

Daily Devotional

Final Week of Lent

DAY 1 // WEDNESDAY

SILENCE: Set a timer for two minutes. Sit in silence and bring your attention to the presence of God with you right now.

SCRIPTURE: John 12:27-28

27 “Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? ‘Father, save me from this hour’? But for this purpose I have come to this hour. **28** Father, glorify your name.” Then a voice came from heaven: “I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.”

DEVOTIONAL: As Jesus prepared for the events that would unfold during Holy Week, he gave his disciples and the crowds insight into what he was feeling. Jesus knew this was going to be a painful and humiliating experience, but he also had the right perspective. Certainly, he could have asked the Father to spare him from all he was about to endure. But that would have undermined all that he intended and needed to accomplish. There was no other way to save humanity from its sin, except to go to the cross. This is the reason Jesus came to earth and he wasn’t going to stop now. His love for us compelled him toward the cross. In doing so, he brought glory to both the Father and Himself.

REFLECTION: Have you ever experienced a “troubled soul” when striving to obey God? How does knowing that God can be glorified by your obedience help you persevere?

PRAYER: “Heavenly Father, thank you for sending your Son to this world, so that we might have eternal life through him. It brings me great peace knowing that what you decide will happen, always happens. I praise you for your sovereign control over all things. You have been working out your redemptive plan from the beginning and will continue to do so. Thank you that by faith in Jesus, I will receive the blessings of that plan, the greatest of which is eternal life in your presence. Amen.”

DAY 2 // THURSDAY

SILENCE: Set a timer for two minutes. Sit in silence and bring your attention to the presence of God with you right now.

SCRIPTURE: John 13:12-17

12 When he had washed their feet and put on his outer garments and resumed his place, he said to them, “Do you understand what I have done to you? **13** You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. **14** If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. **15** For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you. **16** Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. **17** If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.

DEVOTIONAL: This is one of those passages in the Bible where Jesus specifically tells his followers that he is doing something that they should imitate in the future. Jesus, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, humbles himself, bends over, and washes the filthy feet of his disciples. Foot washing was a common practice in Jesus’ time and something that was reserved for the lowest servant in a household. Now washing someone’s feet isn’t a common practice in our Western culture, but there are modern equivalents that could provide opportunities for someone who has honor and authority to “stoop down” and serve those “beneath” their status. Jesus is reminding us here that servants don’t expect to be given honor — they seek to give it to others. This servant attitude is ultimately displayed when Jesus gives his life up for ours.

RESPONSE: How could you serve others this week like Jesus did in this passage? When do you fail to demonstrate this attitude?

PRAYER: “Jesus, thank you for humbling yourself by taking the form of a human, willingly giving up all of the glory and worship you were receiving in heaven. You took the form of a servant, and you have given us this wonderful example to follow. Lord, forgive me when I refuse in my heart to serve others. Help me to cultivate the servant’s heart that you displayed.”

DAY 3 // FRIDAY

SILENCE: Set a timer for two minutes. Sit in silence and bring your attention to the presence of God with you right now.

SCRIPTURE: Hebrews 9:11-14, 24-26

11 But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) **12** he entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption. **13** For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the sprinkling of defiled persons with the ashes of a heifer, sanctify for the purification of the flesh, **14** how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

24 For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf. **25** Nor was it to offer himself repeatedly, as the high priest enters the holy places every year with blood not his own, **26** for then he would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world. But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

DEVOTIONAL: The writer of Hebrews compares and contrasts the Old Covenant (Mosaic Law) and The New Covenant. Everything in the Old Covenant was an imperfect picture of what was to come. For years, God's people had to continually offer sacrifices (which were not perfect) for their sins. It was a stark reminder of the consequence of sin. Blood has to be spilled to ratify the Old Covenant. When Jesus initiated the New Covenant, he also used blood to ratify the covenant. But unlike the bulls, sheep and goats, this sacrifice — Jesus himself — was perfect. He only had to sacrifice himself once to secure forgiveness for sin and eternal life.

RESPONSE: The writer tells us that blood of Christ purifies us for all time, allowing us to “serve the Living God.” How does knowing what Jesus did for you on the cross make you want to serve Him?

PRAYER: “Lord Jesus, thank you for what you did on the cross. You did what no animal sacrifice could do, you did what no mere human being could do. You lived a perfect life, enabling you to become a perfect sacrifice, and then spilled your blood on our behalf. Thank you Jesus. Your blood did not fail and never needs to be shed again. It secured for us salvation and allows us to be in your presence forever.”

DAY 4 // SATURDAY

SILENCE: Set a timer for two minutes. Sit in silence and bring your attention to the presence of God with you right now.

SCRIPTURE: Luke 23:50-56

50 Now there was a man named Joseph, from the Jewish town of Arimathea. He was a member of the council, a good and righteous man, **51** who had not consented to their decision and action; and he was looking for the kingdom of God. **52** This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. **53** Then he took it down and wrapped it in a linen shroud and laid him in a tomb cut in stone, where no one had ever yet been laid. **54** It was the day of Preparation, and the Sabbath was beginning. **55** The women who had come with him from Galilee followed and saw the tomb and how his body was laid. **56** Then they returned and prepared spices and ointments. On the Sabbath they rested according to the commandment.

DEVOTIONAL: After Jesus was crucified, his body was taken by Joseph of Arimathea (one of his disciples) and buried, just before the Sabbath had begun. Mary Magdalene and Jesus' mother Mary came to the tomb and realized they needed to anoint Jesus' body with spices and ointments. But they had to wait because it was the Sabbath day and they were commanded to rest. Even in the middle of the most important weekend in the history of the world, Jesus' followers were obedient to God's command to rest.

RESPONSE: If it is possible for you today, try to find some time to rest and be still, remembering the sacrifice Jesus made on the cross the day we celebrated yesterday and the mighty demonstration of God's power that will be celebrated tomorrow.

PRAYER: "Our Father in heaven, you made the Sabbath, a day of rest, for our good. I want and need to find rest from my busy life. As I sit here today and think about what you accomplished through Jesus on the cross, and what you were about to accomplish by raising him from the dead, I am in awe. I am in awe at the power you possess. I am in awe of the love you have for me. I will strive to rest and remember all you are and all you have done, because you alone are worthy of it."