



**THURSDAY 03.04.10**

**Romans 5:1-8**

James tells us to “consider it pure joy . . . whenever we face trials.” Paul writes, “We also rejoice in our sufferings.” Perhaps you have found yourself wondering where does that idea come from that there might be something “redemptive” about our suffering? Paul responds to our question. It comes from Christ. In Gethsemane, Jesus prays for the cup of suffering to pass, and yet, he continues to walk the path that will open for us the doorway to eternal life.

- Paul writes that the clearest demonstration of God’s love is Christ’s sacrifice on the cross. In other words, love always involves sacrifice. As you look at your life, who else has loved you in this way?
- Take a moment today and think about your relationships. In what ways might God be calling you to sacrifice for those you have been called to love?

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**FRIDAY 03.05.10**

**Psalms 20:1-9**

In every season of life, the Psalms offer guidance and encouragement for our journey. Today’s reading serves as a reminder of the essential truth of faith that led Jesus throughout his life and which he models in his time of prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane. King David, the author of Psalm 20, writes, “Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the Lord.”

- To trust someone is to believe that they have your best interests at heart. How would you describe the level of “trust” you have in God? In what ways has your trust in God developed or diminished?
- If growing in trust and faith was one of your goals for the next year, what barriers in your heart and life might you need to address?

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# GROW • PRAY • STUDY

A RESOURCE FOR DISCIPLES SEEKING TO LOVE GOD, LOVE OTHERS & SERVE THE WORLD ...

**Series:**        *24 Hours That Changed the World*  
**Sermon:**     *My Body Broken, My Blood Shed for You*  
**Scripture:**

*Things I’d like to remember from today’s sermon:*

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## Introduction

Following the Last Supper, Jesus goes to the Garden of Gethsemane on the Mount of Olives. It is from this same mountain that he had descended into the city a few days earlier to the shouts of “Hosanna, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.” From this vantage point, Jesus would have had a view of the entire city of Jerusalem, the Temple Mount, as well as the Antonia Fortress where in just a few hours he would be tried and convicted by the Roman Governor.

As the last 24 hours of Jesus’ life continue to unfold before us in our readings, we find him preparing himself to again enter the holy city. This time there will be no shouts of praise and expectation. Jesus will walk this familiar path, but this time, he will walk it alone.

In the midst of great trial, the scriptures testify that we have hope and our suffering is not in vain. During this week’s reading, reflect on how Jesus prepares for this difficult hour and allow this prayer to guide you.

***Lord, we remember your invitation to bring to you those burdens we find difficult to bear. In our time of trial, we, too, have asked that you might allow the cup of suffering to pass from us. Give us the courage, God, to confess to you our need and the faith and wisdom to trust in your will.***



## TUESDAY 03.02.10

## Luke 22:39-46

Luke’s account of Jesus’ prayer in the Garden provides us the most vivid picture of the anguish that Jesus is experiencing at this critical moment in the last 24 hours of his life. The sweat, Luke describes, was “like drops of blood falling to the ground.” Luke also speaks to the mental fatigue of the disciples as Jesus finds them “exhausted from sorrow” and unable to focus their prayers.

- Perhaps this is a familiar picture to you or one that reminds you of a particular season in your life where you faced great difficulty. In what ways have you found yourself turning to prayer in those moments of anguish and struggle?
- In the New Testament, “being awake” is a phrase often used to describe being spiritually ready. Have you ever, like these first disciples, fallen asleep when Jesus really needed you?

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## MONDAY 03.01.10

## Matthew 4:1-11

In Matthew’s Gospel, Jesus’ ministry both begins and comes to completion in a similar way. Today’s reading takes us back to those first moments following his baptism. In all three “tests,” Jesus is offered the opportunity to do things “his way.” In each instance, Jesus returns to the scriptures and to the will of the one who has sent him. This is the first time in Matthew’s Gospel that we see Jesus living out the prayer he will later pray in the Garden, “Not my will, but thine.”

- In what ways do you currently struggle with temptation? How does Jesus’ example speak to you?
- Walking through the desert enabled Jesus to face the suffering of the cross. In the places where you currently find yourself struggling to stand firm, how might God be preparing you for the opportunity and challenge of tomorrow?

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## WEDNESDAY 03.03.10

## James 1:2-12

In the Sermon on the Mount found in Matthew chapters 5-7, Jesus uses a particular refrain to set up his teaching. “You have heard it said, but I say to you,” is Jesus’ way of saying that following him will often challenge us to “rethink” our relationship with God. Turning the other cheek, loving your enemies and praying for those who persecute you are all examples of Jesus’ “upside down” way of living. We hear something similar in these words from James.

- We often assume that we have been blessed by God when we feel comfortable and secure. In what ways does this text challenge that assumption? How might our trials actually represent God’s blessings?
- Many of us hope that our faith will never be tested. If we had the opportunity to ask James, how might he respond to that?

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