

## MONDAY 3.17.25 - Luke 9:57-62

<sup>57</sup> As they were walking along the road, a man said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go."<sup>58</sup> Jesus replied, "Foxes have dens and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head."<sup>59</sup> He said to another man, "Follow me." But he replied, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father."<sup>60</sup> Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God."<sup>61</sup> Still another said, "I will follow you, Lord; but first let me go back and say goodbye to my family."<sup>62</sup> Jesus replied, "No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God."

Christ knew the hearts of these men. He knew they were not fully committed to Him. Christ knows your heart as well. Are you committed to following Christ? You may ask, what does that look like? Let's start off with a few obvious answers to that question. Christ wants you to replace anger with love. He wants you to replace bitterness with forgiveness. He wants you to share His love and His plan for salvation in every situation. He wants you to desire to live for him, "always". You are probably saying, "wait, you do not understand!" That's what the men in today's scripture said. Jesus' reply to them, and to you, is "If you put the things of this world before me you will never truly be my servant. Ask God to give you the strength to put the world behind you and the cross before you in all you do."

SPACE FOR REFLECTION

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## TUESDAY 3.18.25 - 1 Corinthians 16:13-14

The thing about being a Christian believer is that it demands that you act like one. You know what we taught our children, that looking at one's friends told lots about the child. Same thing is true for you and me. If we espouse Christian values, especially if we actually publicly claim to be a Christian, then our words and actions should match that claim. If they do not, then our commitment to Christ should be in question, by our own selves, because it surely will be by others.

Paul in this letter here closes with that same admonition to his readers. Be careful, act like grown-up mature believers (I paraphrase) be strong, that is, do not lose heart against the world, and let love govern all your choices. Sounds like the stuff of our true

interests, and easy to do. Well, easy to say. More importantly, stand firm in the faith!

SPACE FOR REFLECTION

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## WEDNESDAY 3.19.25 - John 18:28-40

"That's not fair!" Have you ever made that exclamation as a child? We call attention to injustice because we want wrongs to be made right. However, life many times—but not always—is unfair. Such was the experience of our Lord Jesus Christ. Falsely accused by the Jews, Jesus endured six trials—three religious (Jewish) and three civil (Roman). Jesus was tried before Annas (John 18:12-14, 19-23), Caiaphas (John 18:24, Matthew 26:57-68), the Sanhedrin (Luke 22:66-71), Pilate (John 18:28-38), Herod (Luke 23:6-12), and Pilate (John 18:39-19:6). Of course, we know that Jesus was innocent, even though He was condemned to death.

When you are wrongly accused and slandered, remember that God—the Judge of Heaven—will hold men accountable. Keep on loving those who mistreat you, as Jesus commanded (Matt. 5:43). Rather than becoming bitter and giving up hope, entrust yourself to God, as Jesus did (1 Peter 2:23).

SPACE FOR REFLECTION

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## THURSDAY 3.20.25 - Proverbs 25:21-22

How often do we hear children screaming in frustration, "It's not fair!" - often because of what seems to us the most trivial of slights. But if we're being honest, that's often our own complaint about

the unfairness of this world. We live in an imperfect, sinful world; and people and situations often disappoint or hurt us, leading to that common lament. Only God the Father, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit are perfect. In Our understanding, was what happened to Jesus *fair*? He was betrayed, mocked, beaten, and crucified for preaching the truth. His response was to love us all enough to die

for us. Our conviction is the "burning coals" heaped on our heads when we realize our sinful ways and turn to Him in repentance. Then in our Christian living, we are to emulate our Savior by loving and forgiving others their trespasses when we have been wronged, creating an opportunity to heal relationships and draw them to the Lord.

SPACE FOR REFLECTION

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## FRIDAY 3.21.25 - Psalm 43

<sup>1</sup> Vindicate me, my God, and plead my cause against an unfaithful nation. Rescue me from those who are deceitful and wicked. <sup>2</sup> You are God my stronghold. Why have you rejected me? Why must I go about mourning, oppressed by the enemy? <sup>3</sup> Send me your light and your faithful care, let them lead me; let them bring me to your holy mountain, to the place where you dwell. <sup>4</sup> Then I will go to the altar of God, to God, my joy and my delight. I will praise you with the lyre, O God, my God. <sup>5</sup> Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God.

Have you ever felt sad, isolated, lonely, treated unjustly by others, or even abandoned by God? If so, you can relate to the psalmist as he transitions from Psalm 42 into this psalm. All of us have felt those emotions at one time or another, but we; like the psalmist, must realize that our refuge is in the light and truth of God. He is the source of guidance and comfort that we long for during those times.

It is one thing to express frustration with our sufferings, but we also must make a conscious effort to remember the faithfulness God has shown us in the past. Far too often, we drift away from our relationship and dependence on God during the good times, only to then realize how desperately we need his presence to find joy and fulfillment.

This psalm reminds us to turn to God in the midst of our trials.

SPACE FOR REFLECTION

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## **E2 GROUP OPPORTUNITIES**

### SUNDAY MORNINGS - 9:40am

- Kids** CHILDREN'S CHURCH (Ages 4 – 4th Grade)  
LOCATION: Camp Shiloh on the Lower Level  
NURSERY (through Age 3) \*9:40AM ONLY  
LOCATION: Camp Shiloh on the Lower Level
- Youth** E2 CLASS (5th – 12th Grade)  
LOCATION: Youth Activity Center (across street)
- Adults** **SPRING QUARTER** - began March 2<sup>nd</sup>.  
LOCATION: B8-10 - Lane Kemler- began March 2<sup>nd</sup>.  
**EXPLORE THE BIBLE - 1,2 Peter & Jude** - These books were written primarily to address suffering caused by persecution and to combat false teachings.  
LOCATION: B11 - Dave Delcamp - began March 2<sup>nd</sup>.  
**BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE - part 1**  
**All Signs Point to Jesus** - The Gospel of John points to many signs that highlight who Jesus is, and as we look at these signs you will be drawn to a renewed awe and worship of Jesus Christ.  
LOCATION: B1&2 - Chris Domenico - began March 2<sup>nd</sup>.  
**EVERYDAY EVANGELISM**  
**Pursuing Hearts, Not Arguments** - This six-week study will equip you with practical, effective ways to share the gospel. The way to do that is by engaging others with love, respect, and truth.

### SUNDAY EVENINGS - 6:00pm

- Kids** MESSIAH KIDS (Kindergarten – 4th Grade)  
LOCATION: Camp Shiloh on the Lower Level  
**No Messiah Kids this Sunday - 3/16.**
- Youth** YOUTH GROUP (5th – 12th Grade)  
LOCATION: Youth Activity Center (across street)  
**No Youth Group this Sunday - 3/16.**
- Adults** LOCATION: Worship Center

### **WINTER E2 SMALL GROUPS**

**LLT EVENT- FEAST: APPETIZER COURSE:** Ladies, join us March 20<sup>th</sup> at 6:00pm in the FAC for the first course of FEAST! Appetizers prepared by Dash Meal Solutions. Guest speaker: Sarah Dayton. Cost: \$20. Please pick up your book from the Information Table. Read Ch.1-4 prior to attending.

**REVELATION - WOMENS STUDY:** Join us for a 10-week Women's Bible Study following Jen Wilkin's book, "*Revelation: Eternal King, Everlasting Kingdom*". In this study you will become confident, assured, and inspired by the teachings in Revelation. Thursday Mornings at 9:00am in room B8-10 Started February 20<sup>th</sup>.

TO SIGN UP OR REQUEST MORE INFORMATION FOR ANY OF THESE GROUPS OR CLASSES, USE THE CONNECTION CARD IN THE BULLETIN. THANK YOU.

## **John 18:12-14, 19-24** **Kangaroo Court**

Jesus did not undergo just one trial. He endured six trials.

- Trial 1—Before Annas, the High Priest Emeritus
- Trial 2—Before Caiaphas, the High Priest of Israel
- Trial 3—Before the Sanhedrin, the Jewish court of the nation
- Trial 4—Before Pilate, the Roman Governor of Judea
- Trial 5—Before Herod Antipas, the Ruler of Galilee
- Trial 6—Before Pilate who sentenced Jesus to death

The Jews took their legal instruction from the Old Testament Law of Moses. They wrote it down in the Talmud which became the primary source of Jewish religious law and theology.

The religious trials of Jesus were a violation of the Jewish law regarding:

- A \_\_\_\_\_
- I \_\_\_\_\_
- T \_\_\_\_\_
- P \_\_\_\_\_
- J \_\_\_\_\_
- V \_\_\_\_\_

Annas held the office of high priest from A.D.6 to 15. He used his clout to get his sons appointed as high priest after him. When he ran out of sons, he started supplying his sons-in-law. Caiaphas, Annas' son-in-law, was appointed as high priest of Israel during the time of Christ.

Every step of His way to the cross, Jesus left behind an example of how to bear up under unjust suffering. The key to Christ's attitude was trust—not in the legal system or the religious institutions. Rather, trust in "*Him who judges justly.*"

Are you going through trials and persecutions right now? If so, then look to your Heavenly Father. He sees. He knows. He judges righteously. Trust in Him.

*"He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth."  
When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. ~ 1 Peter 2:22-23*

 Edifying and Equipping Every Day

TAKING OUR NEXT STEP TOGETHER IN THE WORD



March 17 - March 21

#### INTRODUCTION:

Part of our purpose and strategy as a church is to Edify and Equip (E2) every believer. We desire to see every person take their next step with God, both individually as well as with families and small groups (E2 Communities). This devotional is to aid us in just that. We invite you to join us in daily devotion.

#### OVERVIEW:

Monday's and Tuesday's readings will be a follow up on Sunday's message from, March 16<sup>th</sup>, "Kangaroo Court", with Pastor Doug Lyon. Wednesday's through Friday's devotions will help prepare us for the message on March 23<sup>rd</sup>, "Pilate Before Christ", with Pastor Doug Lyon.

#### KEY/MEMORY VERSE:

My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.  
John 15:12