perfect day for Christians to gather as a community and corporately turn their hearts and minds toward God as they celebrated the Good News of Jesus.

As Christians, Sundays are extremely important for us, not simply to follow tradition or a religious observance, but to gather with others in community, to celebrate and declare the Good News of Jesus, and to spur one another on toward love and good deeds.

for God so LOVED

the world that *he gave his one and only Son*, that whoever believes in him *shall not perish but have eternal life*

John 3:16



CIRCLE UP | GROUP QUESTIONS

- If you could attend any major event, concert, or activity in the world with a group of family and/or friends, what would you choose to attend and who would you take with you?
- As we prepare for the Lent season and 40 days leading up to Easter, is there something in your spiritual life you would like to work on? Is there anything you are planning to fast from or give up?
- Read James 4v7-8 together as a group. What does it mean to submit ourselves to God?
- What does it mean to flee or resist the devil? What are some practical ways to do that in our culture?
- What is something you feel you most need in your relationship with Christ that you'd like to practice in this season?
- Do you have any resources, books, or friends that you think could help you grow in that area? Does anyone else in the group have recommended resources, books, etc. that might help?
- How can this group be praying for you?



SERMON NOTES

INSIGHTS. THOUGHTS. SCRIBBLES.

FEB 11 - FEB 17

SUNDAY

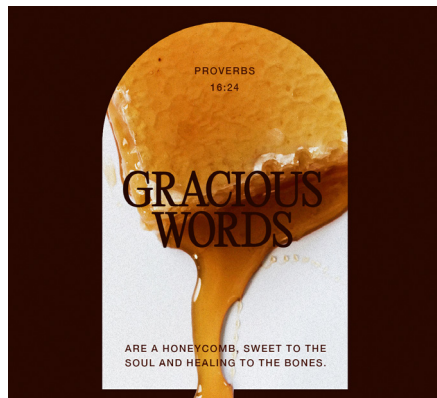
READ. THINK. PRAY. LIVE.



MONDAY, FEBRUARY 12

"Don't worry about tomorrow, because tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."

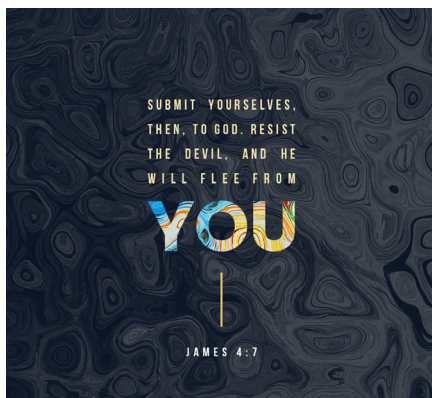
— Matthew 6v34



TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 13

Gracious words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones.

—Proverbs 16v24



WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 14

Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

—James 4v7



THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 15

The Lord is good, a refuge in times of trouble.

—Nahum 1v7

READ. Read through the passage 2 or 3 times.

THINK. What does this passage reveal about God, about us, and/or about the world?

PRAY. Talk to God about any thoughts or questions you might have. Ask Him to guide and convict you as you walk through your day.

LIVE. How does this passage instruct/encourage us to live?



Taste and see the Lord is good;
blessed is the one who takes refuge
in him.

-Psalms 34v8

NOTES/QUESTIONS/THOUGHTS/PRAYER LIST

LENT

LENT: the basics

The earliest records of Lent seem to be a 40-day preparation for those being baptized on Easter Sunday. The idea and concept spread to others, and soon Lent became a more formal practice.

40 Days?

In scripture, the number 40 often corresponds with a time of training, testing, or preparation, (e.g. - Noah, Moses, Israelites, Jesus).

Ash Wednesday

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the 40 days of Lent. In scripture, ashes often refer to a spirit of repentance or moving in a new direction. In some traditions, ashes are placed on the forehead—a reminder of our mortality as well as a symbolic act of repentance.

Ash Wednesday to Easter is more than 40 days. However, Sundays are always reserved for celebration and feasting. For Christians, Sundays mark the day of Jesus' resurrection, which is to be celebrated. So the 40 days do not include Sundays.

TRADITIONALLY, THERE ARE 3 PRIMARY ACTS WE PRACTICE INTENTIONALLY DURING LENT:

● FASTING

Many people choose a meal or a specific food or an entire day each week to fast. For example, some people give up coffee or caffeine for Lent. Others give up chocolate or sweets. Some fast from lunch for 40 days, and some people fast every Friday. In the modern world, the idea of fasting has moved beyond just food and taken forms such as social media or TV. The idea is that we FAST or refrain from one thing in order to give our full attention to God, which leads to...

● PRAYER

Prayer can take the place of whatever we are fasting from. Rather than eating lunch every day, you might choose to take a walk and pray and listen to what God might be speaking to you. Or rather than scrolling on Instagram, you might read scripture. If extended prayer seems foreign or impossible for you, you could begin by reading a book on prayer. Read a chapter each day, and then practice prayer. The big idea is making an intentional effort to connect with God in prayer regularly throughout Lent.

● ALMS GIVING

The third practice was participating financially in the generosity of God. This could be added giving to the local church for missions or a specific need. It could be weekly financial gifts to organizations working with the poor. The big idea is that we sacrifice financially above and beyond our normal giving to reflect the generosity of God.

HOW DO YOU WANT TO PARTICIPATE IN LENT THIS YEAR?

Spend some time thinking and praying about how you could fully practice Lent in this season. Write down your plans here and tell at least one other person who can help hold you accountable. Then, stick with it. And don't bail if you miss a day or a meal. Just jump right back in. Perfection is not the goal—deeper connection with God is.



MODENIK

THE LENT PROJECT

MODERNIK

THE LENT PROJECT

JESUS. The visible image of the invisible God.

JESUS. A display of God's love. And salvation from sin.

JESUS. Come to introduce and open the door of the Kingdom.

JESUS. King Jesus.

The central message of Jesus' life and teaching was not, as many might think, an invitation to heaven when we die. The central message of Jesus was about the Kingdom of God.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD. Here. Now. But not yet fully.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD. Within us, around us, among us. Life in God's Kingdom looks much different than life in the way of our world. It's an open door to something surprising, something full of joy and hope and grace and truth and peace and love. It is Good News for all—the rich, the poor, the powerful, the hopeless.

LOVE. The invitation and the way.

LOVE. The marker and the direction.

LOVE. The very essence of God and those who live in His Kingdom.

Jesus. The Kingdom. Love. Bigger. Wider.
Better than we ever imagined.

Come. Taste. See. Turn around. Repent. Enter in. And live.



HE MUST BECOME GREATER;
I MUST BECOME LESS.

JOHN 3v30



CIRCLE UP | GROUP QUESTIONS

- You are given a large dinner plate that includes a choice protein, a salad, soup, a great side, artisan bread, and a delicious dessert. What would you start with? Why?
- Read Luke 9v23 together as a group. What is Jesus asking His followers to do? Why?
- We often think of the cross as a nice, Christian symbol, but in the Roman empire the cross symbolized torture and even death. Why do you think Jesus used this strong image for following after Him?
- What are some ways we can 'take up our cross daily' in contemporary society? What can/should that look like for modern followers of Jesus?
- What is something in your life that you could give up in order to spend more time with Jesus this Lent season?
- There is a daily invitation to experience more of Jesus and less of us. What is one practical thing you could do tomorrow to practice John the Baptist's words: "[Jesus] must become greater, and I must become less"? (John 3v30)
- How can this group be praying for you?



SERMON NOTES

INSIGHTS. THOUGHTS. SCRIBBLES.

MODGNIK
THE LENT PROJECT

READ. THINK. PRAY. LIVE.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 19

He must become greater and greater, and I must become less and less.

—John 3v30

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 20

But Jesus often withdrew to the wilderness for prayer.

—Luke 5v16

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 21

I can never escape from your Spirit! I can never get away from your presence!

—Psalm 139v7

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 22

Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. Point out anything in me that offends you, and lead me along the path of everlasting life.

—Psalm 139v23-24

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 23

He must become greater and greater, and I must become less and less.

—John 3v30

DON'T BE SELFISH; DON'T TRY TO IMPRESS OTHERS.

BE HUMBLE, THINKING OF OTHERS AS BETTER THAN

YOURSELVES. DON'T LOOK OUT ONLY FOR YOUR OWN

INTERESTS, BUT TAKE AN INTEREST IN OTHERS, TOO.

—PHILIPPIANS 2v3-4



CIRCLE UP | GROUP QUESTIONS

- You have a week-long trip you get to take with a friend. Where would you go? Who would you bring? What would each of you be responsible to plan for the trip?
- Share a story of how someone was important to you in your own journey of faith in Christ.
- Read Mark 2v3-11 together as a group. What stands out to you in this story?
- What are some things we might be able to learn from this interaction?
- Come up with a list as a group some of the ways Christians can help other Christian friends, church members, and people of faith. Then come up with a list of ways Christians can and should be helping those who are not people of faith.
- Pick one thing from either of these lists to practice this week. What did you choose? Why?
- Who is someone you could invite to Easter services with you this year? Spend a few minutes praying for those individuals together.



SERMON NOTES

INSIGHTS. THOUGHTS. SCRIBBLES.

READ. THINK. PRAY. LIVE.

■ MONDAY, FEBRUARY 26

Four men arrived carrying a paralyzed man on a mat. They couldn't bring him to Jesus because of the crowd, so they dug a hole through the roof above his head. Then they lowered the man on his mat, right down in front of Jesus. Seeing their faith, Jesus said to the paralyzed man, "My child, your sins are forgiven".

—Mark 2v3-5

■ TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 27

Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too.

—Philippians 2v3-4

■ WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 28

Bless those who persecute you. Don't curse them; pray that God will bless them. Be happy with those who are happy, and weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with each other. Don't be too proud to enjoy the company of ordinary people. And don't think you know it all! Never pay back evil with more evil. Do things in such a way that everyone can see you are honorable. Do all that you can to live in peace with everyone.

—Romans 12v14-18

■ THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 29

Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, harsh words, and slander, as well as all types of evil behavior. Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you.

—Ephesians 4v31-32

■ FRIDAY, MARCH 1

Jesus replied, "'You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. A second is equally important: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' The entire law and all the demands of the prophets are based on these two commandments."

—Matthew 22v37-40

THIS WEEK

READ. Read through the passage 2 or 3 times.

THINK. What does this passage reveal about God, about us, and/or about the world?

PRAY. Talk to God about any thoughts or questions you might have. Ask Him to guide and convict you as you walk through your day.

LIVE. How does this passage instruct/encourage us to live?

The friends of this man were so focused on his needs that they were willing to do whatever it took to get him to Jesus. What could we learn from this story?

This passage (continuing into the next several verses) is one of the greatest calls to mirror Jesus in the way we see and interact with others. Practically, what could this look like in your life this week? Be specific.

Be happy. Weep. Are you doing that with the people around you? One of the greatest challenges is listening to those around us. Asking questions and really listening to responses helps us celebrate and mourn with those around us.

As he often does, Paul says get rid of one thing so that we can take on another. Do you struggle with any of the emotions and actions he lists here? Why do you think that is?

The greatest commandment. Easy to say. Difficult to do. How are you at loving your neighbors? How might you better love your neighbors? Be specific.

NOTES/QUESTIONS/ THOUGHTS/PRAYER LIST

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Father God, I'm so thankful for the friends and family you've placed in my life. I know I'm not always the best at loving those around me. This week, I'm convicted to be more _____. I pray that Your Spirit would work in me to bring about more _____. Help me to be the kind of friend that I want to have for others. In Jesus' name. Amen

YOU MUST HAVE THE SAME ATTITUDE THAT CHRIST JESUS HAD. THOUGH HE WAS GOD, HE DID NOT THINK OF EQUALITY WITH GOD AS SOMETHING TO CLING TO. INSTEAD, HE GAVE UP HIS DIVINE PRIVILEGES; HE TOOK THE HUMBLE POSITION OF A SLAVE AND WAS BORN AS A HUMAN BEING. WHEN HE APPEARED IN HUMAN FORM, HE HUMBLIED HIMSELF IN OBEDIENCE TO GOD AND DIED A CRIMINAL'S DEATH ON A CROSS.

-PHILIPPIANS 2V5-8



CIRCLE UP | GROUP QUESTIONS

- Which of these modern amenities would be the most difficult for you to give up: warm water, air-conditioning, mobile phone, TV/streaming, or washing machine? Why?
- Share a time when you felt blessed by serving others or by giving up something so that someone else could benefit. Why do you think that action benefited you as well as the other person?
- Read Mark 10v35-45 together as a group. What were the James and John asking of Jesus? How would you feel if you were one of the other disciples?
- What does Jesus say is the key to being a leader or high up in the ranking system of the Kingdom?
- What does it look like to practically live out Mark 10v44 as followers of Jesus? Come up with a list of a few things together.
- Which of the things on this list can you work to grow in or practice this week?
- How can this group be praying for you?



SERMON NOTES

INSIGHTS. THOUGHTS. SCRIBBLES.

READ. THINK. PRAY. LIVE.

■ MONDAY, MARCH 4

You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had. Though he was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. Instead, he gave up his divine privileges; he took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being. When he appeared in human form, he humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on a cross.

—Philippians 2v5-8

■ TUESDAY, MARCH 5

Therefore, God elevated him to the place of highest honor and gave him the name above all other names, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue declare that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

—Philippians 2v9-11

■ WEDNESDAY, MARCH 6

Before the Passover celebration, Jesus knew that his hour had come to leave this world and return to his Father. He had loved his disciples during his ministry on earth, and now he loved them to the very end. So he got up from the table, took off his robe, wrapped a towel around his waist, and poured water into a basin. Then he began to wash the disciples' feet, drying them with the towel he had around him.

—John 13v1 + 4-5

■ THURSDAY, MARCH 7

And he gives grace generously. As the Scriptures say, "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble." So humble yourselves before God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

—James 4v6-7

■ FRIDAY, MARCH 8

Come close to God, and God will come close to you. Wash your hands, you sinners; purify your hearts, for your loyalty is divided between God and the world. Let there be tears for what you have done. Let there be sorrow and deep grief. Let there be sadness instead of laughter, and gloom instead of joy. Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up in honor.

—James 4v8-10

THIS WEEK

READ. Read through the passage 2 or 3 times.

THINK. What does this passage reveal about God, about us, and/or about the world?

PRAY. Talk to God about any thoughts or questions you might have. Ask Him to guide and convict you as you walk through your day.

LIVE. How does this passage instruct/encourage us to live?

Read this passage several times and just ponder/meditate/think about what Jesus did. Let the weight of it sit with you today.

Read this passage several times. One day, every knee will bow and every tongue confess the name and kingship of Jesus.

What do you think John means when he says that “Jesus loved them to the very end”? Footwashing was something reserved for servants. Why do you think Jesus did this at the Last Supper? In our world today, can you think of equivalent actions? List a few ideas.

What jumps out to you in this passage? Why do you think James ties humility and resisting the devil together?

How does this passage speak directly to you? Is the Spirit convicting you of anything? Is the Spirit nudging you in any direction? If so, write it down.

NOTES/QUESTIONS/ THOUGHTS/PRAYER LIST

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Father God, the sacrifice Jesus made for our good is just overwhelming. His humility and the way He served is an incredible picture of the kind of love our world needs. Father, help me to follow in His footsteps. Help me to become a servant to those around me. Help me to see opportunities to lift others up, to wash others' feet, to practice humility. Help me to be more like Jesus. In Jesus' name. Amen

While Jesus was in the Temple, he watched the rich people dropping their gifts in the collection box. Then a poor widow came by and dropped in two small coins.

“I tell you the truth,” Jesus said, “this poor widow has given more than all the rest of them. For they have given a tiny part of their surplus, but she, poor as she is, has given everything she has.”

Luke 21v1-4



CIRCLE UP | GROUP QUESTIONS

- If you could choose only one type of food to have endless amounts of, what would you choose? Why?
- Read Matthew 14v14-21 together. What was Jesus' emotional response to the crowds of people that came to Him? Do you tend to have the same kind of heart posture when you see people in need? Why?
- What are some of the biggest needs that you observe in our society? What, to your knowledge, is being done to try and meet those needs?
- When the disciples try to send people home, Jesus gives an opportunity for the disciples to practice compassion and generosity. They offer what feels like too little. And yet Jesus multiplies it. Have you seen God multiply a small 'offering' in your own life? Where?
- How can you become more generous to needs that exist around you, even if it feels like you might not be able to give or contribute that much?
- Re-read Matthew 14v20. What might this verse be telling us about God?
- What can this group be praying about for you?



SERMON NOTES

INSIGHTS. THOUGHTS. SCRIBBLES.

READ. THINK. PRAY. LIVE.

MONDAY, MARCH 11

"Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be. No one can serve two masters. For you will hate one and love the other; you will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and be enslaved to money."

—Matthew 6v21+24

TUESDAY, MARCH 12

Then he said, "Beware! Guard against every kind of greed. Life is not measured by how much you own."

—Luke 12v15

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 13

While Jesus was in the Temple, he watched the rich people dropping their gifts in the collection box. Then a poor widow came by and dropped in two small coins. "I tell you the truth," Jesus said, "this poor widow has given more than all the rest of them. For they have given a tiny part of their surplus, but she, poor as she is, has given everything she has."

—Luke 21v1-4

THURSDAY, MARCH 14

"But we have only five loaves of bread and two fish!" they answered. "Bring them here," he said. Then he told the people to sit down on the grass. Jesus took the five loaves and two fish, looked up toward heaven, and blessed them. Then, breaking the loaves into pieces, he gave the bread to the disciples, who distributed it to the people.

—Matthew 14v17-19

FRIDAY, MARCH 15

Teach those who are rich in this world not to be proud and not to trust in their money, which is so unreliable. Their trust should be in God, who richly gives us all we need for our enjoyment. Tell them to use their money to do good. They should be rich in good works and generous to those in need, always being ready to share with others. By doing this they will be storing up their treasure as a good foundation for the future so that they may experience true life.

—1 Timothy 6v17-19

THIS WEEK

READ. Read through the passage 2 or 3 times.

THINK. What does this passage reveal about God, about us, and/or about the world?

PRAY. Talk to God about any thoughts or questions you might have. Ask Him to guide and convict you as you walk through your day.

LIVE. How does this passage instruct/encourage us to live?

Jesus says that the desires of our heart will be tied to our treasure. How have you seen that play out in your life? Be specific. Generosity can often combat our tendency to give our hearts to money and the things money can buy. How have you seen generosity bring joy in your life?

Do you struggle with greed? If so, what might help you guard against it in your life? Ask God to help you become more generous and giving.

Why do you think this was included in Luke's stories about Jesus? What do you think Jesus wants us to take from it?

The disciples offered what they thought was too little—and Jesus multiplied it. That's what God does with our generosity. He multiplies it. Where can you become more generous, even if it feels insignificant? Could you begin regular, faithful generosity with your local church to help further the ministries? Don't sit on the sidelines thinking it's too insignificant.

Read through this passage a couple of times. What jumps out at you? Is there a Kingdom challenge there for you?

NOTES/QUESTIONS/ THOUGHTS/PRAYER LIST

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Father God, You created this world and gave it to us as a gift. You loved us and gave us Jesus. Sometimes I'm tempted to think the best kind of life is one in which I'm simply a consumer who needs more and more. Help me to see the beauty in giving, the beauty in generosity. Open up opportunities for me to be generous this week. Help me to grow into a more generous person, no matter the amount. I want to be rich in good works and always ready to share with others. In Jesus' name. Amen

AND WE HAVE SEEN
So the Word became human
 HIS GLORY. THE
and made his home among us.
 GLORY OF THE
He was full of unfailing
 FATHER'S ONE AND
love and faithfulness
 ONLY SON. JOHN 1v14



CIRCLE UP | GROUP QUESTIONS

- What is one of your favorite Easter traditions? Why?
- Have you ever felt distant from God? What did you do to work through that season? What did you learn from that experience?
- Read John 15v4-11 together as a group. What does this passage say gives Christ joy?
- What is the 'fruit' of a life that remains in Christ? Can you share an example of someone in your life that the 'fruit' of his/her life was evidence they spent time with Jesus?
- How do we abide or remain in Jesus? What are some practical things we can do even after Easter and the Lent season?
- Out of the different ways that were discussed, choose one to work on in your relationship with Christ this week. What did you choose? What is something you can practice to grow in that area over the next several days?
- How can this group be praying for you?



SERMON NOTES

INSIGHTS. THOUGHTS. SCRIBBLES.

MODGNIK

THE LENT PROJECT

READ. THINK. PRAY. LIVE.

■ MONDAY, MARCH 18

One day when the crowds were being baptized, Jesus himself was baptized. As he was praying, the heavens opened, and the Holy Spirit, in bodily form, descended on him like a dove. And a voice from heaven said, "You are my dearly loved Son, and you bring me great joy."

—Luke 3v21-22

■ TUESDAY, MARCH 19

"If you love me, obey my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, who will never leave you. He is the Holy Spirit, who leads into all truth."

—John 14v15-17a

■ WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20

"I am leaving you with a gift—peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don't be troubled or afraid."

—John 14v27

■ THURSDAY, MARCH 21

"Remain in me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful unless you remain in me. Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing."

—John 15v4-5

■ FRIDAY, MARCH 22

For God wanted them to know that the riches and glory of Christ are for you Gentiles, too. And this is the secret: Christ lives in you. This gives you assurance of sharing his glory.

—Colossians 1v27

THIS WEEK

READ. Read through the passage 2 or 3 times.

THINK. What does this passage reveal about God, about us, and/or about the world?

PRAY. Talk to God about any thoughts or questions you might have. Ask Him to guide and convict you as you walk through your day.

LIVE. How does this passage instruct/encourage us to live?

Luke records this story, and then records the story of Jesus being tempted in the desert. He is clear to note that Jesus was full of the Holy Spirit. Why do you think this detail is important? How important is it that you have the Holy Spirit? Why?

Jesus promised His followers the gift of the Holy Spirit. He describes the Spirit as an Advocate, or Comforter, or Counselor (translations vary). Could you use an advocate, a comforter and a counselor in your life? Do you believe the Holy Spirit can be that for you? Why or why not?

Peace. If you read this entire passage, you'll see a connection between peace of mind and heart and the gift of the Holy Spirit. How might you open your mind and heart to the Spirit throughout the day today? Consider taking 2-3 minute breaks throughout the day where you consciously look/ listen for the Spirit's wisdom and guidance.

Remain. Abide. Stay connected. Jesus invites us to stay grounded, connected to Him. And when we do, the Spirit begins to strengthen us and produce fruit. Plugging into this journal is one way to find connection. What other ways do/can you find connection and grounding with Jesus? Be specific.

The great secret? Christ in you. Jesus is near. The Spirit is near. This is God's promise and desire for our lives. We must continue to recognize His presence and cooperate with His work IN US. Ask God to continue the work IN YOU today. Recognize that He is not distant. He is near.

NOTES/QUESTIONS/THOUGHTS/PRAYER LIST

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Father God, I believe Your Spirit is living and active in our world today, even when I don't see or feel it. I want Your Spirit to be living and active within my heart and mind. I need Your Spirit. Help me to anchor myself in Christ and open my heart and mind to the Spirit each day. As I seek after You, I pray that Your Spirit would be a real presence in my life. In Jesus' name. Amen

Jesus told her,

“I am the resurrection and the life.”

Anyone who believes in me will live, even after dying. Everyone who lives in me and believes in me will never ever die. Do you believe this, Martha?

John 11v25-26



CIRCLE UP | GROUP QUESTIONS

- If you had to choose a different time period in history to live through, what would you choose? Why?
- What is one thing you feel like God has been growing in you the past couple of months?
- If you're able to, take communion together as a group as you read Luke 22v14-30.
- Think of yourself in the story as one of the disciples. Read the passage slowly again if needed. What would you experience or think about during this interaction?
- Continuing this thought experiment: How might your emotions and thoughts change over the next few days as the events of Good Friday took place?
- What about when you heard the tomb was empty on Sunday?
- How can this group be praying for you?



SERMON NOTES

INSIGHTS. THOUGHTS. SCRIBBLES.

READ. THINK. PRAY. LIVE.

MONDAY, MARCH 25

When they arrived back in Jerusalem, Jesus entered the Temple and began to drive out the people buying and selling animals for sacrifices. He knocked over the tables of the money changers and the chairs of those selling doves, and he stopped everyone from using the Temple as a marketplace.

—Mark 11v15-16

TUESDAY, MARCH 26

“Teacher, which is the most important commandment in the law of Moses?” Jesus replied, “‘You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. A second is equally important: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ The entire law and all the demands of the prophets are based on these two commandments.”

—Matthew 22v36-40

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 27

Jesus shouted to the crowds, “If you trust me, you are trusting not only me, but also God who sent me. For when you see me, you are seeing the one who sent me. I have come as a light to shine in this dark world, so that all who put their trust in me will no longer remain in the dark.”

—John 12v44-46

THURSDAY, MARCH 28

He took some bread and gave thanks to God for it. Then he broke it in pieces and gave it to the disciples, saying, “This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” After supper he took another cup of wine and said, “This cup is the new covenant between God and his people—an agreement confirmed with my blood, which is poured out as a sacrifice for you.”

—Luke 22v19-20

FRIDAY, MARCH 29

When they came to a place called The Skull, they nailed him to the cross. And the criminals were also crucified—one on his right and one on his left. Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they don’t know what they are doing.” When the Roman officer overseeing the execution saw what had happened, he worshiped God and said, “Surely this man was innocent”.

—Luke 23v33-34 + 47

THIS WEEK

READ. Read through the passage 2 or 3 times.

THINK. What does this passage reveal about God, about us, and/or about the world?

PRAY. Talk to God about any thoughts or questions you might have. Ask Him to guide and convict you as you walk through your day.

LIVE. How does this passage instruct/encourage us to live?

The temple had been turned into a place of buying and selling. And in that, the elite had begun taking advantage of people who were looking to connect with God. In shutting down the buying and selling of animals for sacrifice, could Jesus have been pointing to the ultimate sacrifice He was about to make? What surprises you about this story?

As Jesus is teaching this week, He is confronting the religious structure that has continually added more and more weight to people who honestly wanted to honor God. Answering one of the Pharisees questions about the greatest commandment, this is His reply. How does this redefine the way we are to live in God's Kingdom?

If we want to know what God is like, we look at Jesus. He is the visible image of the invisible God. And He is a light in our dark world. His invitation is for us all—no one is excluded. Believe in Him. Trust in Him. Follow Him.

The Last Supper. Jesus washes His disciples' feet. They share the Passover meal. And Jesus points to a new covenant, a new passover, a final sacrifice. He then commands them to love one another just as He had loved them. Can you imagine the emotions and questions that would fill the disciples minds in the next 24-48 hours?

Jesus was pierced and punished for the sins of all humanity. Jesus willingly gave up His life for us. And there is no longer a barrier between us and God's mercy. This is good news. Have you accepted this sacrifice in your place? Through Jesus, you have full access to God's grace and mercy.

NOTES/QUESTIONS/ THOUGHTS/PRAYER LIST

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Father God, "I want to know Christ and experience the mighty power that raised him from the dead. I want to suffer with him, sharing in his death, so that one way or another I will experience the resurrection from the dead. I haven't fully experienced this, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus first took hold of me." In Jesus' name. Amen
(adapted from Philippians 3)



HE IS

RISEN

ALL PRAISE TO GOD, THE FATHER OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST. IT IS BY HIS GREAT MERCY THAT WE HAVE BEEN BORN AGAIN, BECAUSE GOD RAISED JESUS CHRIST FROM THE DEAD. NOW WE LIVE WITH GREAT EXPECTATION!

1 PETER 1V3



Easter is really good news. Sometimes we lose sight of just how good it is. Check out this video from our friends at the Bible Project, who remind us that “something happens when people tell the story of Jesus and start living like He really is the King of the world.

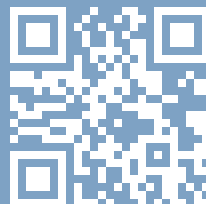
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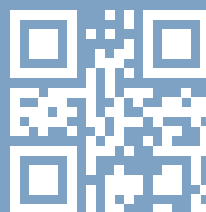
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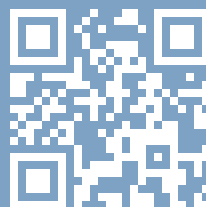
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