

**John 18-21 Devotionals**  
**Easter Reflection**

## Introduction

Happy Easter weekend! As we attend church and gatherings, visit friends and family, eat hot cross buns and relax, what a great few days it is to celebrate Jesus' death and resurrection!

Besides listening to a sermon on Good Friday and Easter Sunday, I often find myself stuck on Easter weekend with what to read in the Bible. Do I continue with the current book or series I'm reading? Should I read a gospel? Which one and how much?

This Easter, as we continue our church series through John's gospel, I thought it would be a great opportunity to continue reflecting in John's account. In this booklet are 4 devotionals, 1 to use on each day of the long weekend, to help you reflect on Jesus' death and resurrection. Here are some things to keep in mind:

- These are written not as a bible study, but in a more reflective manner.
- Each devotional is split up into 4 parts – read, listen, reflect and pray.
- The Bible passage is printed after each devotional for you to write on or mark if you like.
- To listen to the reading you might like to use a Bible app on your phone or search on YouTube.
- The devotional should take 20-25 minutes each day, or more time if you are able. I recommend you spend at least 5 minutes on each section.
- Particularly flowing on from our bible studies in John, I encourage you to share what has encouraged you each day in these devotions with your growth group.

## **Good Friday**

As we begin the Easter weekend, we begin with the death of Jesus. It can be a strange mix of emotions as we read the humiliating trial and crucifixion of Jesus but know the joy that His death can bring as the punishment for our sin is poured out on Him. Today's reading is longer than you might typically read in your own quiet time but I encourage you to read it all. For many, it is a familiar passage. You don't need to study each verse, just read the story as John has presented it for us.

### **Read John 18:28-19:22, 28-30**

As you read the passage, what stands out to you?

What questions do you have?

### **Listen**

After reading the passage yourself, listen to it read. As you listen, picture yourself there watching what is described. What emotions do you feel throughout the event?

## **Reflect**

Amongst the brutality and sadness of the crucifixion, something great is happening. Jesus says "it is finished" (19:30), what does He mean?

We are justified! How does this make you feel?

Whilst the trial and death of Jesus can be saddening to read and reflect on, we rejoice because His great act of shame and humiliation brings us reconciliation with God. His humility through suffering is for our benefit. Because of the cross, our sins are forgiven and we are made right with God. The story of one man's death brings hope to the world. The cross brings good news of great joy.

## **Pray**

Spend time thanking Jesus for His death on the cross. Thank Him for His humility in suffering great trial and pain. Say sorry for your sins that held Him there. Praise Him for the good news that His death brings, that our sins are now forgiven and we are made right with God. Pray this would bring great joy today and over the Easter weekend.

## **John 18:28-19:22, 28-30**

*<sup>28</sup> Then the Jewish leaders took Jesus from Caiaphas to the palace of the Roman governor. By now it was early morning, and to avoid ceremonial uncleanness they did not enter the palace, because they wanted to be able to eat the Passover. <sup>29</sup> So Pilate came out to them and asked, "What charges are you bringing against this man?"*

*<sup>30</sup> "If he were not a criminal," they replied, "we would not have handed him over to you."*

*<sup>31</sup> Pilate said, "Take him yourselves and judge him by your own law."*

*"But we have no right to execute anyone," they objected. <sup>32</sup> This took place to fulfill what Jesus had said about the kind of death he was going to die.*

*<sup>33</sup> Pilate then went back inside the palace, summoned Jesus and asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?"*

*<sup>34</sup> "Is that your own idea," Jesus asked, "or did others talk to you about me?"*

*<sup>35</sup> "Am I a Jew?" Pilate replied. "Your own people and chief priests handed you over to me. What is it you have done?"*

*<sup>36</sup> Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jewish leaders. But now my kingdom is from another place."*

*<sup>37</sup> "You are a king, then!" said Pilate.*

*Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. In fact, the reason I was born and came into the world is to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me."*

*<sup>38</sup> "What is truth?" retorted Pilate. With this he went out again to the Jews gathered there and said, "I find no basis for a charge against him. <sup>39</sup> But it is your custom for me to*

release to you one prisoner at the time of the Passover. Do you want me to release 'the king of the Jews'?"

<sup>40</sup> They shouted back, "No, not him! Give us Barabbas!" Now Barabbas had taken part in an uprising.

<sup>19:1</sup> Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. <sup>2</sup> The soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head. They clothed him in a purple robe <sup>3</sup> and went up to him again and again, saying, "Hail, king of the Jews!" And they slapped him in the face.

<sup>4</sup> Once more Pilate came out and said to the Jews gathered there, "Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know that I find no basis for a charge against him." <sup>5</sup> When Jesus came out wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe, Pilate said to them, "Here is the man!"

<sup>6</sup> As soon as the chief priests and their officials saw him, they shouted, "Crucify! Crucify!"

But Pilate answered, "You take him and crucify him. As for me, I find no basis for a charge against him."

<sup>7</sup> The Jewish leaders insisted, "We have a law, and according to that law he must die, because he claimed to be the Son of God."

<sup>8</sup> When Pilate heard this, he was even more afraid, <sup>9</sup> and he went back inside the palace. "Where do you come from?" he asked Jesus, but Jesus gave him no answer. <sup>10</sup> "Do you refuse to speak to me?" Pilate said. "Don't you realize I have power either to free you or to crucify you?"

<sup>11</sup> Jesus answered, "You would have no power over me if it were not given to you from above. Therefore the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin."

<sup>12</sup> From then on, Pilate tried to set Jesus free, but the Jewish leaders kept shouting, "If you let this man go, you are no

friend of Caesar. Anyone who claims to be a king opposes Caesar.”

<sup>13</sup> When Pilate heard this, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judge’s seat at a place known as the Stone Pavement (which in Aramaic is Gabbatha). <sup>14</sup> It was the day of Preparation of the Passover; it was about noon.

“Here is your king,” Pilate said to the Jews.

<sup>15</sup> But they shouted, “Take him away! Take him away! Crucify him!”

“Shall I crucify your king?” Pilate asked.

“We have no king but Caesar,” the chief priests answered.

<sup>16</sup> Finally Pilate handed him over to them to be crucified.

So the soldiers took charge of Jesus. <sup>17</sup> Carrying his own cross, he went out to the place of the Skull (which in Aramaic is called Golgotha). <sup>18</sup> There they crucified him, and with him two others—one on each side and Jesus in the middle.

<sup>19</sup> Pilate had a notice prepared and fastened to the cross. It read: JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS. <sup>20</sup> Many of the Jews read this sign, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and the sign was written in Aramaic, Latin and Greek. <sup>21</sup> The chief priests of the Jews protested to Pilate, “Do not write ‘The King of the Jews,’ but that this man claimed to be king of the Jews.”

<sup>22</sup> Pilate answered, “What I have written, I have written.”

... <sup>28</sup> Later, knowing that everything had now been finished, and so that Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, “I am thirsty.” <sup>29</sup> A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus’ lips. <sup>30</sup> When he had received the drink, Jesus said, “It is finished.” With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

## **Easter Saturday**

In the busyness of Easter weekend, Saturday can offer a moment of downtime. This side of the cross, we can be on a sense of high after celebrating yesterday the good news that Jesus death brings and anticipating the celebrations of Jesus resurrection tomorrow. Today we are going to read of the events after Jesus death and take some time to pray for those around us.

### **Read John 19:31-42**

After Jesus died, He was taken from the cross and buried. As you read the passage, what stands out to you?

What questions do you have?

### **Listen**

After reading the passage yourself, listen to it read. As you listen, imagine you were involved in each of the acts. Imagine how the disciples were feeling at this time.



## **Reflect**

What is the significance of Jesus being pierced? Why do you think this is important?

How did the disciples feel during these events? How does that compare to how we feel this side of the cross?

In the events of the cross recorded in the gospel, we know Jesus truly died for our sins. But there is a 'not yet' element of Easter Saturday - salvation wasn't truly complete as the disciples waited for Jesus to rise, defeating death and grave. But, as we will be reminded tomorrow, we can rejoice knowing Jesus did rise again and we have complete assurance in our salvation. Like the first Easter Saturday, however, today we live in a 'not-yet' sense too. We live in a world of death and brokenness, waiting for the day when Christ will return and we will be resurrected with Him. As Paul says in Romans 8:23 "we groan inwardly as we wait eagerly" for the glory that is to come.

## **Pray**

Thank Jesus that He truly did die for our sins. Thank Him that His death does not leave us lost or in despair, but in His rising from the dead we can be assured of His salvation for us. Thank Him that we can live in hope of His return. Pray He would give us strength as we live in the 'not-yet', that we would long for the day when we will be resurrected with Him.

## **Praying for others**

As the disciples mourned, they didn't yet understand the hope of what Jesus death achieved and the hope to come in His resurrection. Many in our world today are like this, without joy and hope in what Jesus has done. Spend some time now thinking of those in your life who don't yet know Jesus and pray for them! You might like to use the space below to write down names as you think of them.

## **John 19:31-42**

<sup>31</sup> Now it was the day of Preparation, and the next day was to be a special Sabbath. Because the Jewish leaders did not want the bodies left on the crosses during the Sabbath, they asked Pilate to have the legs broken and the bodies taken down. <sup>32</sup> The soldiers therefore came and broke the legs of the first man who had been crucified with Jesus, and then those of the other. <sup>33</sup> But when they came to Jesus and found that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. <sup>34</sup> Instead, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus' side with a spear, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water. <sup>35</sup> The man who saw it has given testimony, and his testimony is true. He knows that he tells the truth, and he testifies so that you also may believe. <sup>36</sup> These things happened so that the scripture would be fulfilled: "Not one of his bones will be broken," <sup>37</sup> and, as another scripture says, "They will look on the one they have pierced."

<sup>38</sup> Later, Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate for the body of Jesus. Now Joseph was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly because he feared the Jewish leaders. With Pilate's permission, he came and took the body away. <sup>39</sup> He was accompanied by Nicodemus, the man who earlier had visited Jesus at night. Nicodemus brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds. <sup>40</sup> Taking Jesus' body, the two of them wrapped it, with the spices, in strips of linen. This was in accordance with Jewish burial customs. <sup>41</sup> At the place where Jesus was crucified, there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb, in which no one had ever been laid. <sup>42</sup> Because it was the Jewish day of Preparation and since the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

## **Easter Sunday**

Hallelujah, He is risen! Today in particular, we bring great celebration and praise that Jesus death was not final, but He indeed rose from the dead. In Him, we no longer need to fear death, but have the hope of eternal life. Let's rejoice and share in our hope together.

### **Read John 20:1-23**

As you read the passage, what stands out to you?

What questions do you have?

### **Listen**

After reading the passage, listen to a reading of the passage. Imagine you are there in the different scenes. Feel the emotions of those Jesus reveals himself to.

## **Reflect**

Do you feel the same joy that Mary and the disciples felt?

In verse 19 and 21 Jesus exclaims "Peace be with you". How has He brought peace? How is He continuing to bring peace?

Jesus instructs Mary to proclaim His message, and in verse 21 explains the He is sending us. Why is this our greatest mission?

Hallelujah, He is risen! He is risen indeed! Jesus has paid the penalty for our sin, He has defeated death and grave and gives us the hope of eternal life. Jesus has restored peace to our relationship with God. And the peace He gives us is everlasting, as He remains with us through the Holy Spirit. Our hearts should overflow with joy at this good news. With this joy and peace, Jesus sent His disciples to share this message to the ends of the earth. And today, we carry on this great mission, of sharing the good news of Jesus to the world.

## **Pray**

Praise God that Jesus has risen from the dead and appeared to His disciples. Thank Him for the great peace and joy it brings us. Thank Him for giving us peace with the Holy Spirit. Pray that we would feel great joy in this. Pray that many others would know this hope and joy today. Pray we would be bold in sharing Jesus' message as He has commanded us.

## **John 20:1-23**

**20** Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance. <sup>2</sup> So she came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved, and said, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don't know where they have put him!"

<sup>3</sup> So Peter and the other disciple started for the tomb. <sup>4</sup> Both were running, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. <sup>5</sup> He bent over and looked in at the strips of linen lying there but did not go in. <sup>6</sup> Then Simon Peter came along behind him and went straight into the tomb. He saw the strips of linen lying there, <sup>7</sup> as well as the cloth that had been wrapped around Jesus' head. The cloth was still lying in its place, separate from the linen. <sup>8</sup> Finally the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went inside. He saw and believed. <sup>9</sup> (They still did not understand from Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead.) <sup>10</sup> Then the disciples went back to where they were staying.

<sup>11</sup> Now Mary stood outside the tomb crying. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb <sup>12</sup> and saw two angels in white, seated where Jesus' body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot.

<sup>13</sup> They asked her, "Woman, why are you crying?"

"They have taken my Lord away," she said, "and I don't know where they have put him." <sup>14</sup> At this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realize that it was Jesus.

<sup>15</sup> He asked her, "Woman, why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?"

*Thinking he was the gardener, she said, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him."*

*<sup>16</sup> Jesus said to her, "Mary."*

*She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means "Teacher").*

*<sup>17</sup> Jesus said, "Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'"*

*<sup>18</sup> Mary Magdalene went to the disciples with the news: "I have seen the Lord!" And she told them that he had said these things to her.*

*<sup>19</sup> On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" <sup>20</sup> After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.*

*<sup>21</sup> Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." <sup>22</sup> And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. <sup>23</sup> If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."*



## **Easter Monday**

After Jesus rose from the dead, His mission continued. He continued to reveal Himself to His disciples and others as the Risen Lord. Today we are going to read the well-known story of doubting Thomas.

### **Read John 20:24-29**

As you read the passage, what stands out to you?

What questions do you have?

### **Listen**

After reading the passage, listen to a reading of the passage. As you listen, picture yourself as Thomas, feel his curiosity and doubt turn to excitement.

## **Reflect**

As you read and listened to this event, what characteristics do you see of Jesus?

In seeing the resurrected Jesus, Thomas calls Him his Lord and God. What does it mean for Jesus to be your Lord and God?

Jesus is Lord over all, even death! Yet He continues to show us compassion and patience as we grow to believe in Him. And as we read God's word and put our trust in Jesus, blessed are we as followers *"who have not seen and yet have believed"*.

## **Pray**

Thank Jesus again that He has indeed risen from the dead. Thank you for His compassion shown in appearing to Thomas. Thank Him for His Lordship over all, including death. Pray that our doubts would turn to belief as we read God's word. Ask Him to continue to strengthen us in our hope and to live with Jesus as our Lord and God.

## **Read John 20:24-29**

*<sup>24</sup> Now Thomas (also known as Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. <sup>25</sup> So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord!"*

*But he said to them, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe."*

*<sup>26</sup> A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" <sup>27</sup> Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe."*

*<sup>28</sup> Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!"*

*<sup>29</sup> Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."*



**TRINITY**  
CHURCH