

2022 Lenten Journal

“Journeying With Jesus In A Pandemic”

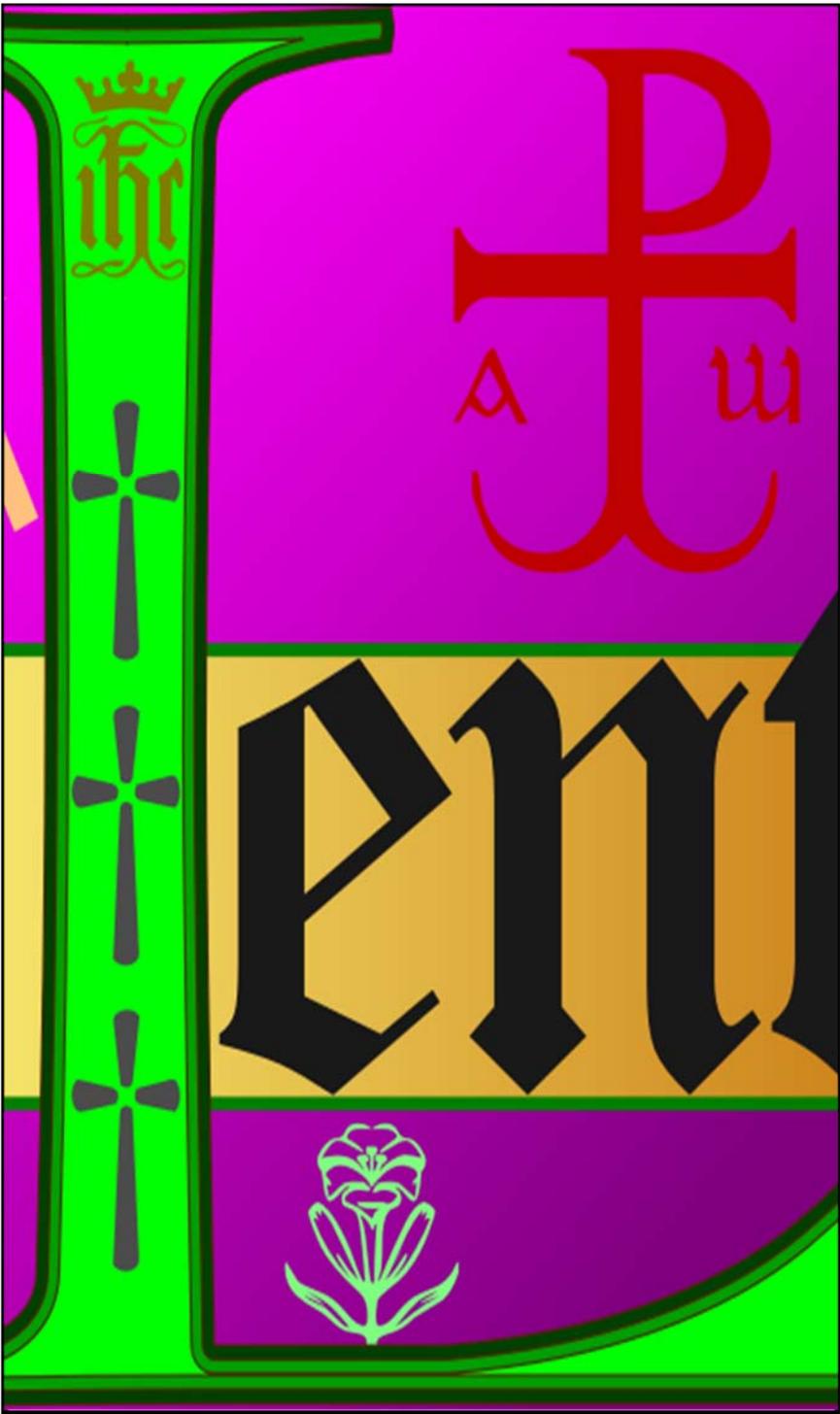


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Embrace the Lenten Journey

The **Resurrection of Jesus Christ** is central to our Christian faith and has been so for centuries. You are invited to use this resource to guide your Bible study during the season of **Lent**. This year as we study the Gospel of Luke we encourage you to pay close attention to our Savior's teachings on *anger, fear* and *forgiveness* as He journeys to Calvary. You are invited to intentionally set aside time to spend with the Lord in the spiritual practices of Bible Study and journaling for the next forty days. Allow the Holy Spirit to guide you into a more intimate relationship with the Lord as you meditate daily on His word. Each Wednesday night's Bible Study will focus on the weekly Scriptures listed in this guide giving you an opportunity to share with your fellow disciples at Bethlehem.

Remember that the **Lenten Season** challenges us:

- To hear and be obedient in our commitment to follow God' s call.
- To take time to develop an intimate relationship with the Father.
- To eagerly follow Christ in offering forgiveness to those who have caused us pain.
- To confess our sins to Christ and repent.

Beginning the Journey
BIBLE STUDY PRAYER
SELF-EXAMINATION JOURNALING

#



What is Lent?

Why Do We Celebrate Lent?

What is Ash Wednesday?

Lent is the season of the Christian Calendar from *Ash Wednesday* to *Easter Sunday*. It is a time for growing closer to God, turning away from sin into the arms of our loving Savior. Lent is like a retreat. Throughout the year the church is to be directed out to the world, but during the 40 days of Lent we pull back into ourselves for reflection and self-examination. It is a period when we intentionally practice the spiritual disciplines of *fasting, prayer, surrender, forgiveness, Bible Study, solitude, silence, and giving* to enhance our intimacy with God.

Ash Wednesday is the official beginning of Lent. On this day we mark our foreheads with ashes. The palms that we waved last year during Palm Sunday are burned and those ashes are spread upon our foreheads to remind us that we have been bought by the blood of Jesus the Christ.

The Spiritual Practice of Journaling

Journaling is a means of listening and reflecting on our experiences in the presence of the **Holy Spirit** to learn from them. It is a way of paying attention to our lives – a way of combining our experiences into something that allows us to attest to the state of our soul. On the pages of a journal, in the privacy of a moment we can take the necessary steps into truth and *examine our feelings, hurts, ideas and struggles* before God. Over time repetitious themes, sins, compulsions, hopes and concerns emerge. We begin to recognize our constant sins, limitations and desires. During times of transition, travel, loss, joy, illness and decision making, journaling can provide a way of processing the *hopes, fears, longings, angers, and prayers* of your heart.

There is no right way to journal. Journaling is a way for you to be with God and your thoughts, not an exercise in language arts. Tell the truth to God and yourself as best as you can. Review what you write on a regular basis.

How to Write in Your Journal

1. Choose the kind of journal that works for you.
2. Find the right place to write.
3. Date your entry.
4. Tell the truth, be honest with God.
5. Write down details. Write down what you feel. Tell how you got to the emotion that you are currently experiencing.



The Discipline of Prayer

Prayer expresses our relationship with God. Prayer along with the Word provides us with a divine hook-up with God. When we pray we talk to and listen to God. God speaks to us and reveals His will for our lives. Prayer helps us to grow spiritually. As we pray, we begin to build an intimate relationship with God.

Why Must we pray?

God's Word commands us to pray (Luke 8:1; 10:2)

Why do our prayers sometimes go unanswered?

1. Un-forgiveness (Mark 22:25)
2. Self-indulgence (James 4:7)
3. Doubt (James 1:5-8)
4. Un-confessed sin (Micah 3:4)
5. Disobedience (Proverbs 28:9)
6. No love or compassion (Proverbs 21:13)
7. Pride (Deuteronomy 1:43-45)

Basic Elements of Prayer

1. Adoration
2. Confession
3. Thanksgiving
4. Supplication

A Family Prayer Activity

Create A Prayer Bottle

This **prayer bottle** takes a simple item (a sensory bottle) and uses it to open a connection, with God.

Supplies

- Water bottles (*Remove the labels*)
- Clear liquid soap
- White iridescent glitter
- Small mirrored glitter (*or something similar*)
- Palm leaf confetti
- purple sequins
- small shells
- small cross

Instructions

1. Fill the bottles 2/3 full with warm water
2. Add 2 tsp white glitter, 2 tsp mirrored glitter, 3 pinches palm leaves, 3 pinches purple sequins, 10-12 small shells, 1 cross.
3. Fill the container the rest of the way (all the way to the top) with liquid soap.
4. Use hot glue to secure the lid in place.
5. Write "Pray", or "I Pray" on the lid of the bottle. Shake the bottle to combine everything inside.

Prayer

Dear God,

When I look in this bottle I see lots of things. I see sparkles that remind me that Jesus is the Light of the world. I see tiny mirrors that remind me that I am made in Your image. I see shells that remind me that when I was baptized I was marked as Yours forever. I see palm leaves that remind me to shout, "Hosanna!" and give thanks for all of my blessings. Most importantly, I see the cross, which reminds me that You loved me so much that You gave me Jesus, and through that love all things are possible.

Create A Prayer Bottle (cont.)

- (find the **Cross**) Where did I see God's love today?
- (find a **palm leaf**) What am I thankful for today?
- (watch the **mirrors**) Where did I see God in myself today?
- (see the **sparkles**) Where do I need to shine my light to help someone?
- (find the **shells**) Say the Lord's Prayer. **AMEN**

Prayer Points During This Lenten Journey

- **Pray** that the Lord will open the eyes of unbelievers to hear and understand the gospel of Jesus Christ as they count the cost of discipleship.
- **Ask** the Lord to open your heart to the truth of what it really means to be a disciple of Jesus.
- **Pray** that God will reveal anything in your life that you're holding onto that has taken priority over your discipleship.
- **Repent** and ask the Lord to forgive you for what you've made priority over Christ.
- **Thank** the Lord for His forgiveness.



Bible Study

Pray

Pray before reading, asking God to help you understand and receive his Word.

Read

Read slowly and carefully through the Bible passage. Read the passage more than once. Read the passage from more than one version. You may also find it helpful to read the preceding or following passages to get the context.

Reflect

Reflect on what you have read, waiting in openness, ready to obey God's Word to you. Think through the passage, asking yourself such questions as:

What does this passage say? What is its main point?

What does it reveal about God, or about me?

What does God require of me now, in thought, word or action?

Write

Write your answers in a journal or notebook.

Apply

Apply what God has taught you from today's reading to the circumstances of life - situations at work, home school, or church.

Pray

End your time as you began, in prayer. Ask God to help you live out and apply what you learned that day.



BIBLE STUDY AND JOURNALING

“Journeying Through the Gospel of Luke “

Join us in a guided study of the Gospel of Luke as we study Jesus’ teaching on worry, fear, anger and forgiveness.

Remember

Read the Bible passage more than once. The New Living Translation is used in this guide.

Reflect

Reflect on what you have read, waiting in openness, ready to obey God’s Word to you.

Write

Tell the truth to God and yourself as best as you can.

Write down details. Write down what you feel. Tell how you got to the emotion that you are currently experiencing.



Week 1 March 6-12, 2022

“The Temptation of Jesus”

Luke 4:1-13 (NLT)

Then Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan River. He was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, ²where he was tempted by the devil for forty days. Jesus ate nothing all that time and became very hungry. ³Then the devil said to him, “If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to become a loaf of bread.”

⁴But Jesus told him, “No! The Scriptures say, ‘People do not live by bread alone.’

⁵Then the devil took him up and revealed to him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. ⁶“I will give you the glory of these kingdoms and authority over them,” the devil said, “because they are mine to give to anyone I please. ⁷I will give it all to you if you will worship me.”

⁸Jesus replied, “The Scriptures say, “You must worship the Lord your God and serve only him.

⁹Then the devil took him to Jerusalem, to the highest point of the Temple, and said, “If you are the Son of God, jump off! ¹⁰For the Scriptures say, “He will order his angels to protect and guard you.

¹¹And they will hold you up with their hands so you won’t even hurt your foot on a stone.”

¹²Jesus responded, “The Scriptures also say, ‘You must not test the LORD your God.’”

¹³When the devil had finished tempting Jesus, he left him until the next opportunity came.

Devotional Readings and Reflections

Read **Luke 4:1-13** daily and respond to the questions. Use the following questions to guide your study.

1. What big event in Jesus' life took place before going into the wilderness?
2. Why do you think Jesus went into the wilderness for 40 days?
3. What did Jesus do for those 40 days in the wilderness?
4. When the 40-day fast was up why do you think Satan tempted him?
5. How did Satan try to get Jesus off target?
6. How do you deal with temptation?
7. What does it mean for us that Jesus remains fully obedient and faithful in the wilderness temptations/testing (while Israel and all of us failed)? How is this good news specifically for you today?
8. Think about an area of your life that you regularly find yourself tempted in. What can you learn from Jesus' example in how he fights temptation? How might the Spirit be leading you to apply this in your life?
9. How does Jesus deal with fear in this story?
10. What will you do differently as a result of studying this text?

Journaling My Thoughts

How has God spoken to you through the study of His Word?

Week 2 March 13-19, 2022

“The Exclusivity of the Kingdom”

Luke 13:22-35 (NLT)

²²Jesus went through the towns and villages, teaching as he went, always pressing on toward Jerusalem. ²³Someone asked him, “Lord, will only a few be saved?” He replied, ²⁴“Work hard to enter the narrow door to God’s Kingdom, for many will try to enter but will fail. ²⁵When the master of the house has locked the door, it will be too late. You will stand outside knocking and pleading, ‘Lord, open the door for us!’ But he will reply, ‘I don’t know you or where you come from.’ ²⁶Then you will say, ‘But we ate and drank with you, and you taught in our streets.’ ²⁷And he will reply, ‘I tell you, I don’t know you or where you come from. Get away from me, all you who do evil.’

²⁸“There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, for you will see Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all the prophets in the Kingdom of God, but you will be thrown out. ²⁹And people will come from all over the world—from east and west, north and south—to take their places in the Kingdom of God. ³⁰And note this: Some who seem least important now will be the greatest then, and some who are the greatest now will be least important then.” ³¹At that time some Pharisees said to him, “Get away from here if you want to live! Herod Antipas wants to kill you!”

³²Jesus replied, “Go tell that fox that I will keep on casting out demons and healing people today and tomorrow; and the third day I will accomplish my purpose. ³³Yes, today, tomorrow, and the next day I must proceed on my way. For it wouldn’t do for a prophet of God to be killed except in Jerusalem!

³⁴“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones God’s messengers! How often I have wanted to gather your children together as a hen protects her chicks beneath her wings, but you wouldn’t let me. ³⁵And now, look, your house is abandoned. And you will never see me again until you say, ‘Blessings on the one who comes in the name of the LORD!’

Devotional Readings and Reflections

Read **Luke 13:22-35** daily and respond to the questions. Use the following questions to guide your study.

1. What was Jesus doing on the way to Jerusalem ?
2. On whom is the door closed, and why does the owner not open it at their pleading?
3. Who is included in the kingdom of God, who is thrown out, and why?
4. What warning did the Pharisees in the story give Jesus ? What was Jesus' goal and why was he certain he would reach it ?
5. What significance did Jesus see in ending his life in Jerusalem?
6. How does Jesus' longing reflect God's heart and purpose for his people?
7. How does Jesus respond to fear or the threat of danger? How do you respond to fear?
8. How is anger, fear, worry or forgiveness reflected in this text?
9. What will you do differently as a result of studying this text?

Journaling My Thoughts

How has God spoken to you through the study of His Word?

Week 3 March 20-26, 2022

“The Need For Repentance”

Luke 13:1-9 (NLT)

About this time Jesus was informed that Pilate had murdered some people from Galilee as they were offering sacrifices at the Temple. ²“Do you think those Galileans were worse sinners than all the other people from Galilee?” Jesus asked. “Is that why they suffered? ³Not at all! And you will perish, too, unless you repent of your sins and turn to God. ⁴And what about the eighteen people who died when the tower in Siloam fell on them? Were they the worst sinners in Jerusalem? ⁵No, and I tell you again that unless you repent, you will perish, too.”

⁶Then Jesus told this story: “A man planted a fig tree in his garden and came again and again to see if there was any fruit on it, but he was always disappointed. ⁷Finally, he said to his gardener, ‘I’ve waited three years, and there hasn’t been a single fig! Cut it down. It’s just taking up space in the garden.’

⁸“The gardener answered, ‘Sir, give it one more chance. Leave it another year, and I’ll give it special attention and plenty of fertilizer. ⁹If we get figs next year, fine. If not, then you can cut it down.’”

Devotional Readings and Reflections

Read **Luke 13:1-9** daily and respond to the questions. Use the following questions to guide your study.

1. What did Jesus hear about a group of Galileans?
2. What explanation for the tragedy did Jesus propose?
3. What was the story involving the tower of Siloam?
4. What were Jesus' listeners to learn from the two stories?
5. What connection do many people make between how "bad" they are and how much they suffer?
6. When was a time you felt that God was letting you suffer because you had sinned?
7. Why did the man want the fig tree chopped down?
8. Whom do the fig tree, the man, and the vineyard tender represent?
9. Why is reconciling with God important?
10. What can you do to comfort, help, or encourage someone who is suffering this week?
11. What step of repentance would communicate to God your gratitude for second chances?
12. What will you do differently as a result of studying this text?

Journaling My Thoughts

How has God spoken to you through the study of His Word?

Week 4 March 27- April 2, 2022

“The Cost of Discipleship”

Luke 14:25-33 (NLT)

²⁵ A large crowd was following Jesus. He turned around and said to them, ²⁶ “If you want to be my disciple, you must, by comparison, hate everyone else—your father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, even your own life. Otherwise, you cannot be my disciple. ²⁷ And if you do not carry your own cross and follow me, you cannot be my disciple.

²⁸ “But don’t begin until you count the cost. For who would begin construction of a building without first calculating the cost to see if there is enough money to finish it? ²⁹ Otherwise, you might complete only the foundation before running out of money, and then everyone would laugh at you. ³⁰ They would say, ‘There’s the person who started that building and couldn’t afford to finish it!’

³¹ “Or what king would go to war against another king without first sitting down with his counselors to discuss whether his army of 10,000 could defeat the 20,000 soldiers marching against him? ³² And if he can’t, he will send a delegation to discuss terms of peace while the enemy is still far away. ³³ So you cannot become my disciple without giving up everything you own.

Devotional Readings and Reflections

Read **Luke 14:25-33** daily and respond to the questions. Use the following questions to guide your study.

1. Jesus outlines conditions under which people “cannot be my disciple.” What are these conditions?
2. To whom did Jesus address his teaching? Why do you think they were traveling with him?
3. What does he mean to “hate” family members and even one’s own life?
4. According to this text, how should a disciple of Jesus view his own life? In what ways does your life reflect that kind of denial of self and in what ways are you missing the mark?
5. What does “a lifestyle of sacrifice in the name of Jesus” look like? What are some of the key characteristics of this lifestyle?
6. What can we learn about possessions from Jesus’ words in this passage and how do the values of this text run counterculture to the world around us?
7. What in your life right now, if you gave it up, would allow you to be better equipped to love people and point them to Christ?
8. What roles do anger, fear and forgiveness play in preventing you from total discipleship?
9. What is God saying to you in this text?

Journaling My Thoughts

How has God spoken to you through the study of His Word?

Week 5 — April 3-8, 2022

“Faith and Forgiveness”

Luke 17:1-10 (NLT)

One day Jesus said to his disciples, “There will always be temptations to sin, but what sorrow awaits the person who does the tempting! ²It would be better to be thrown into the sea with a millstone hung around your neck than to cause one of these little ones to fall into sin. ³So watch yourselves!

“If another believer sins, rebuke that person; then if there is repentance, forgive. ⁴Even if that person wrongs you seven times a day and each time turns again and asks forgiveness, you must forgive.”

⁵The apostles said to the Lord, “Show us how to increase our faith.”

⁶The Lord answered, “If you had faith even as small as a mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, ‘May you be uprooted and be planted in the sea,’ and it would obey you!

⁷“When a servant comes in from plowing or taking care of sheep, does his master say, ‘Come in and eat with me’? ⁸No, he says, ‘Prepare my meal, put on your apron, and serve me while I eat. Then you can eat later.’ ⁹And does the master thank the servant for doing what he was told to do? Of course not. ¹⁰In the same way, when you obey me you should say, ‘We are unworthy servants who have simply done our duty.’”

Devotional Readings and Reflections

Read **Luke 17:1-10** daily and respond to the questions. Use the following questions to guide your study.

1. How is Jesus' statement about temptation different than what some Christians believe today?
2. Why do you think Jesus felt it was important to warn Christians about "stumbling blocks" and what is he referring to?
3. What does Jesus say that would be worse than being the person through whom temptation came?
4. Think about the times when you are most tempted. When does temptation happen to you the most often? What do you do to prevent yourself from falling into temptation?
5. Why is it essential that we begin with self-examination and repentance? What happens when we don't start here? How do we watch ourselves?
6. What role does anger play in forgiveness?
7. What does this appeal for faith in relation to forgiveness tell us about how difficult it is to forgive?
8. What does the parable that Jesus tells communicate to us?
9. Should we expect some great reward for doing what we have been commanded?
10. The Pharisees thought that if they lived a righteous life God owed them good things. In contrast, what is the point that Jesus is making? How does this serve as a warning to the disciples? To us? How does this address what our true motivation is supposed to be in serving Christ?
11. How does this passage as a whole give us a greater understanding of the church's witness?
12. What is God saying to you in this text?

Journaling My Thoughts

How has God spoken to you through the study of His Word?

Week 6 April 10-16, 2022 HOLY WEEK

“The Last Supper”

Luke 22:7-38 (NLT)

⁷Now the Festival of Unleavened Bread arrived, when the Passover lamb is sacrificed. ⁸Jesus sent Peter and John ahead and said, “Go and prepare the Passover meal, so we can eat it together.” ⁹“Where do you want us to prepare it?” they asked him.

¹⁰He replied, “As soon as you enter Jerusalem, a man carrying a pitcher of water will meet you. Follow him. At the house he enters, ¹¹say to the owner, ‘The Teacher asks: Where is the guest room where I can eat the Passover meal with my disciples?’ ¹²He will take you upstairs to a large room that is already set up. That is where you should prepare our meal.” ¹³They went off to the city and found everything just as Jesus had said, and they prepared the Passover meal there.

¹⁴When the time came, Jesus and the apostles sat down together at the table. ¹⁵Jesus said, “I have been very eager to eat this Passover meal with you before my suffering begins. ¹⁶For I tell you now that I won’t eat this meal again until its meaning is fulfilled in the Kingdom of God.”

¹⁷Then he took a cup of wine and gave thanks to God for it. Then he said, “Take this and share it among yourselves. ¹⁸For I will not drink wine again until the Kingdom of God has come.” ¹⁹He took some bread and gave thanks to God for it. Then he broke it in pieces and gave it to the disciples, saying, “This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” ²⁰After supper he took another cup of wine and said, “This cup is the new covenant between God and his people—an agreement confirmed with my blood, which is poured out as a sacrifice for you.

Week 6 April 10-16, 2022 HOLY WEEK

“The Last Supper”

Luke 22:7-38 (NLT)

²¹“But here at this table, sitting among us as a friend, is the man who will betray me. ²²For it has been determined that the Son of Man must die. But what sorrow awaits the one who betrays him.” ²³The disciples began to ask each other which of them would ever do such a thing. ²⁴Then they began to argue among themselves about who would be the greatest among them. ²⁵Jesus told them, “In this world the kings and great men lord it over their people, yet they are called ‘friends of the people.’ ²⁶But among you it will be different. Those who are the greatest among you should take the lowest rank, and the leader should be like a servant. ²⁷Who is more important, the one who sits at the table or the one who serves? The one who sits at the table, of course. But not here! For I am among you as one who serves. ²⁸“You have stayed with me in my time of trial. ²⁹And just as my Father has granted me a Kingdom, I now grant you the right ³⁰to eat and drink at my table in my Kingdom. And you will sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

³¹“Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift each of you like wheat. ³²But I have pleaded in prayer for you, Simon, that your faith should not fail. So when you have repented and turned to me again, strengthen your brothers.” ³³Peter said, “Lord, I am ready to go to prison with you, and even to die with you.” ³⁴But Jesus said, “Peter, let me tell you something. Before the rooster crows tomorrow morning, you will deny three times that you even know me.” ³⁵Then Jesus asked them, “When I sent you out to preach the Good News and you did not have money, a traveler’s bag, or an extra pair of sandals, did you need anything?”

“No,” they replied. ³⁶“But now,” he said, “take your money and a traveler’s bag. And if you don’t have a sword, sell your cloak and buy one! ³⁷For the time has come for this prophecy about me to be fulfilled: ‘He was counted among the rebels.’ Yes, everything written about me by the prophets will come true.” ³⁸“Look, Lord,” they replied, “we have two swords among us.” “That’s enough,” he said.

Devotional Readings and Reflections

Read **Luke 22:7-38** daily and respond to the questions. Use the following questions to guide your study.

1. What was significant about the day of Unleavened Bread?
2. Why were the religious leaders afraid of the people?
3. Why did Jesus eagerly desire to eat the Passover with His disciples?
4. Do you get anxious about how things might work out? Was Jesus? Were His disciples in this passage? Why or why not?
5. What did Jesus instruct His disciples to do in remembrance of Him?
6. Why is Communion important for Christians to observe?
7. How can we follow Christ's example of servanthood?
8. What opportunities for service has the Lord already provided for you?
9. How will you prepare for Communion next time so that you will appreciate more the provision Jesus made for you?
10. List ways you can serve others this week with an attitude of humility?
11. What role do fear, worry and forgiveness play in this story?
12. What will you do differently as a result of studying this text?

Week's Reflections

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