

## **GOD IS WORTHY**

At the start of Holy Week, the week leading up to the crucifixion of Jesus, it began with Jesus riding triumphantly into the city of Jerusalem and ended with Jesus walking out of a dead man's tomb *alive*. Today we will reflect on an instance in Jesus' life that happened on Holy Monday. On Sunday, Jesus rode in to Jerusalem and that evening he left the city. But he went back the next morning and this is where the scripture picks up.

Mark 11: 15-17 (ESV) And they came to Jerusalem. And he entered the temple and began to drive out those who sold and those who bought in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who sold pigeons. And he would not allow anyone to carry anything through the temple. And he was teaching them and saying to them, "Is it not written, "My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations? But you have made it a den of robbers."

The people in the temple, their bodies were in the place of worship but their hearts were not. Their hearts had left worshipping God and valuing God most, and they had traded that for lesser things. You can point your finger and shake your head at them, but the truth is, you have done the same thing. Sure, there are moments and there are days your heart is truly desiring God above all things; truly worshipping Him and wanting Him most. But then there are those moments and those days where you are consumed by the things around you and you desire things that are much less valuable than God himself. So this morning as you pray, realign your heart and your mind.

### **PRAISE HIM**

Revelation 4:11 (ESV) "*Worthy* are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created."

Psalms 145:3 (NLT) Great is the Lord! He is most *worthy* of praise! No one can measure his greatness.

Our God is as good as it gets. He is *worthy* of glory and honor and power. And how great is he? Scripture tells us here that no one can even measure how great he is. Our God is of infinite worth. So praise him for who he is today.

*God, I praise you today because you are **worthy!***

Tell God how valuable he is to you this morning.

### **CONFESS AND REPENT**

Psalms 73: 25-26 (ESV) Whom have I in heaven but you? And there is nothing on earth that **I desire besides you**. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.

God is so much greater and better than anything on the planet. The psalmist says, “there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you”. However, the reality is *your* desire gets drawn in different directions. So be honest and confess to God the things that are competing for your desire today.

*God, I admit to you that you have not been my greatest desire. I am easily distracted by the things of this world. I want to confess to you the things that I have deemed more worthy of my desire than you...*

*Now, Lord, please turn my heart to become overcome with your great worth. Be my greatest desire today. Thank you!*

### **GIVE THANKS**

Psalm 63: 1-5 (ESV) O God, you are my God; earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you; my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water. So I have looked upon you in the sanctuary, beholding your power and glory. Because your steadfast **love** is **better** than life, my lips will praise you. So I will bless you as long as I live; in your name I will lift up my hands. My soul will be **satisfied** as with fat and rich food; and my mouth will praise you with joyful lips.

His love is better than life! He satisfies your soul. Thank Him for that today.

- Thank Him that **his love is better than life.**
- Thank Him that **he satisfies your soul.**

Psalm 121: 1-2 (ESV) I lift up my eyes to the hills. From where does my help come? My **help** comes from the **Lord**, who made heaven and earth.

God is where your help comes from. And today you need to recognize that temptation will come; the temptation to desire things more than God; to call things more valuable than God in your life. You need God’s help in order to keep him in that position, in that place above everything else in your life today.

- Ask God to help you **to hold tightly to him as most valuable today.**
- Ask God to help you **desire him above anything else.**
- Ask God to help you **to love him with your whole heart today.**

### **YIELD**

Matthew 6:24 (ESV) “No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.”

Jesus says you’re going to serve someone. But you can’t serve more than one. You can’t serve both God and money.

Joshua 24:15 (ESV) “...**choose** this day whom you will serve. As for me and my house, we will **serve** the **Lord.**”

Choose today to join Joshua of old and choose to serve the Lord today.

*Lord, this morning I choose to value you above all else. And I know I have to choose a master today. I will serve one, and I can't serve more than one. I choose to serve you. Help me today to look to your will and your ways and to think, speak, and act accordingly. I give you myself now, because you alone are worthy. You gave your son for me; how could I give you less than all of me again today. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

You are encouraged to spend a few more minutes in prayer this morning. As you continue in prayer, consider spending time...

- Praising God
- Sitting quietly, being still in his presence
- Maybe there are things that are heavy on your heart and you just need to bring those before God today.

(Day 16)

## **GOD IS LOVE**

Take some time to consider God's love for his creation, and in particular for his love for you and his desire that you love others, as you talk with him in prayer this morning.

### **PRAISE HIM**

Luke 20:20 (ESV) So they watched him and sent spies, who pretended to be sincere, that they might catch him in something he said, so as to deliver him up to the authority and jurisdiction of the governor.

Matthew 22: 35-40 (ESV) And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the law?" And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets."

Why are we commanded to love our neighbor? Because God does; because people matter to God. God is loving; as a matter of fact, he *is* love scripture tells us. He is the definition of what love is and what love looks like.

Praise Him today as you pray, that he is *love*.

*God, I praise you because you are **love**.*

Tell Him what that means to you as you continue praying.

### **CONFESS AND REPENT**

God calls us to love our neighbor as ourselves; to love all of the people around us. How are you doing with that? How's your attitude towards everyone around you? How's your compassion level for the people around you, even *that* person? How are you doing putting the interests of those around you above your own interests? Be honest, first with yourself and then be honest with God. We are not loving the people around us as well as Jesus commanded us to.

Take a moment and just be honest with God and confess that and repent of that:

*Jesus, I want to love like you have commanded me to love, but I am failing. I'm not able to live every moment truly loving the people around me. In fact, I have shown some people just the opposite. Please forgive me and help me to have the compassion and the action that come from love so that I can make a difference in your name today. Thank you, Lord.*

Romans 5:8 (ESV) But God shows his **love** for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

God displayed his love for us on the cross as Jesus sacrificed his life for us. **God loves you**. But imagine if he didn't? Imagine what it would be like if God didn't love you? You would be left on your own. You

would face the wrath of God with no way out. How good is the love of God that he sent his Son so that you could be saved?

Thank God for all of this in your prayer this morning:

- Thank Him for loving you.
- Thank Him for saving you.

**YIELD**

Ephesians 3:18 (NLT) And may you have the power to understand, as all God's people should, how wide, how long, how high and how deep his **love** is.

God's love for you is so big! That's why the apostle Paul is praying here for believers to have the power to understand it.

- Ask God to help you understand just how vast his love for you is.
- Ask God to help someone else know the greatness of his love today. Who would that be? Allow the Lord to bring a specific name to mind right now, and ask that for that person.
- Ask God to help you know how to show love to the people that he puts in your path today.

*God thank you for showing me what love looks like. I want to love like you today. Please set up divine appointments for me with people so that I can show your love to them. Even if it isn't easy, even if it takes time, please help me to be willing to give of myself today.*

Spend a few more minutes now in prayer, being still, and quiet, sitting in your God's presence and soaking in the reality of how great his love for you is today. After soaking in that incredible truth, bring a few more requests before the Lord before you get started with your day. And remember that your God is loving spending time with you this morning.

## **GOD IS PATIENT**

During the Holy Week leading up to Jesus' death, on Wednesday, it was a dark day for one of Jesus' disciples. It's also known as "Spy Wednesday", because of what happened with this disciple. The disciple: Judas.

Mark 14: 10-11 (ESV) Then Judas Iscariot, who was one of the twelve, went to the chief priests in order to betray him to them. And when they heard it, they were glad and promised to give him money. And he sought an opportunity to betray him.

Here is a guy that has been walking with Jesus for over three years now and he *turns* on him. The thing is, Jesus knew that he would turn on him; Jesus knew that he was going to betray him, and yet, because Jesus knew that it was a part of a bigger picture, Jesus waited *patiently* for Judas to betray him. What kind of a *patience* is that? How great is the *patience* of Jesus! Jesus showed incredible patience in this...and that reveals one of the characteristics of your God: *God is Patient*.

### **PRAISE**

2 Peter 3:9 (ESV) The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.

This morning, focus your heart and your mind on the fact that you have a *patient* God. Praise him that he is patient today.

*God, I praise you because you are **patient**.*

Take a moment and tell God what that means to you that he is patient with you.

### **GIVE THANKS**

Continue with expressing your gratitude towards God...

- Thank God for wanting to save you.
- Thank God that He was *patient* with you, giving you time to repent and turn to Jesus.
- Thank God that his *patience* means more and more people can get saved.

### **CONFESS AND REPENT**

God is *patient* with us and we are blessed because he is; we are *eternally blessed* because he is. And he calls you to be *patient* just like he is.

Ephesians 4:2 (NLT) Always be humble and gentle. Be *patient* with each other, making allowance for each other's faults because of your love.

How are you doing with patience? Have you lost it on anyone recently? Have you exploded on anybody? Have you said words that you really wish you hadn't? This morning, be honest with God and confess to him that you are not as patient as you ought to be and that you need his help today.

*God, we are not very patient people. We like things our way and when we want it. And, when that doesn't happen, we react poorly. So Lord, forgive us for not being patient like you, and enable us to have patience like you when our patience is tested today. Thank you, Lord.*

### **REQUESTS**

Our God is *patient*. And he is the example of what patience looks like for us. And he empowers us as we look to him to have a patience like his. God doesn't want *anyone* to perish. So he is being patient and withholding his wrath on sin so that more people can be saved.

Pray this morning for those who aren't saved this morning. Ask God to bring to mind one person that isn't saved so that you can pray for them today. Who is that one person that God would put on your heart to pray for their salvation today? \_\_\_\_\_ Now pray for them.

- Ask God to draw them to himself.
- Ask God to send his spirit to convict them of their sin and their need for a savior.
- Ask God to lead them away from their sin.
- Ask God to prepare their heart to receive the good news of salvation through Jesus.
- Ask God to send someone to share the gospel with them.

How great is that, that as you are praying, God is moving. God is working in so many people's lives right now as you are praying; he is drawing them to himself.

### **YIELD**

Mark 12: 42-44 (ESV) And a poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which make a penny. And he called his disciples to him and said to them, "Truly, I say to you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the offering box. For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on."

Jesus is sitting there with his disciples and he sees this woman put in all she had to live on. And Jesus doesn't stop her; he doesn't run after her and say, "No, no, no, you shouldn't do that." Instead, he *commends* her; he commends her heart and her devotion of giving herself *completely* to God. Today, may that be *your* heart. Turn to him now and do the same thing this woman did and give yourself completely to him today. Today do not give God just a portion of your life. Give him all of it!

*God, I don't want to settle for living halfheartedly for you today. I want to give you all of me, starting right now. Even when I don't feel like I have much to give, help me to give it, Lord. Help me to give out of my poverty, knowing that you will supply all I need as I do. Use my life for your sake and for your glory today, Jesus. Amen.*

As you continue now in prayer, you are encouraged to spend a few more minutes in conversation with God. Maybe you want to spend a few more minutes praising God for his patience. Maybe let the Lord prompt you to pray for a few more people that God is bringing to your mind and heart that don't know him as savior. Pray that God would draw them to himself today and lead them to salvation in Jesus. As you continue to pray, you are encouraged take a little time just to be quiet and be still and to enjoy being in his presence. Remember that he is loving time with you. Enjoy him today as you continue to pray.

As you continue in prayer, consider...

- **Praising** God for his patience.
- **Praying** for those who don't yet know Jesus as savior.
- **Being still** and enjoy sitting in his presence.

Day 18



## **JESUS IS HUMBLE**

Holy Week, the week of Jesus' life that started with Him riding triumphantly into the city of Jerusalem and ended with him walking out of the tomb *ALIVE*. Thursday of that week is often referred to as "Maundy Thursday". The word "maundy" is derived from the word that means "to command". On that Thursday during Holy Week, Jesus instituted the command to celebrate communion.

### **PRAISE HIM**

With that thought in mind, we start out with another event that took place on the Thursday night of Holy Week.

John 13: 3-5 (ESV) Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going back to God, rose from supper. He laid aside his outer garments, and taking a towel, tied it around his waist. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

Jesus goes around to each of his disciples and does what would have been the job of a common slave at that time. He washes the filth off of the disciples' feet. He takes the lowest position possible in the room. In this act, Jesus displays his true nature, that although having all authority, he uses it to serve the needs of others.

So praise him, acknowledging that he is *humble*.

*Jesus, I praise you because you are **humble**.*

Tell Him what that means to you that he *served* rather than *seeking to be served*.

It's incredible to think that Jesus, our King, Jesus, our Savior, Jesus, our God, was that *humble*.

### **CONFESS AND REPENT**

As you continue to pray, draw your attention to another event that happened on Thursday of the Holy Week....

Luke 22: 60-62 (ESV) But Peter said, "Man, I do not know what you are talking about." And immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed. And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembers the saying of the Lord, how he had said to him, "Before the rooster crows today, you will deny me three times." And he went out and wept bitterly.

Peter denied knowing Jesus *three* times. He *loved* Jesus. He even expressed passionately that he would *never* deny Jesus. Yet he did...Peter turned his back on Jesus.

It would be easy for us to look at Peter and point our finger and say, "how could he do such a thing?" But the truth is, we do the same thing, in our words, our actions, and our thoughts. Every time we have thought, acted or spoken in a way that doesn't represent Jesus well – we have denied him.

Let's ask God to bring to mind the ways you have denied Jesus in the past few days and confess those things today.

*God, I have turned my back on Jesus in my words, actions, thoughts.*

As he brings specific things to mind, confess them, ask for forgiveness, and ask for help to live like Jesus in that area today.

### **GIVE THANKS**

Jesus made an incredible promise to us on that Maundy Thursday, as well.

John 16:7 (ESV) Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the *Helper* will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you.

Jesus promised the Holy Spirit to his followers. The spirit of God that teaches, that reminds, that leads, that guides us, that convicts us, that indwells us, that gives us wisdom, that seals us, that intercedes for us, that gives gifts to us, and that produces fruit in our lives. Just to name a few things that he does.

Thank God for giving us his spirit now –

*God, thank you for giving your spirit to every follower of Jesus.*

*God, thank you that your spirit lives in us.*

*God, thank you that your spirit empowers us to do your will.*

*God, thank you that your spirit produces the character of Jesus in us as we submit to you.*

Jesus prayed an incredible prayer on that Maundy Thursday, as well. Here is a portion of that prayer.

John 17: 20-23 (ESV) "I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me."

Jesus is not just praying for the disciples that are with him in that moment. He says I do not ask for these only. But also for those who will believe. If you have put your faith in Jesus Christ, *He is praying for you. Jesus prayed for you.* He prayed for those of us in the church – those who believe – to have unity, to be unified.

Let's ask God to give us *unity* as believers.

Jesus also instructed his followers on that Thursday, to stay intimately connected to him.

John 15: 5 (ESV) I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.

We have no hope of living the Christian life apart from Jesus. However, if we stay intimately connected with him, he tells us that our lives will bear much fruit because of it.

Ask Jesus to help you to have the *discipline to stay connected* to him daily.

### **YIELD**

In the Garden of Gethsemane, the night before He faced the cross, Jesus was praying. Jesus shows us the ultimate example of what it looks like to submit ourselves to our Heavenly Father.

Luke 22:42 (ESV) saying, "Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done."

Would you pray this prayer, following Jesus' example, and submitting your life to God today?

*God, there are many things I am going to face today. I will be tempted to take the easy way out instead of seeking to live to honor you and to please you. But I am not going to wait until then to decide how I am going to respond. I choose, right now, to honor you and please you, whatever the cost. Not my will, but yours, be done in my life today. In Jesus' name. Amen.*

You are encouraged to spend a few more minutes in conversation with God this morning. Share your heart with him; and enjoy just being in his presence. As you continue to pray, continue to remember this - that God is loving spending this time with you.

As you continue to pray, consider these areas of your life and talk to God about them....

Family, Friends, Church, Work, Yourself

Day 19

## **JESUS IS SACRIFICIAL**

Friday of Holy Week is called "Good Friday". It is the day we remember the death of Jesus on the cross. While he was hanging on the cross, Jesus made seven statements that were recorded for us in the gospels. So this morning, we are going to let those statements lead us in our time of prayer.

### **PRAISE HIM**

Matthew 27:46 (ESV) And about the ninth hour, Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

Jesus was quoting from Psalm 22 in the Old Testament when He said these words. It is a psalm that begins with suffering and ends with victory. And that is what Jesus was doing on the cross; he was enduring suffering that would lead to a victory. But the most amazing part about the cross is that Jesus was not forced to the cross; he willingly gave himself to go to the cross for our benefit. He chose to lay down his life...this suffering wasn't forced upon him. He sacrificed his life on purpose.

Ephesians 5:2 (ESV) Christ loved us and gave himself up for us.

So praise Jesus because he is sacrificial.

*Jesus, I praise you because you are **sacrificial**.*

Tell Him what it means to you today that he was willing to *sacrifice* his life for you.

### **CONFESS AND REPENT**

Another statement Jesus made from the cross is found in the 23<sup>rd</sup> Chapter of Luke.

Luke 23:34 (ESV) And Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Jesus looked down from the cross, hanging from the nails that pierced his wrists and feet, and he forgave those who had driven those nails through his flesh!

Jesus forgave those who hurt him...How are you doing with forgiving those who have hurt you?

You know that holding on to a grudge or hanging on to bitterness feels like you are doing something. But the only thing that you are accomplishing is poisoning your own soul. It doesn't do anything to the person that hurt you and it doesn't change anything for the good. You don't have to hold on to bitterness until the score is settled. Settling the score, that's God's job. "Vengeance is mine, says the Lord" (Romans 12:19) That's not your job to do.

You, however, need to forgive and you need to release that person. Jesus forgave those who put nails through his wrists and feet and if you've trusted Jesus as your savior, *he has forgiven you*. And he wants to help you forgive those who have hurt you.

So who has hurt you and left you wounded, hurt, carrying bitterness today?

Ask Christ to give you the ability to release that person and to truly let that offense go.

*Jesus, I want to forgive, but I need your help. I acknowledge you are the one to settle the score; it's not my job. Help me to release them from owing me anything right now. I place my hurt in your hands. I place the one who has hurt me in your hands, as well. I choose to forgive. Thank you, Jesus. Amen.*

### **GIVE THANKS**

Another statement Jesus made hanging from the cross is found in John 19.

John 19:30 (ESV) When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, "It is finished," and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

Jesus completely paid for all of my sin and yours on the cross. Jesus finished the work that he came to do.

Thank Jesus for hanging on the cross and finishing the work he came to do.

*Thank you, Jesus, for finishing the work you came to do. Thank you for redeeming me by dying in my place.*

As you continue to give thanks this morning, look to another statement that Jesus made from the cross. In this one, Jesus was speaking to the thief hanging next to him.

Luke 23:43 (ESV) And he said to him, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise."

Because of the finished work of Jesus on the cross, all who put their faith *in Jesus* will be *with Jesus* in paradise. Thank Jesus for this incredible truth today.

*Thank you, Jesus, for making a way for me to be with you for all eternity in paradise.*

### **REQUESTS**

As you continue in prayer this morning, look at another statement of Jesus' from the cross.

John 19:28 (ESV) "I thirst."

Jesus *asked* for something from the cross.

Today what do you need to ask for? What is the burden you are carrying? What is the heartache or struggle that you are dealing with today? What do you need for God to do in your life today?

Take a moment to ask God to give you what you need today.

What do you need to ask God for this morning? What comes to mind right now? Go ahead and ask Him for that right now.

### **YIELD**

Turn back to Luke 23 for another statement that Jesus made from the cross.

Luke 23:46 (ESV) Then Jesus, calling out with a loud voice, said, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!" And having said this he breathed his last.

Jesus gave himself completely to finish the work that he was sent to do. It cost him *everything*. He breathed his last...and he died.

Today is a brand-new day. Are you ready and are you willing to give yourself completely to do the will of your Heavenly Father as Jesus did? Are you ready to lay down your life if that is what serving God requires of you today?

Lift up this prayer.

*God, you gave everything for me. And today, I have new life with you because you did. This morning, I choose to give you my life in return. Whatever you want to do with my life, you just say the word. I am yours today, no matter what it will cost me. Help me to give whatever it takes to honor and serve you today. Thank you, Lord. Amen.*

Spend a few more minutes with the Lord this morning, maybe thanking Jesus for the salvation that he bought for you so long ago on this Friday. Maybe you want to spend a little more time bringing a few more things that you need before him today and asking him to give you what you need today.

May your heart be full as you continue to talk with your Savior this morning.

As you continue to pray, consider these areas of your life and talk to God about them...

Family, Friends, Church, Work, Yourself

Day 20