

Walk with Me

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40 DAYS OF DEEPER DEVOTION †=♥

Experience
the last days
of Jesus on earth

40 WEDNESDAY

39 THURSDAY

38 FRIDAY

37 SATURDAY

36 SUNDAY

LET'S GET STARTED.

Embark on a journey through the Easter story with us. Let's see more clearly, love more deeply, and follow Jesus more closely.

As you prayerfully read the scriptures, imagine yourself next to Jesus. Engage all your senses in every scene. What does the location look like? What details do you see? Immerse yourself into the story and imagine what you smell, hear, taste and touch. Let these scenes unfold around you. Closely observe Jesus. Open your heart to His words, like a conversation with a dear friend.

Take time during the day to reflect on everything you experienced.

This Lent, we want to go deeper in our relationship with Jesus. As we journey with Jesus through His final days before the crucifixion, we want to focus on what matters. That could look like creating some simple habits to bring Jesus into focus in our lives.

In our groups, we'll take time to discuss each week's devotion and together see more clearly, love more dearly and follow the person of Jesus.

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Habits

SCRIPTURE BEFORE PHONES.

Refusing to check your phone until after you spend time reading the Bible helps you to focus on 'Who am I and who am I becoming' rather than 'What do I need to do today?'

KNEELING IN PRAYER 2X PER DAY.

Regular, carefully placed prayer is one of the keystone habits of the Christian faith. Our words shape our world. Try this before you head to bed and upon waking up.

PHONE OFF HOURS.

Turning your phone off for an hour daily is a way to focus your attention on the people around you. Try this at the same time every day. Our habits of engagement are habits of love.

FAST SOMETHING.

Build a habit of fasting for 24 hours every week. Regular fasting exposes who we are, reminds us how broken the world is, and draws us closer to Jesus. It can be food, social media or anything that may be difficult for you to give up.

*Thank you to Justin Whitmel Earley for developing these habits

Humility in Action

WEEK ONE

20.02 – 26.02

READING: MATTHEW 20

Walk with Me

A large crowd has gathered. We have met people all over the town speaking about the man that arrived from Galilee. He is over there. See. They say he is a great teacher. Some say He is a prophet. Quickly, bring your things along and let's go hear what all the excitement is about.

As you prayerfully read the scriptures, imagine yourself next to Jesus. Engage all your senses in every scene. What does the location look like? What details do you see? Immerse yourself into the story and imagine what you smell, hear, taste and touch. Let these scenes unfold around you. Closely observe Jesus' words on living a life of service to others.

Morning Prayer:

"Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, thank you for this day. Bless and guide us as we work and play. In everything we say, think and do, may we bring glory and honour to you. Amen."

Evening Prayer:

"Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who has kept us alive and sustained us and has brought us to this special time. Amen."

Group Discussion

1. What in this chapter stands out to you, and why does it stand out?
2. What do you think Jesus meant by "whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave" (Matthew 20:27)?
3. In your own life, what areas do you feel you can take on the posture of a servant? How can you achieve this?

Jesus called them together and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave—just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Matthew 20:25-28 NIV



Pancake Tuesday

For centuries Christians have prepared for 40 day fast towards Easter (Lent), with a simple tradition of eating pancakes the night before their fast begins.

As we step into 40 days of Deeper Devotion as a church, we will be taking time to feast together before we enter a period of fasting. **Celebrate with your group.**

A King on a Donkey

Jesus replied: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’

This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

Matthew 22:37-40 NIV

Walk with Me

In the distance, we can see Jerusalem, the city of David. The crowds following us have grown. Excitement fills the air. We don’t quite know why, but the day feels festive, like something special is being fulfilled. We’re heading into the city searching for a donkey with her colt. I hope the owner will understand that our Lord needs them.

As you prayerfully read the scriptures, imagine yourself next to Jesus. Engage all your senses in every scene. What does the location look like? What details do you see? Immerse yourself into the story and imagine what you smell, hear, taste and touch. Let these scenes unfold around you. Closely observe and reflect on His triumphant entry preceding His sacrifice. How does this make you feel? What does this say about love?

Morning Prayer:

“Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, thank you for this day. Bless and guide us as we work and play. In everything we say, think and do, may we bring glory and honour to you. Amen.”

Evening Prayer:

“Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who has kept us alive and sustained us and has brought us to this special time. Amen.”

Group Discussion

1. What in these two chapters stands out to you, and what about it makes it stand out?
2. What is the significance of Jesus coming into Jerusalem on a donkey? To go deeper, look into the story of how king David came into Jerusalem (2 Samuel 5:1-12)

3. In Matthew 22:37-40, Jesus lays down the two greatest commandments: to love God with all our heart, soul and mind and to love our neighbours as we love ourselves. How do you think your life embodies these commands, and how can you grow in your love for God and others? Write down or discuss three ways and try to implement them this week.



Exposing Hypocrisy



Walk with Me

We find Jesus addressing a crowd gathered around him in the temple. As you look around, you can see His disciples close by him. Further along, almost hidden amongst the masses, are the religious teachers. They are listening intently. Jesus is speaking very directly to them. The atmosphere is tense.

As you prayerfully read the scriptures, imagine yourself next to Jesus. Engage all your senses in every scene. What does the location look like? What details do you see? Immerse yourself into the story and imagine what you smell, hear, taste and touch. Let these scenes unfold around you. Closely observe Jesus' words on the difference between religiosity and the truth in the hearts of the Pharisees.

Morning Prayer:

"Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, thank you for this day. Bless and guide us as we work and play. In everything we say, think and do, may we bring glory and honour to you. Amen."

Evening Prayer:

"Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who has kept us alive and sustained us and has brought us to this special time. Amen."

Group Discussion

1. What in this chapter stands out to you, and what about it makes it stand out?
2. Jesus calls out the hypocrisy of the religious scholars and Pharisees. Bearing in mind that these were the religious leaders of the day, who were well-versed in the word, what led them to become so hypocritical?
3. If the religious leaders could fall into the trap of hypocrisy, how can you guard yourself against living a life that does not reflect your faith?

Now Jesus turned to address his disciples, along with the crowd that had gathered with them. "The religion scholars and Pharisees are competent teachers in God's Law. You won't go wrong in following their teachings on Moses. But be careful about following them. They talk a good line, but they don't live it. They don't take it into their hearts and live it out in their behaviour. It's all spit-and-polish veneer. **Matthew 23:1-3 MSG**

The End of an Era

Group Discussion

1. What in this chapter stands out to you, and what about it makes it stand out?
2. Jesus's most prominent theme he preached on was the Kingdom of God. A new era of humanity he would usher his people into. What do you know about the Kingdom of God, and what do you think it looks like? Watch The Bible Project: Heaven & Earth on Youtube for a deeper dive.
3. What spaces in this world and your own life do you feel the Kingdom of God needs to be revealed? Write down or discuss three thoughts on this.

Walk with Me

There is quite a stir as Jesus, and His disciples leave the temple. Many people crowd around Jesus as He continues teaching in the street outside the temple building. Inside the temple, some Pharisees and religious teachers engaged in heated discussions. 'Who does this man think He is?'

As you prayerfully read the scriptures, imagine yourself next to Jesus. Engage all your senses in every scene. What does the location look like? What details do you see? Immerse yourself into the story and imagine what you smell, hear, taste and touch. Let these scenes unfold around you. Closely observe Jesus and every word He speaks.

Morning Prayer:

"Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, thank you for this day. Bless and guide us as we work and play. In everything we say, think and do, may we bring glory and honour to you. Amen."

Evening Prayer:

"Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who has kept us alive and sustained us and has brought us to this special time. Amen."



But hold your hope firmly to the end and you will experience life and deliverance. "Yet through it all, the good news of heaven's kingdom will be proclaimed all over the world, providing every nation with a demonstration of the reality of God. And after that the end of this age will arrive." **Matthew 24:13-14 TPT**

Sheep or Goats



“Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Enter, you who are blessed by my Father! Take what’s coming to you in this kingdom. It’s been ready for you since the world’s foudation. And here’s why:

I was hungry and you fed me,
I was thirsty and you gave me a drink,
I was homeless and you gave me a room,
I was shivering and you gave me clothes,
I was sick and you stopped to visit,
I was in prison and you came to me.’

Matthew 25:34-36 MSG

Walk with Me

Jesus used parables to help explain the truth of God’s Kingdom in ways everyone could understand. The crowd around Jesus has grown. People are eager to see this man that has got the whole town talking. What will He say next? Is He the Messiah? Oh, if only we could get a closer look.

As you prayerfully read the scriptures, imagine yourself next to Jesus. Engage all your senses in every scene. What does the location look like? What details do you see? Immerse yourself into the story and imagine what you smell, hear, taste and touch. Let these scenes unfold around you. Closely observe the differences in the various people mentioned in each parable.

Morning Prayer:

“Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, thank you for this day. Bless and guide us as we work and play. In everything we say, think and do, may we bring glory and honour to you. Amen.”

Evening Prayer:

“Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who has kept us alive and sustained us and has brought us to this special time. Amen.”

Group Discussion

1. What in this chapter stands out to you, and what about it makes it stand out?

2. In the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats, we read about man redeemed and saved and man condemned and lost. We learn that those saved did good works: giving food and drink, helping the needy, etc. The good works mentioned are not the cause of salvation but the effect of salvation. What role do you think good works play in our walk with Jesus?

3. If people had a closer look at your life and your works, would they be able to say you are a follower of Jesus based on how you live your life? How can you grow in this area? Write down or discuss three things you can grow in.

Betrayed by a Friend

WEEK SIX | 27.03 – 02.04

READING: MATTHEW 26

Walk with Me

The atmosphere is tense. The religious leaders are conspiring to kill Jesus in secret. Unaware of the magnitude of the situation, his disciples are enjoying a moment of rest at Simon's home for dinner. Something is about to happen that will fracture their peace and set in motion the unthinkable. Today, everything will change.

As you prayerfully read the scriptures, imagine yourself next to Jesus. Engage all your senses in every scene. What does the location look like? What details do you see? Immerse yourself into the story and imagine what you smell, hear, taste and touch. Let these scenes unfold around you. Closely observe and reflect on the word Jesus spoke during the Last Supper, particularly during the meal.

Morning Prayer:

"Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, thank you for this day. Bless and guide us as we work and play. In everything we say, think and do, may we bring glory and honour to you. Amen."

Evening Prayer:

"Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who has kept us alive and sustained us and has brought us to this special time. Amen."

Group Discussion

1. What in this chapter stands out to you, and what about it makes it stand out?
2. The Lord's Supper is one of the core practices of our Christian faith. Why do you think Jesus tell his disciples to do this in remembrance of me? For a deeper dive, watch 'What is the importance of the Lord's Supper/Christian Communion'? by GotQuestions on Youtube.
3. Jesus, even though his friend hurt, disappointed and betrayed him, continued with the call the Father had for his life. What can you implement in your life to help you continue going after the call of God on your life? Write down or discuss two or three ways.

Now as they were eating Jesus took bread, and after blessing it, He broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is My body." And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; for this is My blood of the [new and better] covenant, which [ratifies the agreement and] is being poured out for many [as a substitutionary atonement] for the forgiveness of sins. But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom." **Matthew 26:26-29 AMP**

Silence

Pilate asked them, “Then what would you have me to do with Jesus who is called the Anointed One?”
They all shouted back, “Crucify him!”
“Why?” Pilate asked. “What has he done wrong?”
But they kept shouting out, “Crucify him!”
Matthew 27:22-23 TPT

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Good Friday
7 April 2023

Find location and online service details at hillsongafrica.com

Easter Sunday
9 April 2023

Walk with Me

It's early morning. Quiet anticipation hangs like a thick fog over the city. The sun's warm glow is slowly illuminating the hustle and bustle of the early morning activities. Everyone is still trying to understand what happened the day before. Was it a dream? Are we ready for today?

As you prayerfully read the scriptures, imagine yourself next to Jesus. Engage all your senses in every scene. What does the location look like? What details do you see? Immerse yourself into the story and imagine what you smell, hear, taste and touch. Let these scenes unfold around you. Read carefully through the crucifixion, observing closely how Jesus acted throughout.

Morning Prayer:

“Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, thank you for this day. Bless and guide us as we work and play. In everything we say, think and do, may we bring glory and honour to you. Amen.”

Evening Prayer:

“Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who has kept us alive and sustained us and has brought us to this special time. Amen.”

Group Discussion

1. What in this chapter stands out to you, and what about it makes it stand out?
2. When you read about Jesus's death, what thoughts and emotions come to your heart?
3. As we observe this week's meaning, weight, and beauty, take a moment to share communion with your group and reflect on who Jesus is for you and what he has done in your life.

Days
+ = ♥ of
Deeper
Devotion

Walk with
Me

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