

***EASTER WEEK: April 12, 2020***

Heavenly Father, as I approach the celebration of Easter, I am reminded that the glorious resurrection of Jesus was preceded by his agonizing death on the cross. Lead me this day to a deeper appreciation of His sacrifice for me. Lead me as well to a heart full of joy because Jesus rose and lives within me this day. Truly, I serve a **Risen Savior!** In His Holy Name, and in the power of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

Read Luke 22:32: What was Jesus' prayer for His disciples?

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Notice that He prayed that their **faith** would not **fail**. We know that the disciples' faith faltered, but it did not **fail**. What is Peter's response in Luke 22:33?

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Where was Peter putting his confidence when he made that statement? \_\_\_\_\_

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What does Jesus tell Peter in Luke 22:34?

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Read Matthew 26:31-35 - About whose strength is Peter boasting? \_\_\_\_\_

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In verse 35, who else chimed in?

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Can you think of a time when you put your confidence in your own strength instead of in Christ? What were the results? Is there an area of your life in which you have trouble relying on Christ? **Take a minute to confess that to Him now, and ask Him to restore your faith in His strength and His Presence.**

(Note: On the night of Jesus' arrest, the disciples became so overwhelmed with the circumstances unfolding around them, they forgot the reassuring promises Jesus had given them. During the Covid-19 pandemic, we may be feeling overwhelmed by the circumstances unfolding around us. At the end of this lesson, there are some promises for you to read whenever you need reassurance.)

Peter denied Christ 3 times. What do Luke 22:62 and Matthew 26:75 tell us that Peter did afterward? \_\_\_\_\_ Read John 21:15-17 How did Jesus show

Peter grace and restore him to a vibrant life in Christ? \_\_\_\_\_

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Thinking about how Jesus dealt with Peter after he faltered, what can we expect from Jesus when we falter? \_\_\_\_\_

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Let's move now to the crucifixion of Christ by looking at the 7 things Jesus said from the cross.

- 1) **"Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do."** Luke 23:34 (Jesus taught forgiveness even during his last hours on earth.)
- 2) **"Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise."** Luke 23:43 (Jesus said these words to the thief on the cross who had said to Jesus, "Lord, remember me when you come into your kingdom." Jesus' words affirm the fact that he welcomes those who put their faith in Him.)
- 3) "Jesus said to his mother: **"Woman, this is your son."** Then he said to the disciple: **"This is your mother."** John 19:26-27 (Jesus showed his concern for his mother's welfare.)
- 4) **"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"** Matthew 27:46 and Mark 15:34 (John MacArthur states that the true meaning of the cross is found in these words of Jesus. "God punished His own Son as if He had committed every wicked deed done by every sinner who would ever believe. The sin Christ bore was so despicable to the righteousness of God that He had to separate Himself from Jesus. The wrath of His Father being poured out on Him, followed by the separation from His Father is what caused the greatest amount of suffering for Christ on the cross.") Take a moment to reflect on the price of your salvation, and express humility and gratitude to God.
- 5) **"I thirst."** John 19:28 (Jesus, the Living Water—the one who can satisfy all thirst, became thirsty. These words make us even more aware of Jesus' physical needs.)
- 6) Jesus said, **"It is finished."** John 19:30 (Jesus' mission on earth was finished. He had accomplished the work the Father had sent Him to do.)
- 7) **"Father, into your hands I commend my spirit."** Luke 23:46 (Jesus was obedient to the Father's will to the end. Here are Jesus' last words before His death...a prayer to His Father...I'm coming home to You.)

Now, let's celebrate the victorious resurrection of Jesus Christ-- looking at Luke's perspective found in Luke 24:1-9.

Why did the women go to the tomb?

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What did they discover in v. 2? \_\_\_\_\_

What was missing in v. 3? \_\_\_\_\_

Note: The stone was not rolled away so that Christ could exit. Remember that after the resurrection, "when the doors were shut where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus appeared in their midst" (John 20:19). Just as no one had to open the door for Jesus to enter that room; no one had to roll the stone away for Jesus to exit the tomb. Thus, the stone was rolled away for people to be able to see inside—to witness that the tomb was empty.

What did the men in dazzling apparel say to the women? \_\_\_\_\_

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What does the resurrection mean to us? (Write your own response before reading those below. Your own thoughts really matter.) \_\_\_\_\_

In Mark 9:31, Jesus said, "When the Son of Man has been killed, He will rise 3 days later." And He did! Thus, the Word of God is true. The resurrection is the evidence that Jesus Christ is the Son of God as He claimed to be. He has power over death. Heaven is waiting for us because Jesus promised to go and prepare a place for us, and then to come again and receive us. (John 14:1-3)

### **Promises**

Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. Isaiah 41:10

And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love. No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 8:38-39

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways, acknowledge His, and He will direct your path. Proverbs 3:5-6

Lo, I am with you always, even unto the ends of the earth. John 28:20b

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Psalm 46:1

He only is my rock and my salvation, my stronghold; I shall not be shaken. Psalm 62:2

**Believe! Trust! Keep the faith! Seek and Follow Christ – always!**

“The Pastor!”