

Lent 2021

A CHANGE OF
HEART
THE VACCINE FOR
ARROGANCE
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2021 LENT DEVOTIONAL

WEEK 6

Salem Bible Church

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Holy Week Prelude

For the past 5 weeks, we have examined the topic of arrogance during our Lenten season. We have heard from experts and learned biblical truths to help loose us from the unwanted spirit.

As we prepare for the final week leading up to our Lord's death, burial and resurrection, we will deviate from our previous course to focus on the steps our Lord took on his way to the old, rugged cross.

As you enter Holy Week, do your best to be HOLY!! Sometimes we can become lost in the rituals and the fact that this is tradition. Focus on what Jesus actually did and do your best to be Holy on Holy week.

Do you have addictions? If so drop them. Cut out cigarettes and multiple cups of coffee. BE mindful of what you speak, where you go and what you do. Let's focus on the actions of our Lord that our hearts can be with him as he died for us.

As you reflect and work on yourself, read the entries each day and reflect on these actions of our Lord. This Lenten season should make you better than you were before. Let us enter Holy week with Holy intentions of a deeper connection with Christ and others!

Monday, March 29, 2021

Step 1: Cleaning of the Temple

Scripture Reading: Jesus at the Temple

When Jesus entered the temple courts, he began to drive out those who were selling. “It is written,” he said to them, “‘My house will be a house of prayer’; but you have made it ‘a den of robbers.’ Every day he was teaching at the temple. But the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the leaders among the people were trying to kill him. Yet they could not find any way to do it, because all the people hung on his words.’

(Luke 19:45-20:8 NIV)

Devotional Reading

This is one of the few times where we see justified anger rise from the spirit of Jesus. Christ did not like how the “holy ones” had treated his house of worship. On this day, Christ reminded the people of what and how the temple should be used. Christ told them, “My house will be a house of prayer.”

The temple had been used as a place to merchandise, tax and profit from the people. Its design was to add to the people of God and not take away from the people of God. This angered our Lord and led to the “cleansing of the temple.”

This is an important step during Holy Week. As we prepare for the day of resurrection, the place whereby we worship God must be cleansed and prepared so that those who believe and those who come to worship can do so in an environment that has been prepared and cleansed.

When we look at the cleansing of the temple, we should be reminded of how the house of worship should be kept and prepared. People who desire to profit, advance their businesses, or

bring anything that is secular into the house of God, should be corrected and challenged.

The House of God should be clean, pure and prepared for the profiting of man and woman's soul. Our use of the House of God should be to advance the people of God. When this is not the case, the cleansing of the temple in this text should be remembered.

Reflection

In our modern society, how have we allowed the House of God to be defiled and not used for what it should be used for? What do you believe we can do as a church to ensure that God's House is always used as "a house of prayer?"

Tuesday, March 30, 2021

Step 2: The Texting at the Temple: The Proof is in the Pudding

Scripture Reading: The Authority of Jesus Questioned

One day as Jesus was teaching the people in the temple courts and proclaiming the good news, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, together with the elders, came up to him. "Tell us by what authority you are doing these things," they said. "Who gave you this authority?"

He replied, "I will also ask you a question. Tell me: John's baptism—was it from heaven, or of human origin?" They discussed it among themselves and said, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will ask, 'why didn't you believe him?' But if we say, 'Of human origin,' all the people will stone us, because they are persuaded that John was a prophet." So they answered, "We don't know where it was from." Jesus said, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things."

(Luke 20:1-40 NIV)

Devotional Reading

In the 20th Chapter of Luke, many Religious Leaders challenged the authority of Jesus. They wanted to know who gave him the authority to do what he had done. In other words, the people who challenged him, wanted to know who gave him the power (ordination) or sanctioned his actions. They did not understand and for that reason, his power was challenged.

Jesus, as he had done many times before, did not give a clear answer. He compared understanding of his "power" with the understanding of John's Baptism. Jesus asked them was it of heaven or human origin? This confused them; they didn't understand what he meant.

What's the point of this lesson? The point of the lesson is this. The power of Christ in your life will not be understood, justified or even deserved; however, change is change! Your faith does not

need to make sense to others. It may not add up to certain metrics. My faith is what it is and my change justifies all I need it to justify.

Too often, do we attempt to place our faith in a box? My faith may not look like yours because my experience is different; however, the Christ in me is just as real and strong as the Christ in you. Something like the power of God is limitless and cannot be confounded to one set of values or understanding. I may not understand my change but thank God I've been changed!

Reflection

The power of God should be a real thing in your life. Something has happened that has shown you God's power in your life. What have you experienced in your life that has made the power of God real and evident to you?

Wednesday, March 31, 2021

Step 3: The NEEDED Kiss of Death

Scripture Reading: Judas Agrees to Betray Jesus

Now the Festival of Unleavened Bread, called the Passover, was approaching, and the chief priests and the teachers of the law were looking for some way to get rid of Jesus, for they were afraid of the people. Then Satan entered Judas, called Iscariot, one of the Twelve.

And Judas went to the chief priests and the officers of the temple discussed with them how he might betray Jesus. They were delighted and agreed to give him money. He consented, and watched for an opportunity to hand Jesus over to them when no crowd was present.

(Luke 22:1-6 NIV)

Devotional Reading

At the time of our text for today, Jesus was nearing his end. He was approaching the “Last Supper” and arguably the most notable action of the week leading up to Jesus’ death, burial and resurrection was the betrayal of Judas.

Judas was a man who was close to Christ. He traveled with him and was even responsible for keeping the money (treasurer). This is all-important because it shows he was a man who not only knew Christ but also was entrusted by others who were close to him.

Despite his knowledge of Christ or even his position as treasurer, Judas sold Jesus for a few pieces of silver. We have heard and know this story all too well. Those who betray us are the ones who are closest to us! Actually, if a person is not close to you, they can’t betray you! If an enemy sells you out, it’s not a surprise but more so expected!

The irony of the text is despite the pain of seeing our Lord betrayed, it had to happen! Even in the midst of his betrayal, Judas had a purpose and place in the story of Jesus.

Likewise, in our lives, there are “Strategic Judas” that are placed in our lives. These are the folks who bring pain, stress and difficulties at the most difficult times. We rack our minds trying to logically understand; however, we forget the fact that their actions have spiritual significance!

Reflection

Have you ever had a Judas in your life? When were you betrayed? How did it make you feel? When you look back on the event, are you able to see the purpose of the pain they caused in your life?

Thursday, April 1, 2021

Step 4: The Commandment

Scripture Reading: Maundy Thursday

“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” (John 13:34 NIV)

Devotional Reading

The Thursday before the resurrection is known as “Maundy” Thursday. Many things happened on this day, but the power of the day is found in the understanding of the word “Maundy.” The word Maundy is a shortened word from the Latin word “mandatum.” The word “mandatum” means to command.¹

Why “command?” On Maundy Thursday, 3 major events occurred. They are as follows:

- Issuance of The Lords Supper
- The Washing of the Disciples Feet
- The Commandant of Love given to the disciples

Year after year, our focus is on the Last Supper and the actual washing of the feet of the disciples; however, we forget about the “command.” This is important because the “command” is the word that names “Maundy Thursday.” Because of this we need to understand what it was.

The commandment Jesus gave them is named by Christ as a “New Commandment” (John13:34). Jesus commands his disciples to

¹ *What is Maundy Thursday?* Alex Crain, Christianity Today, <https://www.christianity.com/christian-life/what-is-maundy-thursday-11628350.html>.

love one another as he has loved them. This “commandment” is the summary of the entire day! The Lord’s supper, the washing of the feet, and the reminder that this should be done “often” is all based upon Christ desire for us to love one another!

This is a powerful understanding that should give new context to Christianity and the life of Christ. We aren’t called to live for ourselves but for one another. The world could use more love than what is shared!

Reflection

How can you love others more than you have? Do you feel your love for others is in alignment with the love God desires from us?

Friday, April 2, 2021

Step 5: Good Friday Born to Die

Scripture Reading: Good Friday

While he was still speaking a crowd came up, and the man who was called Judas, one of the Twelve, was leading them. He approached Jesus to kiss him, but Jesus asked him, "Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?" When Jesus' followers saw what was going to happen, they said, "Lord, should we strike with our swords?" And one of them struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his right ear. But Jesus answered, "No more of this!" And he touched the man's ear and healed him. Then Jesus said to the chief priests, the officers of the temple guard and the elders, who had come for him, "Am I leading a rebellion, that you have come with swords and clubs? Every day I was with you in the temple courts, and you did not lay a hand on me. But this is your hour—when darkness reigns."

(Luke 22: 47-52)

Devotional Reading

The fulfillment of purpose isn't always pretty! Destiny doesn't always look glamorous. On Good Friday, a perfect man died a criminal's death. There is a lesson we should all learn in this. The lesson is threefold:

- 1.) God's purpose for yourself may not be what you think it should be. Sometimes what we are to do and the road we are to take doesn't look at all as we think it should. Christ came into the world perfect and unblemished, yet he died between two criminals.
- 2.) Your destiny is not always pain free! Retired life in the tropics, may not be what God has in store for you. Some of us have journeys that are made to carry out the burdens of others. This should not be scoffed upon; this should be embraced.

3.) Obedience is the ticket to sufficiency. Despite the end of Christ, his story does not end within a grave on Friday but rather as a risen savior on Sunday morning. Despite the burden of your journey, God has more for you! Keep your faith in him and your resurrection will be around the corner.