

Study Guide

For the Week of March 29, 2009

This study guide is designed to help you to become more familiar with the Bible. Study these passages on your own, with a friend, or with a group. If you or someone you know needs a Bible, please take one from under a chair in the Worship Center. They are there for you to take home and use! Message manuscripts are available at www.spwired.com.

Monday– This week we'll read all four gospel accounts of Jesus' crucifixion. Each day make notes regarding the similarities and differences and your reflections on the last words and moments in Jesus' life. **Read Matthew 27:32-66**. Notice in your reading this week that even now the people surrounding the cross continue to deride Jesus. This moment represented the apex of evil in our world – God has come to walk among us, and he is not only crucified, but the crowd, the soldiers, the priests, even the bandits on the crosses next to him hurl insults at him. What is Jesus feeling in verse 46? Does it mean anything for you when you pray in moments when you feel God forsaken? Joseph of Arimethea was a member of the Sanhedrin – one of those who did not speak up when Jesus was on trial – what do you think he is feeling in vs. 57-60?

Tuesday – **Read Mark 15:21-47**. Looking down from the cross, what might it have felt like for Jesus to see soldiers casting lots (essentially throwing dice) for his clothing? The charge about destroying the temple was misconstrued by Jesus' hearers – this was hearsay – Jesus had referred to his own body as a temple, which would be destroyed and raised up in three days. In the temple there was a large curtain that separated the Holy of Holies where only the priest could go, from the rest of the temple. What is the significance of the fact that at Jesus' death this curtain separating God's throne room from ordinary worshipers was torn in two? Which of Jesus' followers were at the cross.

Wednesday – **Read Luke 23:26-56**. Verses 28-31 refer to the destruction of Jerusalem, which will occur 40 years after Jesus' crucifixion. It will occur because a would be "messiah" sought to deliver the Jews from the Romans by the power of the sword. The Romans crushed the revolt and one million Jews were killed while Jerusalem was destroyed. Notice Jesus' words from the cross in Luke's account. Here Jesus is still, as he hangs on the cross, focused on his mission of seeking and saving the lost (Luke 19:10). Reflect for a few moments on the two persons who come to faith in this chapter – what do their stories tell you about Jesus, his mission, and salvation?

Thursday – **Read John 19:16b-42**. Only John tells us the sign was posted in three languages—symbolic that Jesus' death, and the gospel, was not only for the Jews, but for the whole world. What do verses 25-27 tell you about Jesus? When Jesus says, "It is finished," what does he mean? What is verse 35 meant to convey? Notice in verse 39 that Nicodemus, another member of the Sanhedrin, joins Joseph.

Friday – Jesus is meditating upon Psalm 22 as he hangs from the cross. Today we have the opportunity to read and reflect upon the very words Jesus was praying and thinking about as he was dying. **Read Psalm 22** and look for the connections between what was happening as Jesus was being crucified and this Psalm written hundreds of years before. Imagine Jesus praying this prayer from the cross (which is likely what he was in fact doing). What insight does this give you into Jesus?

Prayer Concerns

Serving in Iraq:

Cyle Haywood (non-military)
Ryan Grindstaff

Military:

Jesse Smith
Nathan Lawellin
Matthew Peak
Stephen Leadbetter
Richard Hurst
James Lesimeister
Jon Arnold
Jason Lewis
Joshua Walker

Health & Healing:

Jr. & Carrol Skelton
Doug Kennard
Bill Schmidt
Tammy Jones
J. C. Hodgdon
Mike Kurphy
Bernie Daum
Carol Daum

Cancer Treatment:

Sonja Davidson
Tony Allen
Joyce Pace

Don Barnes
Jerry Webster
Vickie Sweet

Other Concerns:

Terry Hoagland
Dan Stewart
Earline Wright
J. Don Book and Family
Edna & Ervin Dill
Patrick and Bobbie Hamilton & Family
Carol Brockman
Kathy George
Mary Soriano