

*Day 1*  
*October 8*



*Pray / Praise God for your eternal salvation*

JESUS IS the King who willingly took the punishment of all sins -- past, present, and future -- upon himself.

Modern ideas of what sacrifice means are drastically different from the time of Jesus and the Israelites that came hundreds of years of before him. When the Law of Moses was in effect, sacrifice usually required blood or burnt offerings.

Jesus knew what was coming to him: a severe and brutal death by crucifixion, and he accepted it as the will of his father. The horror and severity of all our sins required the blood of Jesus.



*Read | Matthew 26:36-42*



*Reflect | Spend some time reflecting on the following questions.*

Reflect on the images and feelings that come to your mind when you hear the word “sacrifice.” What can you learn from Jesus in today’s scripture verses when you are considering being sacrificial, or about to face something dark and dreadful?

Why is it important to realize not only the fact that Jesus died for our sins, but also the manner in which he died? The brutality of his slaughter should serve as a reminder of the severity and destructive nature of sin.

Sometimes non-Christians will seek out followers of Christ if they are seeking a relationship with him. If this pertains to you as a Christian, how can you articulate what your response has been to the crucifixion story? How will you articulate the eternal love, hope, and grace of God through all the brutality of the slaughter?

## Day 2

October 9



*Pray | Ask God to forgive your sins and transgressions*

BARABBAS MAY seem like an inconsequential figure in the crucifixion story. It would seem completely absurd today to have a crowd of people, almost as if it were sport, choose which one of two death row inmates gets released and who goes on to die.

It would also seem completely absurd today for someone who has committed no violence to be chosen to die over someone who has been found guilty of murder. As you read today's scripture verses, be intentional about putting Barabbas at the forefront of your thoughts.



*Read | Matthew 27:11-26, Luke 23:18*



*Reflect | Spend some time reflecting on the following questions.*

The crowd's decision to choose to have Jesus killed instead of Barabbas seems counterintuitive. It is unexpected that a crowd would have a murderer freed and a non-violent breaker of religious law killed. What does this tell you about God's will and design through the crucifixion story?

Have you ever read through the story of Jesus and Barabbas before the crowd or watched it on a movie, hoping the crowd will pick Barabbas to be killed instead, even though you know already know full well how it ends? What does this say about our limited understanding of the totality of God's mission?

Think of Barabbas as representing all of humanity and all of humanity's sin. Think of Barabbas as representing you as an individual. Think of Jesus just as he was: sinless, full of grace, innocent, and sacrificial. Reflect on how Barabbas' release is the preview of how Jesus releases people from the penalties of sin.

## Day 3

October 10



*Pray | For God to give you a heart of humility*

THE LOVE, humility, patience, and endurance of Jesus are unmatched. The crucifixion demonstrates Jesus as a person. He was a person who had choices to make and pain to endure.

At any time, Jesus could have avoided all of what he endured during the crucifixion. He could have given into temptation from Satan in the desert or he could have admitted wrongdoing early on to the Pharisees. But, this was not God's plan. God's plan was to sacrifice his one and only son for all of humanity.



*Read | Matthew 27:27-44, Isaiah 52:13-53:12*



*Reflect | Spend some time reflecting on the following questions.*

One of the most remarkable aspects of today's scripture verses is that Jesus endured so much torture and humiliation, and it was all by his choice. What is the most you have endured in your faith journey with Christ? Why did you choose to endure it?

Once again, in this story as in many other stories throughout the Bible, God sends an unexpected and ironic message. The Roman soldiers beat Jesus to torture him. They dressed him in "royal" robes, put a crown of thorns on his head, and called him "king of Israel" to mock and humiliate him. Little did they know, what they were doing for evil, God was using for good. They assisted in God's mission by helping to fulfill the ancient prophecy of Isaiah which was made hundreds of years prior to Jesus' time. What does this say to you about the level of God's eternal grace, patience, and love?

*Day 4*  
*October 11*



*Pray | Tell God how much you anticipate his eternal kingdom*

JESUS WAS forsaken so we can be accepted. He was condemned so we would be welcomed into the ultimate most holy place!

If you have taken a tour of professional sports stadium, such as Target Field, or US Bank Stadium, you know part of that tour will take you onto the playing field. The playing field is something you only see on TV and a place where only professional athletes are allowed. Being allowed onto the playing field can elicit a response of awe, or disbelief that you are actually standing on the playing field, in the same place as these bigger-than-life athletes.



*Read | Matthew 27:45-56, Hebrews 10:19-25*



*Reflect | Spend some time reflecting on the following questions.*

After Jesus died, the curtain separating the most holy place of the temple from the rest of the world was torn. In these times, no one except for a very select number of priests was allowed in the most holy place. Jesus died to end the separation of all the world's people from him. God allowed an all-access pass to his eternal kingdom at this moment. If you are seeking a relationship with Jesus Christ, spend time in prayer and ask him into your heart. Join Jesus Christ instead of being separated from him.

If you are a follower of Jesus Christ, how can you use the story of the tearing of the curtain to be inclusive of everyone else? How can these scripture verses help you in understanding the extent of God's love for everyone?

Even the most devoted followers of Christ can feel separation from him at times. What are some things in your life that keep you separated from Jesus? Pray to God, ask for his forgiveness, and confess to him what separates you from him. God always forgives!

## Day 5

October 12



*Pray | Give thanks to God for fulfilling all of his promises*

THE CRUCIFIXION story is multi-faceted, complex, and dynamic. One could read the same scripture verses about the crucifixion several times and take various pieces away at different times.

One consistent and universal truth about Jesus' crucifixion is that it is a direct fulfillment of several Old Testament prophecies and events. Some prophecies and events cover broad, over-arching aspects of the crucifixion, while some others cover smaller details...even down to broken bones.



*Read | John 19:28-37, Psalm 34:10, Exodus 12:46*



*Reflect | Spend some time reflecting on the following questions.*

If you have been attending Five Oaks Church for the past few years, you have probably heard over and over, that the Old Testament “points to Christ.” If you are someone who tends to gloss over or avoid the Old Testament, spend time in prayer today ask God to help you love the Old Testament.

God uses evil for his good. God used the perpetrators of the crucifixion to fulfill both some of the over-arching broad aspects of the Old Testament and some of the smaller details. It was common for Roman soldiers to break the bones of crucified people to speed the dying process along. Why didn't the soldiers break the legs of Jesus? Were they too tired and lazy, in a hurry? There isn't a reason given, other than that Jesus was already dead. They could have broken his bones sooner. The reason or lack thereof is not important. The important aspect of this seemingly small detail is that was predicted hundreds of years earlier and is a result of God's will, mission, and perfect plan.

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