

## Devotions for the Week of April 14, 2019

### LARGE-PRINT

#### Palm/Passion Sunday

#### North East United Methodist Church

By Rev. Dr. Drew M. Christian

### Sunday, April 14, 2019

#### **Read Matthew 28: 18-20.**

Oswald Chambers wrote, *“God is not saving the world; it is done. Our business is to get men and women to realize it”*

This Palm/Passion Sunday, we followed Jesus as he celebrated the Passover meal with His disciples, prayed in the garden of Gethsemane, had His best friend, Peter, deny Him, was arrested and beaten, was nailed to a wooden cross, and was laid and buried in the tomb. Jesus did this for us. At any time, the Bible says He could have called on an *“army of angels”* to rescue Him, but He was willing to give up His life so we could be cleansed and made whole, so that we could be forgiven.

The world is full of people who don't know this story...who don't know this truth...who are LOST. They are LOST on an island, in the desert, out in the wilderness, at sea. Who will bring them home? Who will lead them to the One who offers them “living water,” who offers them LIFE? As Paul writes, *“For whoever calls on the name of the LORD will be saved”* (Romans 10:13). Paul goes on to say, *“But how can people call for help if they don't know who to trust? And how can they know who to trust if they haven't heard of the One who can be trusted? And how can they hear if nobody tells them?”* (Romans 10:14; Message).

Will you tell them? Will you share with your neighbors,

your co-workers, your family, your friends about the God who loves them? Will you invite them to church so they can hear about a Savior who died for them? Will you tell them who they can trust? How they can be FOUND? Will you go?

Have you invited someone to Easter Sunday services so they can hear the Gospel? Who is God laying on your heart to invite, to pick up Easter morning, to bring to church? Invite them and pray for them throughout this week, that they will be receptive to hear the Easter story, to hear the message of God's love for them.

### **Monday, April 15, 2019**

**Read Isaiah 53: 1-12; Philippians 2: 5-11.**

The three most important events in world history are the birth, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We have a Savior that was born a baby in a manger, was not only divine but also completely human; therefore, He understands how we feel, how we hurt, what we are going through. We also have a Savior who was willing to die for us...die a horrific death. Jesus did that for us. As Max Lucado writes, "*Jesus Chose The Nails.*"

It is not the proper time to talk about the resurrection because we are still in the season of Lent, focusing on His death. Lent reminds us that we must "*not let one single day go by*" that we don't remember what Christ did for us and that we are to live a life in response to His sacrifice...we are to be the Hands and Feet of Christ.

Take time tonight to reflect on Jesus' death on a cross...His willingness to die for you. Take time to reflect on how Jesus' death made it possible that only the "*shadow of death*" touches us. Take time to reflect on whether or not you are ready for your own death...how have you lived your life...does your life reflect

thanks for what Christ has done for you...are you helping others know and hear about Christ's sacrifice, His hands and feet being pierced "*so that none would pierce ours.*" Take time to meditate on these things as we continue through the holiest of weeks.

## **Tuesday, April 16, 2019**

### **Read Mark 14: 12-26.**

In the book, And The Angels Were Silent, Lucado writes, "*'This is my body,' he says as he breaks the bread. And you thought it was just a ritual. You thought it was just an observance. You thought it was a memorial to something which was done back then. You thought it was a re-enactment of a meal he had with them. It is so much more. It is a meal he has with you.*"

Lucado goes on to write, "*For some, communion is a sleepy hour in which wafers are eaten and juice is drunk and the soul never stirs. It wasn't intended to be such. It was intended to be an **I-can't-believe-it's-me-pinch-me-I'm-dreaming** invitation to sit at God's table and be served by the King himself.*" Wow!

Jesus meets us at the table. That last night with His disciples was not only an invitation for them to sit with Him for a Passover meal and to later recognize His death in the breaking of the bread and pouring of the wine; but, that night was an invitation for you, each of you, to leave "*the chores of life and enter his splendor.*" Jesus invites us to the table. Invites you. Out of love. Think about that next time you take communion.

## **Wednesday, April 17, 2019**

### **Read Luke 22: 39-71 and Luke 23: 1-25.**

Jesus steps into the garden of Gethsemane. It was to be the place Jesus would go to pray, to be with His Father before His

death. It was to be the place where Jesus would resolutely go to His death for us.

Lucado writes, *“Imagine, for a moment, yourself in this situation. Your final hour with a son about to be sent overseas. Your last moment with your dying spouse. One last visit with your parent. What do you say? What do you do? What words do you choose? It’s worth noting that Jesus chose prayer. He chose to pray for us. “I pray for these men. But I am also praying for all people who will believe in me because of the teaching of these men. Father, I pray that all people who believe in me can be one...I pray that these people can also be one in us, so that the world will believe that you sent me.””*

Lucado goes on to write, *“You need to note that in this final prayer, Jesus prayed for you. You need to underline in red and highlight in yellow his love: “I am also praying for all people who will believe in me because of the teaching.” That is you. As Jesus stepped into the garden, you were in his prayers. As Jesus looked into heaven, you were in his vision. As Jesus dreamed of the day when we will be where he is, he saw you there. His final prayer was about you. His final pain was for you. His final passion was you...**It was in the garden that he made his decision...He would rather go to hell for you than go to heaven without you.**”*

Take time to thank Him and to give Him your heart.

**Thursday, April 18, 2019**

**Don't Forget: Holy Thursday Service—TONIGHT  
@ North East United Methodist Church at 7 PM  
Lenten Soup Supper at 6 PM**

**Read John 13: 1-20; Luke 22: 14-34.**

On Thursday night, that week, Jesus met with His disciples in the upper room and He washed the disciples' feet. We remember this night, tonight, at our Holy Thursday worship service.

Jesus showed us an example that night of how we should reach out to one another, how we should be of service to one another, humbly reaching out, considering others greater than ourselves. C. Gene Wilkes, in Jesus on Leadership, writes, *"I realized that we who lead often overlook the fact that the true place of Christ-like leadership is out in the crowd rather than up at the head table. People who follow Christ's model of leadership would never be embarrassed to find themselves among the kitchen help. Such a leader is comfortable working with those who serve in the background and gladly works alongside them until they complete the job. Head tables are optional for leaders who follow Jesus. Service, not status, is the goal of this kind of leader."*

What kind of servant are you? What kind of leader? Are you concerned about being recognized or are you willing to work behind the scenes unnoticed for Christ? Pray that God will help you become a "servant leader," placing your thoughts and energies on others, and how you can serve them.

**Friday, April 19, 2019**

**Don't Forget: Good Friday Services—  
12 PM & 7 PM @ St. Mary Anne's Episcopal Church  
North East, Maryland**

**Read Luke 23: 26-49.**

Listen to the words of two women as they reflect on the cross.

Emilie Barnes writes, *“Now when I see the cross, it reminds me of the suffering of Jesus – suffering so much greater than I will ever go through. These two “sticks” give me courage over and over again. Calvary is where He hung and died for me so I would have eternal life with my heavenly Father. This is a gift I will appreciate all my life here on earth. I look forward to someday being at home with God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. The cross means everything to me.”*

Elizabeth George writes, *“For years this was the scene in our kitchen each Eastertime as my two daughters and I sought ways for our family to share the Easter message – the good news of Jesus Christ's death, burial, and resurrection, the good news of Jesus' triumph over sin and death, and the good news of salvation and eternal life through Jesus Christ – with our oh-so-needy neighbors. Oh, our cookie cutter collection included the shapes of a baby chick, a bunny rabbit, and even an Easter egg. But we chose the cross. Why? Until my daughters “got it,” they invariably asked me this same question: “Why the cross? Why not the chick or the bunny or the egg?” Always, and in the simplest of terms, I tried to answer this question in a way that would teach my girls the meaning of the cross, the longtime symbol of Christianity and the death of Jesus Christ:*

***C = hrist, God-in-flesh, gave His life (Philippians 2:8) as a  
 R =ansom, a payment, for our sins (Matthew 20:28).  
 O =ffering up His life as a sinless sacrifice (Hebrews 10:14),  
 S =uffering unto death (Hebrews 22:2) to secure our  
 S =alvation from sin and death (Colossians 2: 13-14).***

*Now, my friend, I have three questions for you. Have you embraced the Christ of the cross as your Savior? Are you teaching your children about the cross? And are you reaching out to others with the message of the cross?"*

Jerry Jenkins puts it this way, "As mere literature, the story of a sinless sacrifice dying for me would be a classic. The unspeakable knowledge that this is more than a story, that it is true, ***demands my very life.***"

Take time tonight...this Good Friday...to reflect on Jesus' death...to reflect and embrace the cross of Christ.

### **Saturday, April 20, 2019**

#### **Read Luke 23: 50-56.**

Lucado talks about his visit to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher and the supposed burial place of Jesus. He writes, "The low ceiling forced me to squat and lean against a cold, rough wall...I sat in silence...It began to occur to me where I was: in a tomb. A tomb which could have held the body of Christ...We didn't dare speak. We couldn't. Nothing is blacker than a grave, as lifeless as a pit, as permanent as the crypt. But into the crypt he came."

Christ was willing to be buried so we would be raised. Take time tonight to prepare your heart for Easter morning. Travel to

the tomb...hear the weeping of Jesus' friends, mother, disciples...recognize once again that He died for you...kneel before His body...thank Him for His sacrifice...prepare to visit His grave tomorrow morning.

And remember to bring someone to church tomorrow so they may experience the Easter story.

