

## Monday, April 6, 2009

In the next six days, more people around the world will give serious consideration to Christianity than any other week of the year. Note John 12:20-22. It's happening today! More than ½ million people may experience spiritual transformation this week around the world . . . please pray for a mighty moving of the Spirit of God, for a spiritual battle will surely rage, just as it did that Passover week for Jesus.

John 11:45-57 gives us a glimpse into the growing opposition to Jesus in the weeks preceding the great Passover feast. Jesus came to Bethany, (John 12) an important destination in His atonement journey to the cross. Being fully God, Jesus knew what awaited Him in these Passover days. Mary, Martha and Lazarus' home was a welcome respite, a familiar and friendly environment . . . at least it had been in the past. This time, things had changed. Lazarus, being raised from the dead by Jesus some weeks before (John 11) was now a living evidence of Jesus' life changing power! The dinner Jesus attended, with risen Lazarus at the table, caused quite a stir and evoked even further "death plans" (John 12:10, 11) from religious leaders seeking to maintain the status quo. Think about that . . . are you a living miracle? Does the work of God in your life cause people to ponder the truth and power of Jesus?

During this week between "Palm Sunday" and "Maundy Thursday", Jesus spent His days in bustling Jerusalem debating with leaders in the Temple area, healing folks, visiting the Garden and contemplating His approaching sacrificial death. Several evenings, He returned back to Bethany. This home was a "base camp of victory", for Jesus was able to celebrate the living evidence (Lazarus) of His true identity (God incarnate) and His life giving power, supreme over death and the effects of sin and even Satan. As we see in John 12, Mary's home was also a place of worship, as she anointed Jesus with perfume in an act of worship. Can you see how hours in this place prepared Jesus for the horrible reality of the approaching cross? Do you have such a place of refreshment and spiritual empowerment? As a follower of Christ, this week will be a spiritual battle for you too!

## Tuesday, April 7, 2009

In the few days of this Passover week, Jesus dramatically increased the intensity of His truth teaching. Matthew 21-23 give us considerable insight into the tone and power of these days. His clearing of the Temple area challenged the "big business" of religion and the defilement of the Temple purpose. His cry "My house shall be called a house of prayer" was understood by all present as a direct quote from Isaiah 56:7. Because the Jews of those days knew the Scriptures well, their minds would be drawn instantly to Isaiah 52-58. These powerful chapters both poured out accusation and promised blessing for Israel. Isaiah had spoken 700 years before, but it was unfolding before their eyes in Jesus' day. Note, please, John 12:37-41.

Jesus' parable teachings in Matthew 21 & 22 were seen as clear accusations against those who were opposing Jesus. Matthew 23 was a direct and specific condemnation of the religious leaders and their profound failure as spiritual leaders of God's people. "Woe to you teachers of the law . . ." couldn't be more clear! From the earliest days of the Hebrews, the privilege of being a spiritual leader brought with it profound responsibility both in personal lifestyle and in authentic and respectful relationship with God. Their rejection of Jesus as Messiah was the epitome of their leadership failure.

When you consider the John 12 account of Jesus' triumphal parade into Jerusalem and God's clear identification of Jesus as His Son for the third audible time (Matt. 3:17; 17:5; John 12:28), we can see the crescendo of events and emotions building to a climax point. "it was for this very reason that I came to this hour" (John 12:27). Can you feel the intensity and intentionality of the last days in Jesus' earthly journey?

I can well imagine Jesus found great peace in His evenings at Bethany with Martha, Mary, and Lazarus, while these days were filled with such tension and conflict in Jerusalem. Hundreds, perhaps thousands of those watching and listening were caught up in the debate "who is this man"? The debate rages this week across our world. So . . . what conclusion have you come to about Jesus' identity and His role in your life?

## Wednesday, April 8, 2009

Each day this week Calvary Community Church is open at the noon hour for prayer, as you are invited to reflectively walk the path to Golgotha. Matthew 24 & 25 may have been spoken on Wednesday of that final week for Jesus. They are powerful statements about days which are yet future for us . . . days leading to when Jesus will return again to this earth to gather up His followers. As you read carefully, be amazed at how current world news is seen in what Jesus was saying! Many Bible scholars would see these two chapters linked with Daniel 7-12 and the Revelation of John as portraying "end time" events including the return of Jesus for the Rapture of the Church / the 1000 year Millennial reign of Christ on earth / the great battle of Armageddon / the second resurrection for those who died without Christ / the judgment of the Great White Throne separating believers in Christ from unbelievers for all eternity, etc.

While the events of that Passover week have their primary focus on the Passion, death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ to purchase redemption for any and every person who would trust Him to be their Savior, these events are part of the larger eternal plan and purpose of God. The timing of Matthew 24 and 25, of course, is known only to God (Matt. 24:36, 42). Yet at Jesus' ascension it was made quite clear "this same Jesus who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen Him go." (Acts 1:11) "Behold I am coming soon" is the thrice repeated theme of Revelation 22! Are you living with a sense of great anticipation?

Tomorrow is "Maundy Thursday", the day Jesus and His friends shared their Passover meal together in the upper room. You'll note Matthew 26 provides careful insight into the rapidly developing drama which would reach its climax within hours in the garden of Gethsemane. I urge you not to allow the busyness of these days to rob you from understanding and experiencing what Jesus wants to teach you about the significance of His Passion week applied to your life!

Thursday, April 9, 2009

This day in that final Passover week, was a day of deep turmoil and agony for Jesus and His friends. Matthew 26, Mark 14, Luke 22 all give us an overview. It is John, however, who gives us a detailed glimpse into that “upper room” (John 13-17). If you are able to find quiet time today, I urge you to read all the accounts I’ve mentioned, and do so with pen in hand making notes of what the Holy Spirit speaks into your heart as you follow Jesus through this longest day in His earthly life. If He slept at all Wednesday night, it would have been His last rest until His death Friday afternoon. What do you see, perhaps for the first time, as you read and pray through the Gospel accounts of this day in Jesus’ life.

Remember our noon prayer time today, and worship concert this evening as opportunities for you to “engage with God”.

Friday, April 10, 2009

Calvary Church will be open all day today for you to spend significant time in prayer and reflection with the risen Christ . . . Noon prayer and Communion service / the Worship Concert this evening / “The Passion of the Christ” movie and communion tonight after the worship concert.

John 19, Luke 23, Mark 16, Matthew 27, all give us accounts of the crucifixion and burial of Jesus Christ. Could I suggest you FIRST read Isaiah 53? Do you see the remarkable fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophecy?

How was Jesus “despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, familiar with suffering.”? (Isaiah 53:3)

How was He “pierced for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities”? (Isaiah 53:5)

Do you see how “the punishment that brought us peace was upon Him”? When the Temple curtain was torn in two, top to bottom, God made peace between Himself and sinful men, available to all (Matthew 27:51 and Romans 5:1). The place where only the High Priest had been allowed to plead for sin forgiveness was now open to all by the work of Jesus, a once and for all High Priest! This is one of the key themes of the book of Hebrews. Consider please the following Scripture and write your comments about what Jesus accomplished for you and me in His death and resurrection:

Hebrews 4:14-16

Hebrews 7:23-28

Hebrews 9:11-28

Hebrews 10:11-23!!

Don’t miss out on any of the significance of this weekend!!



Pastor Doug Anderson

April 6 – April 10, 2009



A Disciplemaking Tool  
**DIGGING**  
**DEEPER**



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