

Journey to Easter



DailyLife
Five Oaks Church

Week 5: March 12–18, 2016

Day 1

March 14



OUR ATTITUDE OF gratitude for God's blessings should never fade because God's generosity never fades.

In today's passage, ten men with leprosy approach Jesus to be healed. They rightfully stay far away from Jesus, as the law required, and with great hope called out to Jesus for healing. When Jesus sends them off to go show themselves to the priests, they find themselves healed along the way. Incredibly, only one of the ten, upon recognizing the miracle of healing, actually returned to thank Jesus. Unbelievable, right?

Maybe we shouldn't be so hasty to judge. How many times do we forget where our many blessings come from and forget to thank God for them? Lent is a time to remember God's greatest gift to us. Let's use this season to find ways to establish a continuous attitude of gratitude to God for all his blessings, one that flows from all aspects of our lives.



Read | Luke 17:11-19



Reflect / Read and reflect on the following.

Each of the ten men with leprosy had sufficient faith to be healed, but only one had a heart of gratitude great enough to drive him back to Jesus to thank and worship the Healer. How does this story reveal the true nature of God's mercy and grace contrasted with the sinful and selfish human heart?

Day 2

March 15



THE HUMBLE WILL be made right with God and exalted in the end; those who exalt themselves will be humbled in the end.

In today's passage we see a story of two men praying to God: one a Pharisee and one a tax collector. The prayer of the Pharisee is very self-centered and prideful. As you read the verses, it might be easy to brush aside the prayer, thinking that you'd never pray a prayer like that. Perhaps you'd never actually pray such blatantly self-centered words, but it's a good reminder to constantly assess the focus of our prayers. Are they primarily about what God should do for me—to make me more comfortable or successful or secure? It's an easy trap to fall into. Such prayers display a selfish heart.

The prayer of the tax collector is one of complete submission, acknowledging absolute dependence on God, asking for nothing but mercy. This is the heart we need to continually strive for. It's a heart that God can take and use for great things in the growth of his kingdom



Read | Luke 18:9-14



Reflect | Read and reflect on the following.

Jesus says that the tax collector went home “justified,” while the Pharisee did not. How does the attitude and spirit of the tax collector justify him before God?

Day 3

March 16



GOD IS FAITHFULLY putting Jesus seekers in your path. Always be watchful and ready to engage them.

The Bible does not say exactly what motivated Zacchaeus to desire so strongly to see Jesus, but with hindsight, it's clear that God was moving in his heart and motivating his actions. Jesus sees Zacchaeus, recognizes the opportunity, and fearlessly invites himself over to Zacchaeus' house. Zacchaeus' heart was primed for a change. He knew what he did was wrong. It just took a small act of recognition and engagement from Jesus to bring about that change.

God, through the Holy Spirit, continues to work in the hearts and lives of those far away from him. He puts these people in the path of his followers, creating opportunities for engagement and change. Like Jesus, we need to look up, see the people around us, recognize the opportunities, and then act fearlessly. We act in confidence because of the promises of God to always be with us and give us the words that are needed.



Read / Luke 19:1-10



Reflect / Read and reflect on the following.

In Luke 19:10 Jesus says, “The Son of Man came to seek and save the lost.” This same Jesus, before leaving this earth, commissioned his disciples and followers to do the same. Reflect on how the hours of your days are spent. How are you delivering on this commission from Jesus?

Day 4
March 17



GOD IS PATIENT and forgiving, but his patience will not last forever.

Jesus told the parable of the wicked tenants to convict the Jews and their leaders of their rejection of the true purpose that God had for them, and their utter failure to promote the greatness of God to the world. He claimed his place as the cornerstone on which the kingdom of God would be built, and he foretold they would reject him as the cornerstone.

Jesus, through his death and resurrection, conquered Satan, sin, and death. He is the established cornerstone upon which the entire kingdom of God is built. As verse 18 indicates, this cornerstone has the potential to save or destroy. God is patient. He gives us an entire life in which to choose to embrace or reject Jesus as the cornerstone, the Lord of our lives. Ultimately this decision will determine where you spend eternity.



Read / Luke 20:9-19



Reflect / Read and reflect on the following.

Isaiah 28:16: “Therefore thus says the Lord God, ‘Behold, I am the one who has laid as a foundation in Zion, a stone, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone, of a sure foundation.’”

Cornerstones are not something we think about or talk about much these days. Take a moment to reflect on the significance of a cornerstone, and then in your own words, describe what it means that Jesus is the cornerstone of the kingdom of God

Day 5

March 18



THE HOLY SPIRIT enables all true followers of Jesus Christ to turn trials and persecution into moments of victory for the kingdom of God.

It's never promised that the life of a follower of Jesus Christ here on earth will be an easy one. Jesus implies that hatred, persecution, capture, trials, and death are to be expected by someone who is truly following in his steps. He promises that these situations will not arise without hope and without the resources needed to handle the situation in a way that reflects the glory and greatness of God.

Jesus anticipates and addresses a concern that humans have faced throughout history. We lack confidence that we can clearly articulate the story of Jesus and the truths about the kingdom of God. We're afraid we will not be able to answer all the challenging questions that are posed. Jesus instructs us to consciously decide not to predetermine our answers to the challenging questions but to trust that the Holy Spirit will provide the words. Obedience on this truly shows where our true strength and confidence originates.



Read / Luke 21:7-19



Reflect / Read and reflect on the following.

In verse 19, Jesus promises that “by your endurance you will gain your lives.” Do you feel that your endurance is being tested on behalf of Jesus Christ and God’s kingdom? Explain why or why not— and what changes may need to happen in your life to bring about more testing.

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