

Bethany Scripture Reading: Jesus' Last Words

March 10

Verse of the Week: Luke 23:34 FORGIVENESS

And Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

And they cast lots to divide his garments.

Scripture: Numbers 14:1-25

Observation:

Why do you think, after all the people witnessed, they still did not believe God would give them the land?

What is significant about God's display of glory in vs. 10-12?

What genius do you see in the minority report from Caleb & Joshua in vs. 6-9?

When you read vs. 18, what are your thoughts about God's steadfast love and forgiveness? What warning about God does Moses provide?

Application:

What happens in you to not pursue living out what God desires for you?

What is most appealing about this text? Most challenging?

Prayer:

Thank God for the forgiveness he offers and the love he gives. Invite him to forgive you based on his great love.

March 11

Verse of the Week: Luke 23:34

And Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

And they cast lots to divide his garments.

Scripture: Psalm 103

Observation:

How has David benefitted from God's favor?

List five reasons found here to praise the Lord.

How does David in this Psalm reflect what Moses describes of God in Numbers 14 (yesterday's devotional)?

Application:

When have you experienced God's grace first-hand?

What is a situation you would want to bring God's grace and forgiveness into?

Consider the mood of this Psalm. When you pray, how could your attitude be affecting your prayer?

Prayer:

Ask God to show you his forgiveness in what you see, what you hear. Ask him to make clear his abounding love?

March 12

Verse of the Week: Luke 23:34

And Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

And they cast lots to divide his garments.

Scripture: Psalm 51

Observation:

Psalm 51 was a Psalm of David following his sin with Bathsheba. How does David approach God after this incident? What is his disposition?

In vs. 13, what does David plan on doing once God has forgiven him?

According to David in vs. 17, what is essential for obtaining God's forgiveness?

Application:

What is required for us to have a contrite heart? When have you had the overwhelming grief like David has toward sin?

How has covering up sin backfired in your life?

Are you growing in sensitivity to sin?

Prayer:

Oh God, I pray as did David, please blot out my transgression according to your great compassion.

March 13

Verse of the Week: Luke 23:34

And Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

And they cast lots to divide his garments.

Scripture: Psalm 32

Observation:

Different translations of this Psalm arrange it differently. How do the different translations help you understand David's logic?

What are three positive effects of confessing sin?

Why did the psalmist wait so long to confess his sin? (vs. 3-5)

Why would David contrast people to a horse or mule?

Application:

Unconfessed sin sapped David's strength. How have you seen sin sap your strength?

David contrasts two types of people: those who resist confession and those who immediately repent. What are the results from each by you?

How has the message of God freely forgiving those who ask for it impacted you?

Prayer:

God, show me how I might help others by sharing my experience of forgiveness.

March 14

Verse of the Week: Luke 23:34

And Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

And they cast lots to divide his garments.

Scripture: Acts 2:14-40

Observation:

Why was it important for Peter to include Old Testament passages in his speech to the Jews?

Explain what it means to be "pierced to the heart"?

What are the implications of the resurrection and ascension for Jesus?
For the people?

How would you put Peter's answer in vs. 38-40?

Application:

To repent and be baptized in Jesus' name means to turn from all your sin and affirm your allegiance to Jesus. How does that present a challenge to you? Why is it important to include Jesus' name?

What role has repentance played in your walk of faith?

How is the repentance and Jesus' forgiveness important for a new believer? For a person that is a long-time believer?

Pray. Thank God for the convicting presence of the Holy Spirit in your life, leading you to repentance and forgiveness. Thank him as well for delivering you from the power of "this perverse generation."

March 15

Verse of the Week: Luke 23:34

And Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

And they cast lots to divide his garments.

Scripture: Hebrews 9

Observation:

What is ineffective about the Old Testament sacrifices towards sin?

What happens in the inner room? The outer room?

According to vs. 14, how are we to LIVE because Jesus offered himself for us? Notice the contrast between "the LIVING Lord" and "acts that lead to DEATH."

How is the priesthood of Christ distinguished from the old system?

Application:

What part of the picture of Christ in Hebrews 9 is most meaningful to you?

How can we put into human terms the cost of Jesus' sacrifice?

How does Jesus gift to you grow from reading Hebrews 9?

Pray:

Ask God to open your eyes to the value of who Jesus is, and what he did.

March 16

Verse of the Week: Matthew 18

And Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

And they cast lots to divide his garments.

Scripture: Matthew 18:15-35

Observation:

Why is it important to follow the "steps of making things right" in vs. 15-18?

Mt. 18:15-20 and 21-35 are two separate teaching of Jesus on what?

Offenders in Jesus' day were to be forgiven 3 times, after four times the offense need not be forgiven. What does Jesus' answer tell us about forgiveness in his kingdom?

How is the authority of the local congregation described in vs. 18?
How does Jesus connect this authority to prayer?

Application:

What is the limit to your forgiveness?

How can you forgive someone from your past that hurt you deeply?

If a person does not ask you for forgiveness, what is your response to them? Why?

Pray: Thank you Father for forgiving my sins so I can maintain a fruitful relationship with you. Also grant me courage to repent of an offense or confront another to protect the unity of the congregation.

March 17

Verse of the Week: Isaiah 53:6 Relationship/Sheep

All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Scripture: Psalm 23

Observation:

If the Lord is our shepherd, we are not in want. What does the Psalm say he provides for us?

What kind of paths does our shepherd guide us in?

What relieves the sheep's fear? What does that rod and staff do to comfort?

Application:

If we have a shepherd, what does this psalm tell us we should expect?

If the shepherd takes us on a path we don't know, how should we respond?

How does Psalm 23 give comfort to you?

Pray:

Thank the Lord that He knows us and what we need. Ask Him to give you a desire to trust and walk in His guidance completely.

March 18

Verse of the Week: Isaiah 53:6

All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Scripture: Psalm 100

Observation:

What are the six reasons the psalmist gives praise to God?

What kind of attitude characterizes God's people?

Why is thanksgiving a communal activity?

Application:

What are three things you are most thankful for?

What is something that causes you to praise God?

How can this Psalm bring joy on your dark days?

Pray: Ask God to help you see what you are already given, and to be outspoken in acknowledging it.

March 19

Verse of the Week: Isaiah 53:6

All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Scripture: Ezekiel 34

Observation:

What were the shepherds doing in vs. 2-3?

Who are the bad shepherds in this passage?

What do you think the author meant by “fat sheep”?

What does God promise to do for His sheep? (vs. 23-31)

Application:

What do you learn about God’s hope for people in this passage?

How can you see Jesus and his mission through this passage?

What kind of sheep are you? (injured? Weak? Lost?) How is God taking care of you?

Pray: Ask the Lord to help you be the kind of sheep that can be led to His desired place.

March 20

Verse of the Week: Isaiah 53:6

All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Scripture: Luke 15:1-7

Observation:

Are you one of the 99? Why?

What is Jesus saying to Pharisees in this parable?

What is Jesus saying in vs. 7?

Application:

How do you sometimes stray from the Lord?

What does this story tell you about your value to God?

Pray:

Pray that this parable would affect how you see people in your life: both strangers and loved ones.

March 21

Verse of the Week: Isaiah 53:6

All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Scripture: Matthew 9:35-38

Observation:

The people Jesus saw in these days what was his emotion towards them?

These sheep were lacking what?

What is Jesus' prayer request?

Application:

What is a harvest field that you believe is especially short of workers?

Why is prayer the answer for the need, instead of something else?

What is your harvest field?

Pray: Ask God to bring workers into the harvest field you see.

March 22

Verse of the Week: Isaiah 53:6

All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Scripture: John 10:1-18

Observation:

How do sheep respond to the shepherd?

How is Jesus like a gate in the sheep pen?

Who are the other sheep and the hired hands in the story? Who are they in our modern world?

What does our good shepherd do for the sheep? (vs. 17-18)

Application:

What was the turning point for your to hearing and responding to God's voice?

How does it make you feel to think of Jesus as the Good Shepherd?

How do you know it is Jesus' voice you are hearing?

Pray:

Ask God to help you have better ears to hear what he is doing as our good shepherd.

March 23

Verse of the Week: Isaiah 53:6

All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Scripture: 1 Peter 2:23-25

Observation:

How does Jesus' death result in both an ending and a beginning in our lives?

Who is Peter referring to when he said, "he entrusted himself to him who judges justly"?

What do sheep naturally do?

What is Jesus the shepherd of?

Application:

What is your response to insults?

If Jesus bore our sins, we are to die to sins and live for righteousness.

What sin will you die to?

How have you gone astray in the past?

Pray: Ask Jesus to shepherd you, even when we have gone astray.

March 24

Verse of the Week: Matthew 27:46

And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

Scripture: Psalm 27

Observation:

What are three qualities of God that David mentions in Vs. 1?

Why did David believe he did not have to be afraid?

What does David seem to value the most from God's presence?

Application:

Name one time you sought the Lord in the last month.

What words would you use to describe the Lord's presence in your point of need?

Jesus invited us to seek first his Kingdom. David tells us to seek the Lord's face. How will you seek God and His kingdom first?

Pray:

Ask God to be present in your current challenge. Ask him to help you seek Him first.

March 25

Verse of the Week: Matthew 27:46

And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

Scripture: Psalm 34

Observation:

Some scholars divide this Psalm into two parts. Where would you divide the Psalm in two? What is the purpose or focus of each?

How could David "Taste and see the Lord is good"?

What will destroy the wicked (vs. 21)? Why doesn't God intervene?

Application:

How does looking to the Lord for help develop radiant joy?

How does being a Christian and the Christian life "taste" to you?

How could this Psalm be Jesus' testimony as well as David's, and yours?

How do you search for peace? (vs. 14)

Pray: Ask God to help you taste, see, and pursue the Lord.

March 26

Verse of the Week: Matthew 27:46

And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

Scripture: Isaiah 49:8-26

Observation:

Name 4 things that will happen to show the world the Lord is your Savior and your Redeemer?

What are the people's doubts (vs. 14, 24)? How does this passage answer them?

What does God not forget?

Application:

How does it feel to be forgotten?

When have you felt forgotten by the Lord?

How does vs. 16-18 encourage the "forgotten"?

Pray: Ask God to help you know he sees you and remembers you.

March 27

Verse of the Week: Matthew 27:46

And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

Scripture: Psalm 22

Observation:

What is David's basic struggle?

What seems worse: God's distance or people's mocking?

How does David's tune change from vs. 20 to vs. 21-23?

Jesus quotes Psalm 22:1 on the cross. How does that parallel help you understand this psalm?

Application:

How do you express yourself when you are stricken with grief, loss or separation? How does it feel when God seems to be at a distance?

How does knowing Jesus went through something like our separation help us?

How could you share what God will give those that are lacking (vs. 26)?

Pray: Ask God to help you know him better through the separation you face.

March 28

Verse of the Week: Matthew 27:46

And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

Scripture: Hebrews 13:1-16

Observation:

In what areas should brotherly love define Christians? (vs. 1-7)

What does this passage mean when it says, "let us go to him outside the camp and bear the reproach he endured"?

Name two sacrifices which please God.

Application:

How have you made progress in the last year: loving one another as brothers & sisters? Hospitality? Caring for those suffering for their faith? Keeping marriage strong? Staying free from the love of money? Submitting to leaders?

What kind of strange teachings can tempt believers today?

Pray:

Ask God to help you grow in the specific area that is hardest for you that is mentioned in Hebrews 13.

March 29

Verse of the Week: Matthew 27:46

And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

Scripture: Luke 18:18-34

Observation:

What does the ruler's question imply about his viewpoint on eternal life?

What is Jesus' point in response?

What is the way into the kingdom (vs. 27-30)?

Application:

How are you like the ruler in your approach to God?

What has helped you in the impossibility of earning the Kingdom of God?

How has God help you discover hope in hopeless situations?

Pray:

Ask God to show you your blind spots in your faith journey.

March 30

Verse of the Week: Matthew 27:46

And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

Scripture: Matthew 27:46

Observation:

Why does Jesus cry out?

Why does Jesus use God as God's name instead of his usual, Father?

How was Jesus forsaken?

Application:

How have you felt forsaken by God?

How does feeling forsaken connect us to Jesus?

What have you called out loudly to God?

Pray:

Ask God to help you know Him through the separation you feel.

March 31

Verse of the Week: Luke 23:42-43

And he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." 43 And he said to him, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise."

Scripture: Romans 1:1-17

Observation:

What do you think it would have been like for the Roman church to receive a letter from Paul in the 1st century?

What do you think Paul means when he said, "that I may impart some spiritual gift to you to strengthen you"?

What is Paul emphasizing about the story of Jesus?

Why would resurrection be vital to people facing persecution?

Application:

What about the resurrection is important to you?

The call to obedience is mentioned, that comes from faith. How has your faith been stretched as you strived for obedience?

Pray: Ask God to open your eyes to what the resurrection means.

April 1

Verse of the Week: Luke 23:42-43

And he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." 43 And he said to him, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise."

Scripture: 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

Observation:

Paul tells the believers they are not like others. What is unique about the people that Paul writes (vs. 5)?

What does vs. 11 tell us we are to do with these words?

Application:

How can you grow in self-control, put on faith, love, and hope?

How does being described as "children of light" bring you comfort & encouragement?

Pray: Ask God to help you see the resurrection from Paul's perspective, and to share it to those who need encouragement.

April 2

Verse of the Week: Luke 23:42-43

And he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." 43 And he said to him, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise."

Scripture: Romans 6

Observation:

If we are dead to sin, how is it that Christians still sin?

What were the people of the church in Rome doing before they turned their lives over to Christ?

What is the result of sin as mentioned in this passage?

Application:

How have you seen sin bring death into your life?

How do you put to death the temptation to sin?

Why does God's call to be a slave to righteousness make sense to you? How will you pursue that?

Pray:

Confess sin that has crept into your life. Ask Jesus to give you new life in that area.

April 3

Verse of the Week: Luke 23:42-43

And he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." 43 And he said to him, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise."

Scripture: John 14:1-11

Observation:

What comfort does Jesus offer his disciples?

Why is Jesus preparing a place something believers turn to when we think of eternity?

What kind of preparations is Jesus referring to?

Application:

How has your faith been stretched through death?

What do you think Jesus wants you to remember from this passage?

Philip asks to be shown the Father. What would you like Jesus to show you?

Pray: Ask Jesus to open your eyes to what he wants you to see.

April 4

Verse of the Week: Luke 23:42-43

And he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." 43 And he said to him, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise."

Scripture: Genesis 48

Observation:

What are the people looking forward to in vs. 4-7?

What did the promised inheritance mean to the people?

From what you remember of the history of Israel, how long would it be before they would be in the Promised Land?

Why do you think Ephraim and Manasseh put on equal footing with Joseph's brothers instead of Joseph?

Application:

How long have you waited for God's promises?

If someone said to you that God doesn't keep his promises, what would you say to them?

What is a promise of God you value?

Pray: Ask God to remind you of His promise to you.

April 5

Verse of the Week: Luke 23:42-43

And he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." 43 And he said to him, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise."

Scripture: Exodus 6:1-12

Observation:

Why wouldn't the Israelites listen to Moses?

As a Hebrew slave, what would you hear from this that would be most convincing? Least? Why?

How did Moses think and feel after hearing the response of the people (Vs. 12)?

Application:

When have you doubted God's plan?

How have you been reluctant to speak up due to something in your past?

How could you bring a word of encouragement to someone who needs it?

Pray: If there is a difference between God's promise and how you feel, ask God to make up the difference, and trust in Him still.

April 6

Verse of the Week: Luke 23:42-43

And he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." 43 And he said to him, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise."

Scripture: Luke 23:36-43

Observation:

What is Jesus' title in this passage?

How did people act toward Jesus in this passage? If not treated like a king, how was he treated?

What of vs. 40 is most profound?

How did the criminal feel when Jesus said, "Today you will be with me in paradise"?

Application:

How do you come to Jesus? What title is how you normally come to Him?

What would you want to clarify to your loved ones about their view of Jesus?

What would hearing vs. 43 have meant to you?

Pray: Ask God to give you clarity on who Jesus is, and a right relationship for eternity.

April 7

Verse of the Week: John 19:28

After this, Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill the Scripture), "I thirst."

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 1:1-11

Observation:

What is the relationship with God giving us comfort and our ability to comfort others?

How are Jesus', Paul's, and the Corinthian believers' suffering related?

What does Paul trust in, in vs. 10?

Application:

How have you experience comfort from others, and from the Lord?

Why does God allow suffering beyond what we feel we can bear?

Pray:

Give praise to the God of all comfort who gives us what we need when we need it!

April 8

Verse of the Week: John 19:28

After this, Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill the Scripture), "I thirst."

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 5:1-10

Observation:

How does the confidence Paul has in the future give him what he needs for today?

How does Paul's "home" affect his daily living (vs. 6-10)?

What motivates Paul to get on in his life?

Application:

Look at vs. 5. How does God's purpose apply to a current crisis of yours?

How can knowing the location of your ultimate "home" affect your attitude towards again?

How could your growing understanding of Paul's perspective help you encourage others today?

Pray: Ask God to help you grow in confidence in the comfort of our ultimate home.

April 9

Verse of the Week: John 19:28

After this, Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill the Scripture), "I thirst."

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 6:1-13

Observation:

What does Paul say he does not want to put in anyone's path?

What does it mean, "we appeal to you not to receive the grace of God in vain"?

Check out vs. 12. What does Paul withhold?

Application:

How have you been a stumbling block to others?

Along the way, how has God worked in your life to overcome

What causes you to withhold, to not fully share your life with others?

Pray:

Ask God to give you what is necessary to walk with God, and be a blessing to others.

April 10

Verse of the Week: John 19:28

After this, Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill the Scripture), "I thirst."

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 7:2-16

Observation:

What has Paul been doing, and why does that require comfort?

What does Godly sorrow produce?

What tone of voice do you think vs. 16 is?

Application:

What is it like to be confronted for a wrong you did by someone you love?

How did you feel about that person at that time?

What did you learn through that experience?

What attitude is necessary to keep loving confrontation from becoming judgement?

Pray: Ask God to give you the correct balance of humility and assertiveness regarding the sin you may confront.

April 11

Verse of the Week: John 19:28

After this, Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill the Scripture), "I thirst."

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 11:16-33

Observation:

Why were the Corinthians allowing the abusive person (vs. 20)?

How is his suffering a more eloquent witness to his authority than fine sounding speech?

How would you regard a minister that has been through what Paul faced?

Application:

How do you need to embrace Paul's attitude in light of the pressures and demands in your life?

Jesus' and Paul's gentleness was misunderstood as weakness. How did that result in a blessing?

How would Paul have been less effective if he had pushed his weight around?

Pray: Ask God to give you the strength to act in humility, even if it may be understood as weakness.

April 12

Verse of the Week: John 19:28

After this, Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill the Scripture), "I thirst."

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 12:1-10

Observation:

What does the story of ascending to heaven do to validate a minister's ministry?

How does a thorn, and Paul's dealing with it, validate his ministry?

What did the Lord say to Paul in response to take away the thorn?

Application:

How do you react when God appears to ignore your request?

What would your reaction be to God saying what he said to Paul in vs. 9?

How has God worked in and through you in your weakness?

How could suffering from chronic pain make your relationship with God stronger?

Pray: Invite God to teach you in your weakness and need what you would not learn any other way.

April 13

Verse of the Week: John 19:28

After this, Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill the Scripture), "I thirst."

Scripture: James 1:27

Observation:

Who does God say to look after?

How does caring for people who are less fortunate than you represent true religion?

If Jesus were thirsty, what would you do? If you meet thirsty people, what should we do?

Application:

Why do you believe God invites us to care for people instead of doing it Himself?

How can we improve our vision, seeing those in need?

List two ways we can keep ourselves "unstained" from the world.

Who is someone in need in your life today?

Pray: Ask God to give you insight on caring for the world around you.

April 14

Verse of the Week: John 19:30

When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, "It is finished," and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

Scripture: Romans 8:1-17

Observation:

What is Paul trying to remind the believer in the opening verses of this section?

What does Jesus coming to earth mean for people struggling to deal with sin?

Why is it easier for believers to set their mind on the things of the Spirit?

Jesus being alive in us give us what kind of hope in dealing with sin?

Application:

If there was a pollution detector for your thought life, what would it be reading?

How could you give control of your mind to the Holy Spirit?

When do you find it easier to submit to God's Law and the Holy Spirit?

Pray: Ask God to put to death in you the sin that so easily entangles.

April 15

Verse of the Week: John 19:30

When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, "It is finished," and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

Scripture: Romans 8:18-39

Observation:

From what you remember of the persecution of the church in Rome, how would Paul's words encourage?

What does the Holy Spirit do when we don't know how to pray?

What separates believers from the love of God?

Application:

When was a time you prayed but you didn't know how?

When was a time you felt closest to despair?

Think of a time when things were at their worst, but later you noticed something good came from it. Did you thank God for it?

Pray: Invite God to speak through your desperation, for your friend's difficulty.

April 16

Verse of the Week:

John 19:30

When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, "It is finished," and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

Scripture: Romans 8:28-39

Observation:

What five verbs describe what God has already done for you in vs. 29-30?

Why shouldn't we worry when bad things come our way?

What does Paul say we should say in response to this?

What does Paul tell us about God's love at the end of this passage?

Application:

Of the verbs listed in Vs. 29-30, which one means the most to you and why?

When we feel guilty and separated from God, what should we say?

Pray: Praise God that he has already accomplished what matters in our lives if we are believers.

April 17

Verse of the Week:

John 19:30

When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, "It is finished," and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

Scripture: Ephesians 6:10-18

Observation:

What is Paul telling us to be strong in?

Who supplies the armor?

How do we fight the battle?

Application:

How does a spiritual battle feel to you?

What attitude should we have as we face our enemy?

What part of your spiritual armor is weak?

Pray: Put on the spiritual armor through prayer.

April 18

Verse of the Week:

John 19:30

When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, "It is finished," and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

Scripture: Mark 15

Observation:

What insights do we have into Pilate and Jesus' character from this story?

Why is Jesus silent?

How do you think Jesus felt when the crown of thorns was put on his head, and mocked?

What is significant about the centurion's observation?

Why is the torn curtain significant?

Application:

Why did Jesus go through this if he has all authority and is God?

How does reading this about what happen to Jesus make you feel?

Pray: Ask God to help you understand what the crucifixion means for the believer.

April 19

Luke 24:5-7

And as they were frightened and bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them, "Why do you seek the living among the dead? ⁶He is not here, but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, ⁷that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified and on the third day rise."

Scripture: Luke 24:1-12

Observation:

Given what the women had been through the last few days, how would they have felt heading to the tomb?

Why did Peter go home instead of going back to the disciples?

Why didn't the people believe the women when they returned?

Application:

How did the meaning of the resurrection first "dawn" upon you?

What is your spiritual life most focused on: Good Friday? Easter Sunday? Somewhere in-between?

Pray: Thank God for the gift of his Son, and what how the resurrection gives us hope.

April 20

Verse of the week:

Luke 24:5-7

And as they were frightened and bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them, “Why do you seek the living among the dead? ⁶He is not here, but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, ⁷that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified and on the third day rise.”

Scripture: Luke 24:13-35

Observation:

What kind of attitude would the men had as they walked? How would the 2 men felt as they walked along? When Jesus called them “foolish”?

From what you know of the Old Testament, what passage do you think would have been brought up?

Why did Jesus take the men on a Bible study instead of directly saying who he was?

Application:

What is your “road to Emmaus”, where you discovered who Jesus really was?

If you were to take a person to the Bible and tell them who Jesus is, where would you take them?

What helps you recognize Jesus in the daily walk of life?

Pray: Ask Jesus to show you who he is in Scripture, and as you walk along the road of life.

April 21

Verse of the Week: Isaiah 53:6 Relationship/Sheep

All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Scripture: Romans 1:1-17

Observation:

Who are the “all” Isaiah addressed in 53:6?

According to Paul, who did Jesus die for? (v. 5, 13, 14)

Reading between the lines, what problems was Paul trying to address at the church in Rome?

Describe the relationship between faith and obedience (vs. 5). How important is faith to the believer (vs. 17)?

What do we learn about Paul in this passage?

Application:

When did you first notice Jesus’ call on your life?

Who was the “Paul” in your life that encouraged you in first years of your spiritual life?

Devise a diagram that depicts the connections between preaching the gospel, faith, salvation, obedience and righteousness.

Pray:

Father, remind me that everyone I encounter is a sinner who needs the salvation you offer and that I am one of them.

April 22

Verse of the Week: Isaiah 53:6

All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Scripture: 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

Observation:

What does Paul challenge believers to do in vs. 6 and 7?

What does the description of Jesus coming as a “thief in the night” stir up in you?

What is the significance of “day/light” and “night/darkness”? Notice the contrast in behaviors of those who dwell in the light and those in the darkness.

What does Paul ask us to do with faith, hope and love?

Application:

Of all the places you live (home/school/work/church/) where do you feel the need for more faith? Hope? Love?

How can you contribute to faith, hope and love grow in your community?

How does this passage prepare you for your own death?

Pray: Ask God to help you see how you can bring faith, hope and love to your world.

April 23

Verse of the Week: 1 Peter 2:16

Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God.

Scripture: Romans 6

Observation:

Vs. 1 provides the controlling question for Paul. What does this imply about the thinking of some of the church in Rome?

Death and resurrection is mentioned 15 times in this passage. What is Paul trying to say?

What does it mean to practice the teaching in vs. 11-13?

What is the “benefit” of living in sin? In righteousness (vs. 21-22)? Explain how these verses relate to Paul’s controlling question.

Application:

Looking back to your life before Christ, how can you now tell where sin had power over you?

You died to sin! How might your life be different if you consider this truth daily?

If you had acted as Jesus’ more willing servant this week, how would that have changed your attitude and actions?

Pray: Ask Jesus to set you free from what enslaves you, and be released to live for him.

April 24

Verse of the Week: 1 Peter 2:16

Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God.

Scripture: John 14:1-14

Observation:

What comfort does Jesus offer his disciples?

Jesus announces he is the way to the Father. What important claim does he make about himself in this regard?

What tone of voice do you think Jesus had in vs. 9-14?

Jesus tells his disciples they are missing something important about Jesus and the Father. What are they missing?

Application:

If Jesus is the way, what kind of road are you on? Is it more a bumpy country road, a trail in the wilderness, or a four-lane highway, or something else? Why?

Jesus stresses the importance of belief in vs. 1. How is this significant for a disciple of Jesus?

How would you respond to someone who tells you there are many roads and ways to God, especially considering John 14:6?

Pray:

Ask Jesus to show you the way to the Father. Let what he tells you about being the way, truth and life resonate in your heart.

April 25

Verse of the Week: 1 Peter 2:16

Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God.

Scripture: Ephesians 1:1-14

Observation:

In vs. 1, Paul invites us to do what?

What does Paul tell us are the blessings in Christ in vs. 3-9?

How does being chosen by God (vs. 4) related to our believing and salvation (vs. 13)?

Application:

When did you come to appreciate all that God has done for you through Jesus Christ?

How does knowing that you are an adopted child of God change your view of yourself and God?

How can Paul's teaching aid you in your prayer life?

How does knowing you are chosen and loved by God affect how you love others?

Pray: Father, thank you that I do not lack any spiritual need in Christ.

April 26

Verse of the Week: 1 Peter 2:16

Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God.

Scripture: John 3

Observation:

What does John 3:1-2 tell us about Nicodemus? How do you think coming at night is significant?

According to Nicodemus, who was Jesus (vs. 2)? How were Nicodemus and Jesus similar? How did Nicodemus determine who Jesus was and where he came from?

What point is Jesus making by comparing spiritual birth to wind?

Application:

When did you see God as the Father who is saving you and not condemning you?

John establishes the authority and supremacy of Jesus as a teacher. How would this have been important for Nicodemus, John the Baptist, John's audience, and you?

Pray:

Ask God to understand your faith being born again and baptism.

April 27

Verse of the Week: 1 Peter 2:16

Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God.

Scripture: Titus 2:1-15

Observation:

How does Paul describe the moral culture of Crete? (vs. 1, 12, 13)?

What is Paul implying about the importance of mentors?

What difference does our salvation make in this present age?

Application:

Describe the moral climate of where you live. How does it challenge your effort to lead a self-controlled life?

Of the groups of people mentioned in Titus 2, which do you belong?
What are you called to be doing?

With so many people saying there are nothing but hypocrites in the church, what can you do to refute that?

Pray: My God and Heavenly Father, help me to be an example of good deeds.