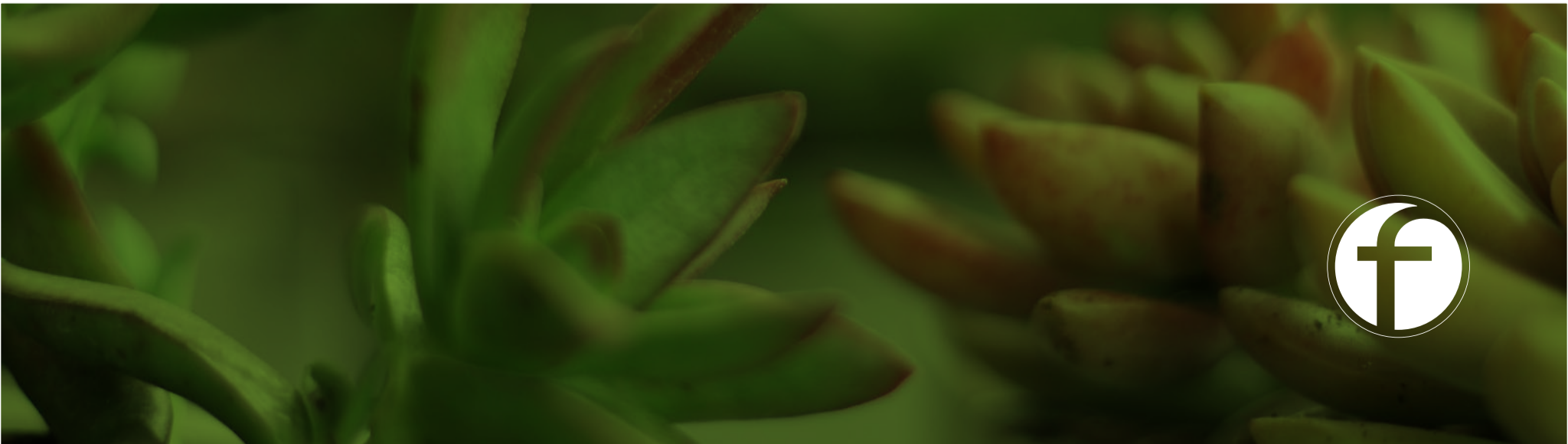
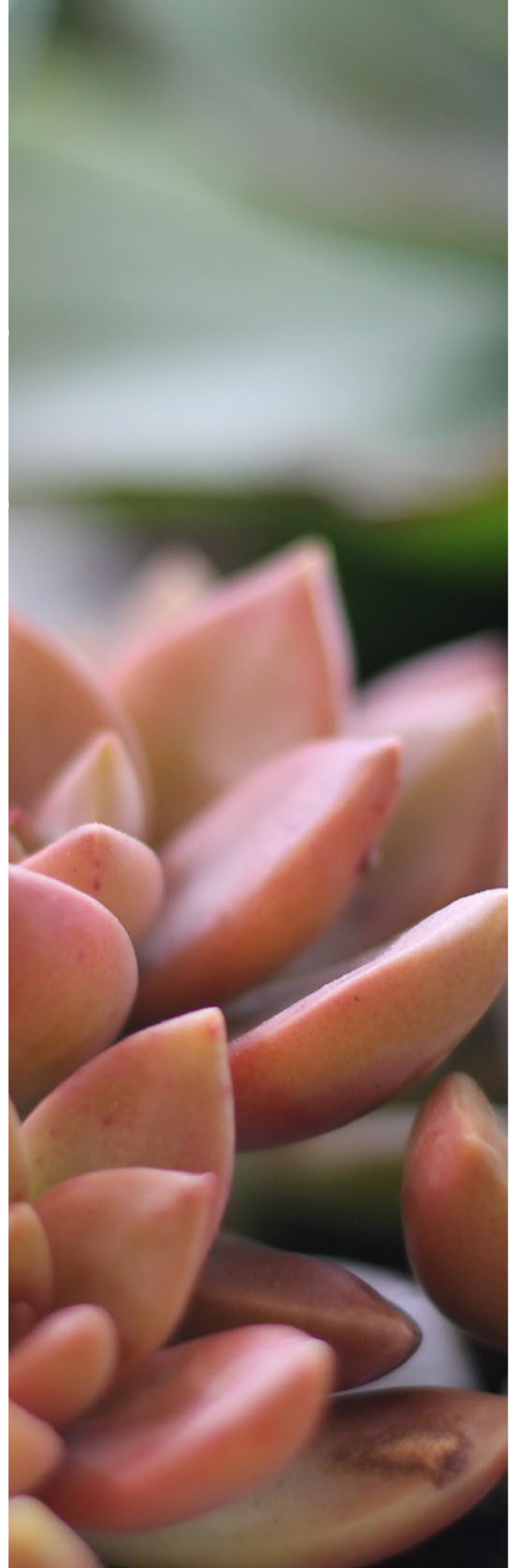
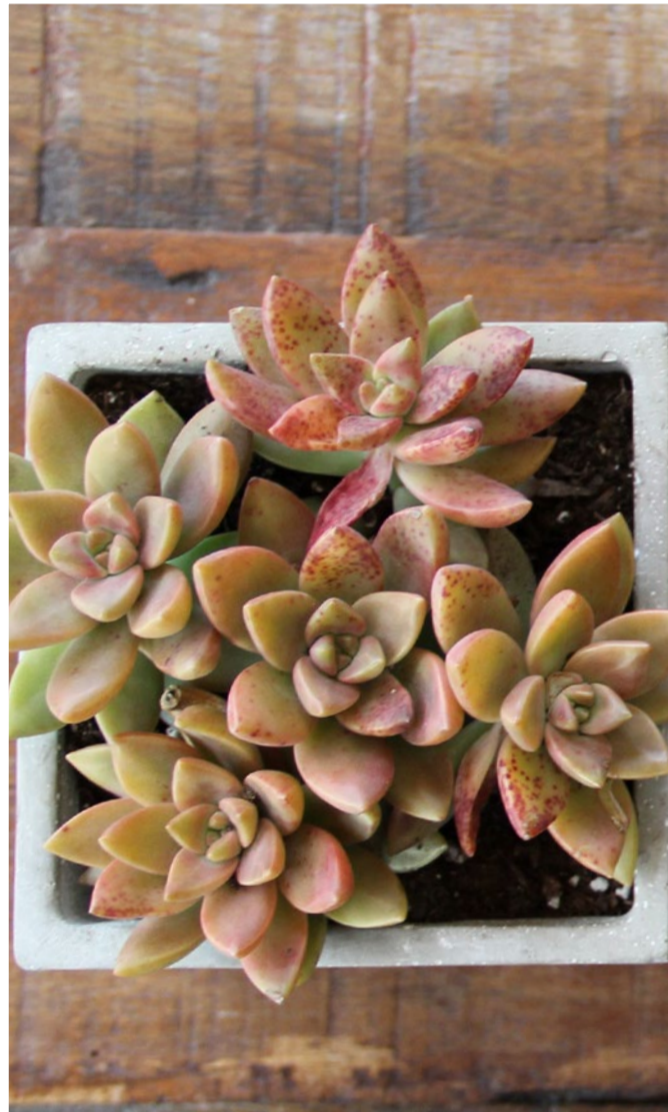
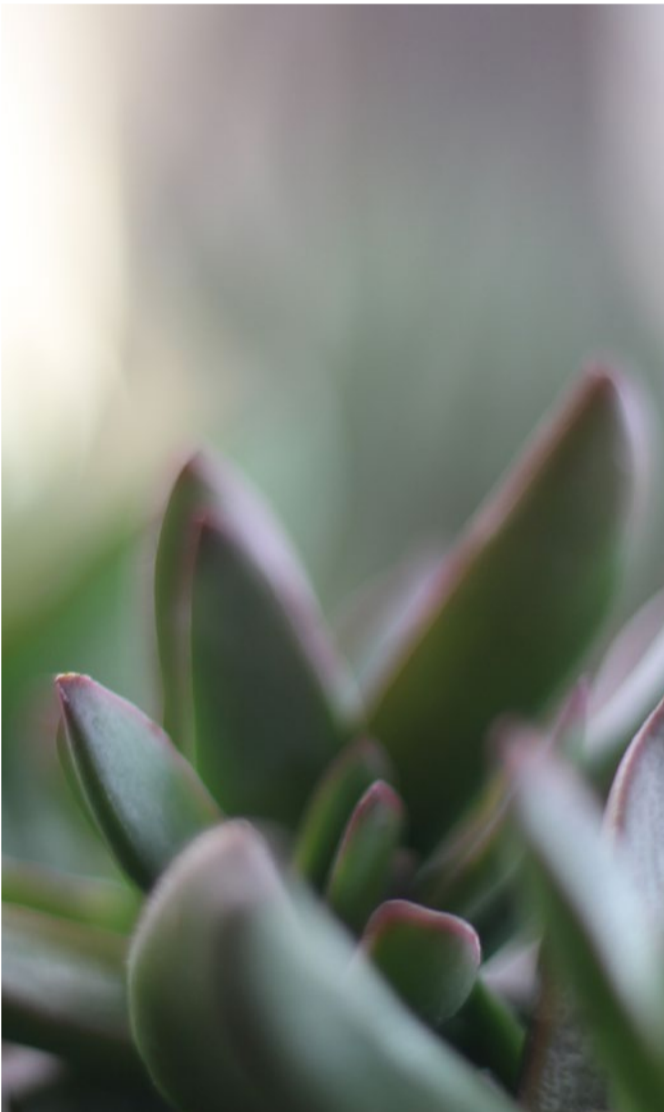


Passion Week

2017 Devotional





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Passion Week

Introduction

"I lay down my life so that I may take it up again. No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again." Jesus, **The Gospel of John 10:17-18**

The days before Jesus' death and resurrection were uncommon. This is so because His death was not a surprise or an accident. Jesus was not killed by an angry mob out of control. He was not caught unaware by an unforeseen plot. He knew the reason He was born into this world. He came to accomplish salvation by becoming a sacrifice. He only waited for the right moment, the hour, the fullness of time.

This truth adds an indescribable weight to the events, words and teachings of the few days leading up to the cross. From Jesus' formal entrance into Jerusalem, to the new-found joy of a Living Savior on the next Sunday morning, these days become ineffably profound. This is why, as followers of Jesus, we reformat our schedule, our habits, our devotion and our worship during this Passion Week.

If the death of Jesus Christ is the salvation of all who believe in Him, and if His resurrection from the grave is the very center of the Gospel, then we do well to pause and reflect during this time. This devotional is intended to make this Passion Week different than all other weeks. It is a tool to help you set this week apart, to consider Jesus more than normal, to worship Him with freshness, to love Him more completely, to honor Him with more abandon. It focuses on the Biblical text as the week unfolds. May it be a blessing.



Sunday, April 9 / Palm Sunday

Matthew 21:1-11

“When [Jesus and his disciples] had approached Jerusalem and had come to Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, “Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied there and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to Me. If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, ‘The Lord has need of them,’ and immediately he will send them.” This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet:

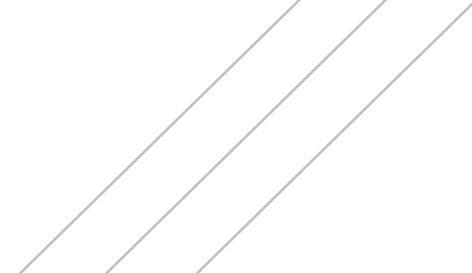
*“Say to the daughter of Zion,
‘Behold your King is coming to you,
Gentle, and mounted on a donkey,
Even on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.” (Zechariah 9:9)*

The disciples went and did just as Jesus had instructed them, and brought the donkey and the colt, and laid their coats on them; and He sat on the coats. Most of the crowd spread their coats in the road, and others were cutting branches from the trees and spreading them in the road. The crowds going ahead of Him, and those who followed, were shouting,

*“Hosanna to the Son of David;
Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord;
Hosanna in the highest!” (Psalm 118:26)*

When He had entered Jerusalem, all the city was stirred, saying, “Who is this?” And the crowds were saying, “This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth in Galilee.”

It is clear that Jesus is in control. Every detail is as it should be, and Jesus is in the center as Ultimate Sovereign. But the question remains, what is going on here? What is Jesus really doing and why?



This is nothing less than Jesus' official presentation to the capital city of Israel and Jewish Leadership. He is Israel's King. He has come to rule and reign with truth and grace.

Look at the prophecy written 600 years before this day. The prophet Daniel, by the Spirit of God, predicts the very day that Jesus would ride into Jerusalem on a donkey. The word "weeks" means a *set of seven*, that is, *seven years*. If you add up these years and the timing, it leads directly to the triumphal entry of Jesus on this day, Sunday, Palm Sunday. Amazing.

Daniel 9:24-26

"Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy place. So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress. Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing..."

What may God be orchestrating in your life right now that is beyond your ability to see?

Luke 19:41-44

"When [Jesus] approached Jerusalem, He saw the city and wept over it, saying, "If you had known in this day, even you, the things which make for peace! But now they have been hidden from your eyes. For the days will come upon you when your enemies will throw up a barricade against you, and surround you and hem you in on every side, and they will level you to the ground and your children within you, and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not recognize the time of your visitation."

Pray today for yourself, for your heart, for your mind. Ask that God would, today, right now, create in you the kind of heart that lays down your coat before Jesus. Ask God to enlarge your heart to a place of humility and worship, shouting with the crowds, *"Blessed are you Jesus, the one coming in the name of the Lord Most High."*

Monday, April 10

Mark 11:11-19

“Jesus entered Jerusalem and came into the temple; and after looking around at everything, He left for Bethany with the twelve, since it was already late.

On the next day, when they had left Bethany, He became hungry. Seeing at a distance a fig tree in leaf, He went to see if perhaps He would find anything on it; and when He came to it, He found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs. He said to it, “May no one ever eat fruit from you again!” And His disciples were listening.

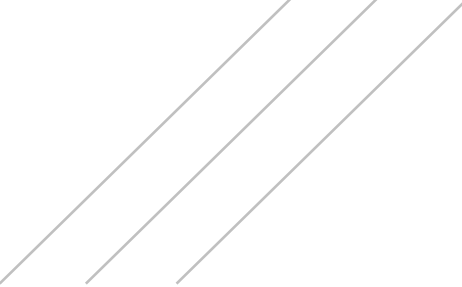
Then they came to Jerusalem. And He entered the temple and began to drive out those who were buying and selling in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who were selling doves; and He would not permit anyone to carry merchandise through the temple. And He began to teach and say to them, “Is it not written, ‘My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations’? But you have made it a robbers’ den.” The chief priests and the scribes heard this, and began seeking how to destroy Him; for they were afraid of Him, for the whole crowd was astonished at His teaching.”

The next day, Jesus and the disciples returned to Jerusalem from Bethany, a village just a short walk East of the Temple Mount. It seems this was his home base during this week. Today, Monday, Jesus surprised both the crowds and his disciples by revealing his great passion for purity, prayer and worship.

But that zealous passion is also seen in Jesus’ great desire to heal.

Matthew 21:14-17

“And the blind and the lame came to Him in the temple, and He healed them. But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the wonderful things that He had done, and the children who were shouting in the temple, “Hosanna to the Son of David,” they became indignant and said to Him, “Do You hear what these children are saying?” And Jesus said to them, “Yes; have



you never read, 'Out of the mouth of infants and nursing babies You have prepared praise for Yourself?'" (Psalm 8:2) And He left them and went out of the city to Bethany, and spent the night there."

What in your life needs to be overturned? What in your life needs to be healed?
The same Jesus does both. And He does them both for His glory and for your good.

Pray today that God would powerfully reveal His passion to heal in all those who need it. Remember names and stories of family, friends, church family members and others who need God's help and healing. Pray for them.

Finally, pray for your own heart. Ask God to reveal areas that need renovation and renewal, habits that need transformation, sin that needs breaking, chains of addiction that desperately need God's power. Offer yourself, your whole heart, to God in prayer today.

Tuesday, April 11

Mark 11:20-26

“As they were passing by in the morning, they saw the fig tree withered from the roots up. Being reminded, Peter said to Him, “Rabbi, look, the fig tree which You cursed has withered.” And Jesus answered saying to them, “Have faith in God. Truly I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be taken up and cast into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says is going to happen, it will be granted him. Therefore I say to you, all things for which you pray and ask, believe that you have received them, and they will be granted you.

Whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father who is in heaven will also forgive you your transgressions. [But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father who is in heaven forgive your transgressions.]”

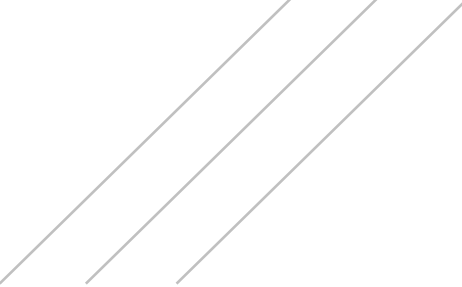
When Jesus and the disciples return to the fig tree, it is withered. **Matthew 21:20** says, *“Seeing this, the disciples were amazed and asked, “How did the fig tree wither all at once?”* Things change when Jesus speaks.

People change when Jesus comes into their life. Forgiveness is granted by God through Jesus Christ. It would be his coming death on the cross that perfectly and finally purchased our forgiveness. Yet, as we are supposed to be like God, He asks us to forgive others.

Who in your life needs your forgiveness?

You know, you will never feel like forgiving someone. If you’ve been hurt, directly or indirectly, actively or passively, that pain is real. There is a real wound, whatever the size. Forgiveness is the choice to release someone from that debt. It is a choice, not a feeling.

Pray now and ask God for the grace to forgive others. The first step in that choice is to remember how much God has forgiven you. You have been forgiven much, so you should love



God greatly. And if you have been forgiven, then you should freely forgive others. Write a list of names of people that you need to forgive and pray through them. Instead of remembering the pain of the wound, ask God to give you the grace to see Jesus instead. Choose. Be free.

Wednesday, April 12

Mark 12:1-12

“And He began to speak to them in parables: “A man planted a vineyard and put a wall around it, and dug a vat under the wine press and built a tower, and rented it out to vine-growers and went on a journey. At the harvest time he sent a slave to the vine-growers, in order to receive some of the produce of the vineyard from the vine-growers. They took him, and beat him and sent him away empty-handed. Again he sent them another slave, and they wounded him in the head, and treated him shamefully. And he sent another, and that one they killed; and so with many others, beating some and killing others.

He had one more to send, a beloved son; he sent him last of all to them, saying, ‘They will respect my son.’ But those vine-growers said to one another, ‘This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance will be ours!’ They took him, and killed him and threw him out of the vineyard. What will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the vine-growers, and will give the vineyard to others. Have you not even read this Scripture:

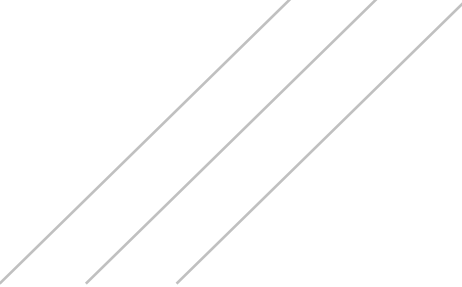
*“The stone which the builders rejected,
This became the chief corner stone;
This came about from the Lord,
And it is marvelous in our eyes?” (Psalm 118:22-23)*

And they were seeking to seize Him, and yet they feared the people, for they understood that He spoke the parable against them. And so they left Him and went away.”

Today the final plot begins. Jesus is the stone being rejected, the beloved Son being killed. The Jewish leaders have had enough and they are resiliently set on elimination.

Luke 20:19-26

“The scribes and the chief priests tried to lay hands on Him that very hour, and they feared the people; for they understood that He spoke this parable against them. So they watched



Him, and sent spies who pretended to be righteous, in order that they might catch Him in some statement, so that they could deliver Him to the rule and the authority of the governor.

They questioned Him, saying, "Teacher, we know that You speak and teach correctly, and You are not partial to any, but teach the way of God in truth. Is it lawful for us to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?" But He detected their trickery and said to them, "Show Me a denarius. Whose likeness and inscription does it have?" They said, "Caesar's." And He said to them, "Then render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." And they were unable to catch Him in a saying in the presence of the people; and being amazed at His answer, they became silent."

A simple "no" to the taxation question would have put Jesus at odds with Rome. This would have been a simple report from the Jews to the Romans. Done deal. A simple "yes" to the question would have created great tension between Jesus and the Jewish leadership, who thought such payment was the same as disloyalty and dishonor to God. The goal, entrapment.

Is there any area of your heart or life in which you are trying to squeeze God? Are you playing the field? Hedging your bets? Faith acts very differently.

Pray today for those that you know who are far from God; those in your life or in your sphere of influence that have not trusted in Jesus. They may be hostile and vehement, they may be indifferent and apathetic. Pray for them by name. Pray for their hearts to soften to the Gospel. Ask God to use you in some way to speak the truth and power of God's grace. Ask God to strike up the angel band and start the party as lost hearts are saved, as the dead come to life in Jesus Christ.

Thursday, April 13

The plot for Jesus' life is fully underway. As the timing and sovereignty of God align, Jesus' approaching death falls on the annual celebration of the Passover, a covenant meal that finds its fullest significance in Jesus Himself.

Luke 22:1-13

"Now the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which is called the Passover, was approaching. The chief priests and the scribes were seeking how they might put Him to death; for they were afraid of the people.

And Satan entered into Judas who was called Iscariot, belonging to the number of the twelve. And he went away and discussed with the chief priests and officers how he might betray Him to them. They were glad and agreed to give him money. So he consented, and began seeking a good opportunity to betray Him to them apart from the crowd.

Then came the first day of Unleavened Bread on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. And Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and prepare the Passover for us, so that we may eat it." They said to Him, "Where do You want us to prepare it?" And He said to them, "When you have entered the city, a man will meet you carrying a pitcher of water; follow him into the house that he enters. And you shall say to the owner of the house, 'The Teacher says to you, 'Where is the guest room in which I may eat the Passover with My disciples?'" And he will show you a large, furnished upper room; prepare it there." And they left and found everything just as He had told them; and they prepared the Passover."

The first step of the Passover was the "preparation" of the location. All leaven, even the crumbs of leavened bread behind the stove, had to be meticulously cleaned and prepared, as "leaven" was a symbol of evil, sin and slavery. This is what the disciples did when they prepared the upper room. Is there anything you need to clean out of your heart? Perhaps your physical home?

John 13:2-17

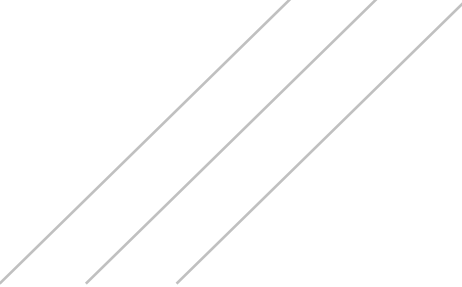
“During supper, the devil having already put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, to betray Him, Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come forth from God and was going back to God, got up from supper, and laid aside His garments; and taking a towel, He girded Himself.

Then He poured water into the basin, and began to wash the disciples’ feet and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded. So He came to Simon Peter. He said to Him, “Lord, do You wash my feet?” Jesus answered and said to him, “What I do you do not realize now, but you will understand hereafter.” Peter said to Him, “Never shall You wash my feet!” Jesus answered him, “If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me.” Simon Peter said to Him, “Lord, then wash not only my feet, but also my hands and my head.” Jesus said to him, “He who has bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you.” For He knew the one who was betraying Him; for this reason He said, “Not all of you are clean.”

So when He had washed their feet, and taken His garments and reclined at the table again, He said to them, “Do you know what I have done to you? You call Me Teacher and Lord; and you are right, for so I am. If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you. Truly, truly, I say to you, a slave is not greater than his master, nor is one who is sent greater than the one who sent him. If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.”

Luke 22:14-26

“When the hour had come, He reclined at the table, and the apostles with Him. And He said to them, “I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; for I say to you, I shall never again eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.” And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He said, “Take this and share it among yourselves; for I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine from now on until the kingdom of God comes.” And when He had taken some bread and given thanks, He broke it and gave it to them, saying, “This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me.”



And in the same way He took the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood. But behold, the hand of the one betraying Me is with Mine on the table. For indeed, the Son of Man is going as it has been determined; but woe to that man by whom He is betrayed!" And they began to discuss among themselves which one of them it might be who was going to do this thing."

The Passover meal consisted of at least four critically central components or ingredients: wine, unleavened bread, bitter herbs and lamb. The lamb was sacrificed. At the very moment that Jesus and his disciples feasted on unleavened bread and roasted lamb, a plot was unfolding to kill Jesus—to break His body and spill His blood.

Pray today that your heart would understand Jesus' sacrifice in a deeper and wider way than ever before. That the broken body and spilled blood of Christ our Savior would be the defining event of your life—clarifying your identity in God's family, establishing your place in His Kingdom, and utilizing your gifts in His great plan—all for His glory.

For more of Jesus' final teaching with eleven disciples (Judas had already gone out), see **John 13:31-17:26**. Read these words in light of impending death.

Friday, April 14 / Good Friday

Matthew 26:36-56

“Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and said to His disciples, “Sit here while I go over there and pray.” And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be grieved and distressed. Then He said to them, “My soul is deeply grieved, to the point of death; remain here and keep watch with Me.”

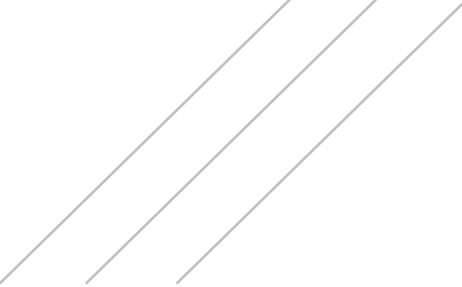
And He went a little beyond them, and fell on His face and prayed, saying, “My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You will.” And He came to the disciples and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, “So, you men could not keep watch with Me for one hour? Keep watching and praying that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

He went away again a second time and prayed, saying, “My Father, if this cannot pass away unless I drink it, Your will be done.” Again He came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. And He left them again, and went away and prayed a third time, saying the same thing once more. Then He came to the disciples and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and resting? Behold, the hour is at hand and the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. Get up, let us be going; behold, the one who betrays Me is at hand!”

Jesus’ Betrayal and Arrest

While He was still speaking, behold, Judas, one of the twelve, came up accompanied by a large crowd with swords and clubs, who came from the chief priests and elders of the people. Now he who was betraying Him gave them a sign, saying, “Whomever I kiss, He is the one; seize Him.” Immediately Judas went to Jesus and said, “Hail, Rabbi!” and kissed Him. And Jesus said to him, “Friend, do what you have come for.” Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and seized Him.

And behold, one of those who were with Jesus reached and drew out his sword, and struck the slave of the high priest and cut off his ear. Then Jesus said to him, “Put your sword back into



its place; for all those who take up the sword shall perish by the sword. Or do you think that I cannot appeal to My Father, and He will at once put at My disposal more than twelve legions of angels? How then will the Scriptures be fulfilled, which say that it must happen this way?" At that time Jesus said to the crowds, "Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest Me as you would against a robber? Every day I used to sit in the temple teaching and you did not seize Me. But all this has taken place to fulfill the Scriptures of the prophets."

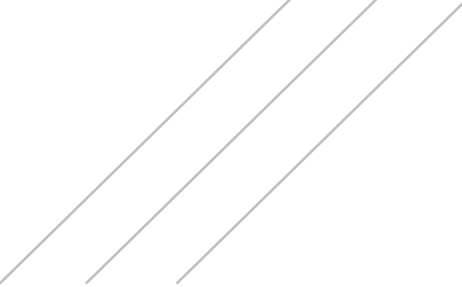
Then all the disciples left Him and fled."

John 18:12-32

"So the Roman cohort and the commander and the officers of the Jews, arrested Jesus and bound Him, and led Him to Annas first; for he was father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was high priest that year. Now Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jews that it was expedient for one man to die on behalf of the people.

Simon Peter was following Jesus, and so was another disciple. Now that disciple was known to the high priest, and entered with Jesus into the court of the high priest, but Peter was standing at the door outside. So the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out and spoke to the doorkeeper, and brought Peter in. Then the slave-girl who kept the door said to Peter, "You are not also one of this man's disciples, are you?" He said, "I am not." Now the slaves and the officers were standing there, having made a charcoal fire, for it was cold and they were warming themselves; and Peter was also with them, standing and warming himself.

The high priest then questioned Jesus about His disciples, and about His teaching. Jesus answered him, "I have spoken openly to the world; I always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all the Jews come together; and I spoke nothing in secret. Why do you question Me? Question those who have heard what I spoke to them; they know what I said." When He had said this, one of the officers standing nearby struck Jesus, saying, "Is that the way You answer the high priest?" Jesus answered him, "If I have spoken wrongly, testify of the wrong; but if rightly, why do you strike Me?" So Annas sent Him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.



Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. So they said to him, "You are not also one of His disciples, are you?" He denied it, and said, "I am not." One of the slaves of the high priest, being a relative of the one whose ear Peter cut off, said, "Did I not see you in the garden with Him?" Peter then denied it again, and immediately a rooster crowed.

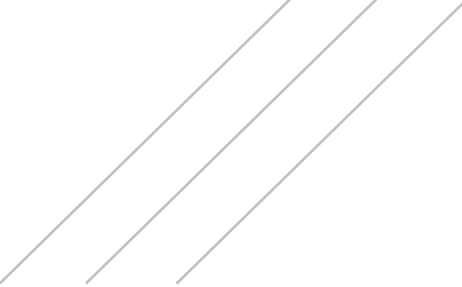
Then they led Jesus from Caiaphas into the Praetorium, and it was early; and they themselves did not enter into the Praetorium so that they would not be defiled, but might eat the Passover. Therefore Pilate went out to them and said, "What accusation do you bring against this Man?" They answered and said to him, "If this Man were not an evildoer, we would not have delivered Him to you." So Pilate said to them, "Take Him yourselves, and judge Him according to your law." The Jews said to him, "We are not permitted to put anyone to death," to fulfill the word of Jesus which He spoke, signifying by what kind of death He was about to die."

John 19:1-30

"Pilate then took Jesus and scourged Him. And the soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on His head, and put a purple robe on Him; and they began to come up to Him and say, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and to give Him slaps in the face. Pilate came out again and said to them, "Behold, I am bringing Him out to you so that you may know that I find no guilt in Him."

Jesus then came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Behold, the Man!" So when the chief priests and the officers saw Him, they cried out saying, "Crucify, crucify!" Pilate said to them, "Take Him yourselves and crucify Him, for I find no guilt in Him." The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and by that law He ought to die because He made Himself out to be the Son of God." ...

Therefore when Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus out, and sat down on the judgment seat at a place called The Pavement, but in Hebrew, Gabbatha. Now it was the day of preparation for the Passover; it was about the sixth hour. And he said to the Jews, "Behold, your King!" So they cried out, "Away with Him, away with Him, crucify Him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar."



So he then handed Him over to them to be crucified. They took Jesus, therefore, and He went out, bearing His own cross, to the place called the Place of a Skull, which is called in Hebrew, Golgotha. There they crucified Him, and with Him two other men, one on either side, and Jesus in between. Pilate also wrote an inscription and put it on the cross. It was written, "JESUS THE NAZARENE, THE KING OF THE JEWS." Therefore many of the Jews read this inscription, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, Latin and in Greek. So the chief priests of the Jews were saying to Pilate, "Do not write, 'The King of the Jews'; but that He said, 'I am King of the Jews.'" Pilate answered, "What I have written I have written."

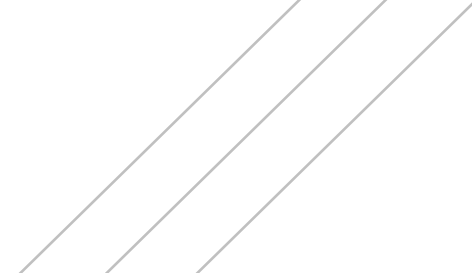
Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His outer garments and made four parts, a part to every soldier and also the tunic; now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece. So they said to one another, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it, to decide whose it shall be"; this was to fulfill the Scripture: "They divided My outer garments among them, and for My clothing they cast lots." Therefore the soldiers did these things.

But standing by the cross of Jesus were His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus then saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing nearby, He said to His mother, "Woman, behold, your son!" Then He said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother!" From that hour the disciple took her into his own household. After this, Jesus, knowing that all things had already been accomplished, to fulfill the Scripture, said, "I am thirsty." A jar full of sour wine was standing there; so they put a sponge full of the sour wine upon a branch of hyssop and brought it up to His mouth. Therefore when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!"

And He bowed His head and gave up His spirit."

Matthew 27:51

"And behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth shook and the rocks were split."



What does it mean to you that God Himself died in your place, to make you acceptable to God? Worship Jesus today for all that He has done. Thank Him. As often as you can today, thank Him.

GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE
7PM

Saturday, April 15

Matthew 27:54-66

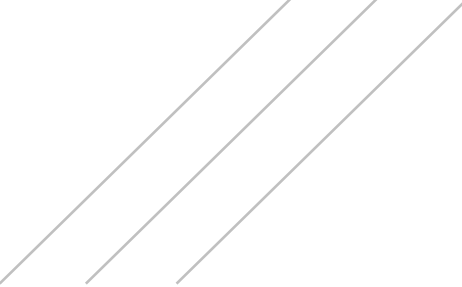
“Now the centurion, and those who were with him keeping guard over Jesus, when they saw the earthquake and the things that were happening, became very frightened and said, “Truly this was the Son of God!”

Many women were there looking on from a distance, who had followed Jesus from Galilee while ministering to Him. Among them was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee.

When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who himself had also become a disciple of Jesus. This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. And Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock; and he rolled a large stone against the entrance of the tomb and went away. And Mary Magdalene was there, and the other Mary, sitting opposite the grave.

Now on the next day, the day after the preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered together with Pilate, and said, “Sir, we remember that when He was still alive that deceiver said, ‘After three days I am to rise again.’ Therefore, give orders for the grave to be made secure until the third day, otherwise His disciples may come and steal Him away and say to the people, ‘He has risen from the dead,’ and the last deception will be worse than the first.” Pilate said to them, “You have a guard; go, make it as secure as you know how.” And they went and made the grave secure, and along with the guard they set a seal on the stone.”

On this silent and fearful day, try to imagine what the original followers of Jesus would have felt. Their Rabbi and leader had been publicly and horrifically killed. Will they be next? Were they being hunted even now?



Where in your life does fear keep you from faith?

Pray today for increased faith in your life, for the faith to be more generous, to be more consistent and disciplined, to be more worshipful.

Sunday, April 16 / Easter Sunday

Mark 16:1-8

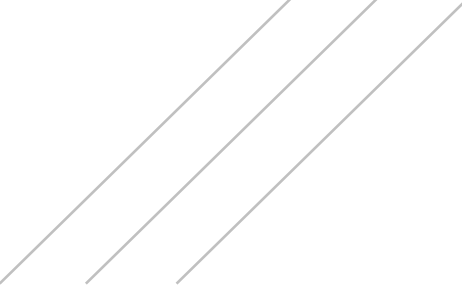
“When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, bought spices, so that they might come and anoint Him. Very early on the first day of the week, they came to the tomb when the sun had risen. They were saying to one another, “Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance of the tomb?” Looking up, they saw that the stone had been rolled away, although it was extremely large. Entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting at the right, wearing a white robe; and they were amazed. And he said to them, “Do not be amazed; you are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who has been crucified. He has risen; He is not here; behold, here is the place where they laid Him. But go, tell His disciples and Peter, ‘He is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see Him, just as He told you.’” They went out and fled from the tomb, for trembling and astonishment had gripped them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.”

Matthew 28:8-10

“And they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy and ran to report it to His disciples. And behold, Jesus met them and greeted them. And they came up and took hold of His feet and worshiped Him. Then Jesus said to them, “Do not be afraid; go and take word to My brethren to leave for Galilee, and there they will see Me.”

John 20:11-22

“But Mary was standing outside the tomb weeping; and so, as she wept, she stooped and looked into the tomb; and she saw two angels in white sitting, one at the head and one at the feet, where the body of Jesus had been lying. And they said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping?” She said to them, “Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid Him.” When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, and did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?” Supposing Him to be the gardener, she said to Him, “Sir, if you have carried Him away, tell me where you have laid Him, and I will take Him away.” Jesus said to her, “Mary!” She turned and said to Him in Hebrew, “Rabboni!” (which means, Teacher). Jesus said to her, “Stop clinging to Me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to



My brethren and say to them, 'I ascend to My Father and your Father, and My God and your God.'" Mary Magdalene came, announcing to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord," and that He had said these things to her.

*So when it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and when the doors were shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and *said to them, "Peace be with you." And when He had said this, He showed them both His hands and His side. The disciples then rejoiced when they saw the Lord. So Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you; as the Father has sent Me, I also send you." And when He had said this, He breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit."*

This changes everything.

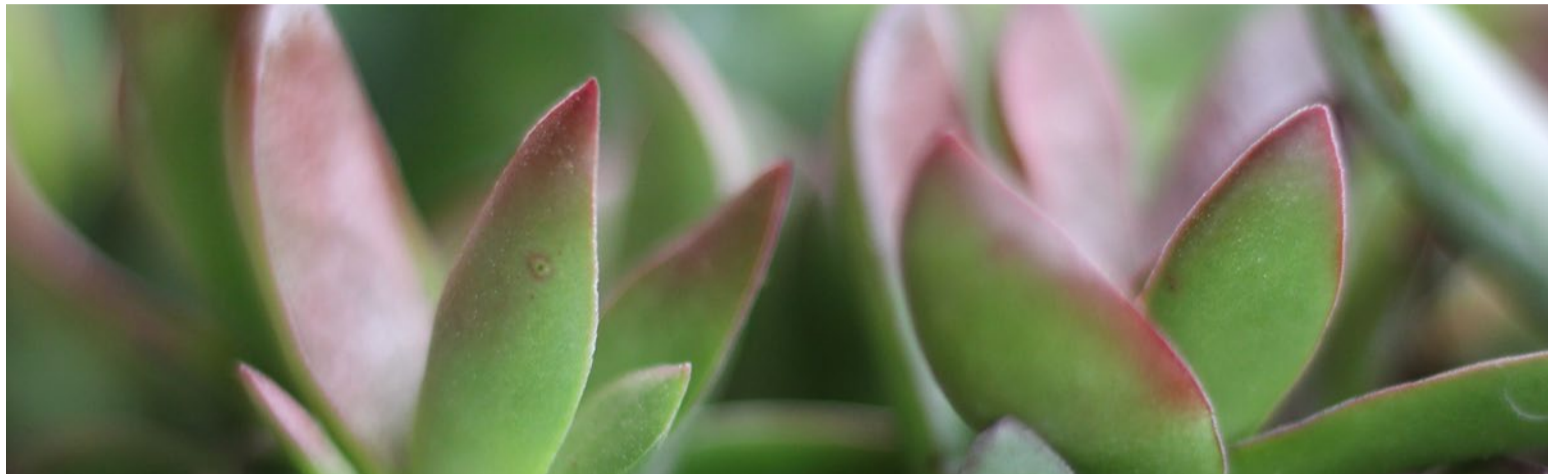
If death itself is subject to the power of Jesus Christ, then all who are found in Him by faith are no longer slaves to fear of death.

First Corinthians 15:1-4, 20-22

"Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain.

For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures...

But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep. For since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive."



Today is Resurrection Sunday. But in reality, because of the pervasive and enduring power of Jesus, everyday is Resurrection Day. Every morning is filled with new mercies made fully alive by the resurrection of Jesus. Give great thanks today. May your worship on this day fuel a more lively and heartfelt worship everyday.

EASTER SUNDAY SERVICES

8AM · 9:30AM · 11AM

Childcare will be available for birth-kindergarten during the 9:30 a.m. & 11 a.m. services only.

KIDZ INC New Life Celebration after each service
rides, egg hunt & more