

In order for us to live as a person who speaks hope instead of one who spreads toxic grumbling requires us to deeply know the hope that Jesus has given us. This week, the devotional is centered around Holy Week—a time to remember the suffering of Jesus in his last week on earth. Enter in with a grateful posture.

New to daily devotionals? Here are a few tips for this week:

- Before you begin your devotional time, spend some time in prayer. So much of following God is making yourself available to God, to receive what He might have for you.
- Let Scripture change your understanding of Jesus. Ask, “What did I think about Jesus before I read this?” and, “What might be a new revelation to me?”
- Consider using the devotionals with your family or group—what would it look like for your family to set aside time each day to remember who God is and what He has provided for us?

Monday, April 15th

Read John 6:41-43

41 At this the Jews there began to grumble about him because he said, “I am the bread that came down from heaven.” 42 They said, “Is this not Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How can he now say, ‘I came down from heaven?’” 43 “Stop grumbling among yourselves,” Jesus answered.

Why do you think the Jews grumbled against Jesus? What was keeping them from understanding what Jesus was communicating?

When has your attitude or posture kept you from knowing who Jesus is? How did it change your day, your relationships or your spiritual life?

How have you found the opposite to be true—a good attitude enhancing your understanding of Jesus? What would it look like to choose that path in your life?

Tuesday, April 16th

Read Matthew 21:7-11 (Palm Sunday)

7 They brought the donkey and the colt and placed their cloaks on them for Jesus to sit on. 8 A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. 9 The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted, “Hosanna to the Son of David!” “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!” “Hosanna in the highest heaven!” 10 When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, “Who is this?” 11 The crowds answered, “This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee.”

What do you notice about this passage? What is surprising? What is unusual about the way they welcomed a king?

How do you make sense of this passage in contrast with the passage from Monday? Why would there be such different reactions to Jesus?

When is it easy for you to shout praises to God? When is it difficult? How can you pursue gratitude in either situation?

Wednesday, April 17th (Holy Wednesday)

Read Matthew 26:14-16, 20-25

14 Then one of the Twelve—the one called Judas Iscariot—went to the chief priests 15 and asked, “What are you willing to give me if I deliver him over to you?” So they counted out for him thirty pieces of silver. 16 From then on Judas watched for an opportunity to hand him over. ... 20 When evening came, Jesus was reclining at the table with the Twelve. 21 And while they were eating, he said, “Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me.” 22 They were very sad and began to say to him one after the other, “Surely you don’t mean me, Lord?” 23 Jesus replied, “The one who has dipped his hand into the bowl with me will betray me. 24 The Son of Man will go just as it is written about him. But woe to that man who betrays the Son of Man! It would be better for him if he had not been born.” 25 Then Judas, the one who would betray him, said, “Surely you don’t mean me, Rabbi?” Jesus answered, “You have said so.”

Why do you think Judas betrayed Jesus? Do you think it was about more than money? What would cause someone to do such a thing?

Think from the perspective of Jesus, Judas and the disciples—what would it have been like to witness Judas’ betrayal?

If Jesus knew Judas was going to betray him, why wouldn’t he have done anything about it? What does that say about the cost Jesus was willing to pay?

Thursday, April 18th (Maundy Thursday)

Read John 13:2-8

It was just before the Passover Festival. Jesus knew that the hour had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. ² The evening meal was in progress, and the devil had already prompted Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, to betray Jesus. ³ Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; ⁴ so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. ⁵ After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him. ⁶ He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" ⁷ Jesus replied, "You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand." ⁸ "No," said Peter, "you shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me."

How do you think Peter and the other disciple's felt when Jesus washed their feet? Why do you think verse 3 reminds us of Jesus' relationship with God the Father? What significance does that add to the rest of the passage?

When have you been unsure of something but later seen how God was moving? (v.7) How do you think that statement, and later Jesus' crucifixion, would impact Peter's life? How might it change our perspective?

How have you been washed by Jesus? Spend time thanking Jesus for allowing us to be with him.

Friday, April 19th (Good Friday)

Spend time reading Matthew 27:27-55 (you can pull up the rest of the passage in your Bible or using biblegateway.com). Notice the ways that this passage contrasts with the other passages from the week. You might choose to read it several times, letting yourself grieve the story. Finish by spending time in prayer.

²⁷ Then the governor's soldiers took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole company of soldiers around him. ²⁸ They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, ²⁹ and then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on his head. They put a staff in his right hand. Then they knelt in front of him and mocked him. "Hail, king of the Jews!" they said. ³⁰ They spit on him, and took the staff and struck him on the head again and again. ³¹ After they had mocked him, they took off the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him.

Unsettled

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