

EVERY DAY WITH JESUS (November 16 – 22)

Savor a segment of the gospel each day so that you may...

“...grow in the grace and knowledge of our LORD and Savior Jesus Christ.” “II Peter 3:18)

November 16 Luke 22:35-38 The drum beats became louder and closer together as Jesus' end drew near. The days of popularity were about over. Soon to be gone were the days of “don't take a knapsack, moneybag, sword with you on your travels,” because the days of welcome and open generosity and hospitality that the disciples had been shown and knew in the past would be gone. Their Teacher tells them, “What is written about me must be fulfilled.” Upon the fulfillment of Scripture, a new life would be ahead for all of Jesus' followers. In truth it is a life of favor and blessing from God, but of hostility from the world. Why does the world so hate Jesus and his believers?¹

Prayer: Lord Jesus, in a world hostile to you and your followers, help me so I am not timid and fearful, but, by your Spirit, faith filled and faithful to you. Amen.

¹ The world, like its god, loathes anything that tells it the truth. Also, sinful humans are proud, arrogant creatures, who don't like to be told, “You are wrong.” To be told that Jesus is the only way to remove the sin of the world galls, because, “Surely I am not *so* bad that only *He* could do that.” Sinful pride hates the thought of needing to admit one's sinfulness and need for a Savior. It is the greatest act of humility a person can perform to stand before God and say, “For Jesus sake forgive me, LORD, I was wrong.” The world would rather kill the Lord of Life than do that.

November 17, Luke 22:39-46 Prayer can be hard work, as this reading shows. Jesus persevered in it and because of it. The disciples should have been hard at it, but, like we do all too often do, instead they slept. List reasons why we so often are asleep, as it were, at the switch when to comes to prayer.¹

Prayer: Our Father, teach me to pray as your Son prayed. In that aspect of my life, may I also be like him. Amen.

¹ Perhaps add to your list -We have not been listening to God speaking to us through Scripture, so we don't know what the conversation is about and so do know how to respond to what God says there. We have other 'more important' things to do. We find prayer boring. We don't want to think. We don't like to take our minds off ourselves. And let's just admit it, often we are not all that spiritually minded. And another thing – we're either fearful or lazy - if we pray, maybe the Lord will want, not others, but *us* to act, care, repent, share Jesus with that person, etc.

November 18, Luke 22:47-53 A man reaps what he sows Paul says in Galatians (6:7, 8). For some time Judas had been sowing to his flesh, and now his fruit is ripening. Its full ripening would come as he went out and hanged himself (Mt. 27:5). So often an act seems good in our eyes, but its result ends in personal disaster. Can you name several instances of this in Scripture?¹ Despite the better evidence of Jesus healing a wounded man's ear, the crowd, acting in 'good faith', went ahead with their actions. What warning is here for us?² To be sure, God worked all for the good here, as he promises in Romans 8, but this does not exonerate Judas or those who arrested and tried Jesus for their liability.

Prayer: Lord, I am sure that at times I have acted in 'good faith', when actually I was working against you and contrary to your will. Forgive me for those sins. In mercy and by your promise work even those for your honor and for the good of those who love you. Amen

¹ Among others -Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit. Israel did not enter the Promised Land as God instructed them. Samson married a Philistine woman and dated Delilah. Saul sacrificed before Samuel came. The Pharisees and Sadducees took care of the Jesus problem. Ananias and Sapphira lied about the money they got from the sale of their land. ² Know the facts, double check them and make sure, not just that you are right, but that you are in line with the will of God.

November 19, Luke 22:54-62 What a great lesson today! Remember when Jesus told us that if one wanted to follow him, “let deny himself” (Luke 9:23)? When Peter faltered in his bravado, he actually did to Jesus what

we are to do to ourselves. Name some of those actions.¹ Peter evidences his repentance by his tears. How is his repentance and remorse over his sin different from that of Judas' ?²

Prayer: Jesus, out of love and respect for you, in all things let me deny, not you, but myself. In this way let me evidence that I am yours. And when I fall, help me to know and find hope in the fact that forgiveness of the sins of the world, including all my sins, is found in you. Amen.

¹Peter said, "I don't know him." "I don't know that you are talking about." We are to do the same with self - rejecting and denying it and pledging faithfulness to Jesus alone, no matter the cost. ²Peter and Judas both showed deep remorse over their actions. Peter, however, even though deeply remorseful over his sin, by Spirit worked faith believed Jesus could and would forgive him, and in that faith he came back to the one he denied. Tragically Judas did not have the same faith (Acts 1:15-26).

November 20, Luke 22:63-23:25 The great irony of today's reading is that while we see Jesus on trial, the guilty, who are running the show, end up trying and convicting themselves. How did the various groups do that?¹

Prayer: Lord Jesus, you, the Innocent, went to trial so I the guilty might have forgiveness of my sins. By that act you released me from the slavery that sin is, and the eternal jail of hell I deserved. In response to your love, let me, out of love for you, never return to the evil that entrapped and killed me. Move me to share with others still trapped in sin and death, the good news that you have opened the dungeon's doors, so they too come out and live in your light and freedom. Amen.

¹ His guards in their unbelief showed lack of reverence for him. The council showed by their own statements that they preferred a lie to the Truth (vv. 22:66-71). That attitude is also shown as they continue their lies before Pilate and Herod (vv. 23:1-25). Even though no credible charge could be brought against Jesus, the council wanted only one thing, Jesus' death. Pilate and Herod by their actions (or failures to act) showed that they were interested in political expedience and maintaining the peace rather than in justice.

November 21, Luke 23:26-31 It is a mistake to stand on the side of the road and weep as we see a beaten and bloodied Jesus walking by carrying his cross. Jesus tells us that when he said, "Weep for yourselves." Consider why he said those words.¹

Prayer: Lord, your walk that Good Friday was one of triumph. Let me ever see and understand that, so my lamentation is ever directed aright – not to empty sentimentality and misplaced sympathy concerning you - but to my sins and what I did to you by them. Comfort my heart with the knowledge that in you the sins of the world have been taken away. Amen.

¹The women were weeping over Jesus' *external* fate that day, not realizing that horrible days were coming to them due to Israel's *spiritual* state of unbelief. If God did not spare his Son (the green wood), why should he hold back the Romans when they would come in A.D. 70 and deal with the dead wood? For an understanding of what occurred in A.D. 70, you might go online or to the library and see what the Jewish historian Josephus had to say about the brutality of the Romans in their conquest of Jerusalem.

November 22, Luke 23:32-49 I suggest that we do not look at Calvary in the same way we look at the solemn battlefields of Gettysburg and Normandy. As we look at those fields we think of the thousands that were wounded there, and of other thousands who died there and are who now are buried in nearby cemeteries. At Calvary and on the cross we see a triumph take place as Jesus completed his Father's will to the nth degree. On that 'battlefield' the victory was his, and by faith it is ours. Name his victories.¹ Also rejoice that through his torn flesh you and I now have access to the Father (Heb. 10:18-25).

Prayer: Lord Jesus, let me ever relish telling others of what you have done on Calvary that we might be free. Let there be tears in my eyes as I tell the story – tears of joy and hope and eternal gratitude. Amen.

¹ He defeated satan, washed away our sins, fulfilled the law and removed from us the wrath of God as he himself bore it for us. Yes, he was wounded there, suffered there, died there and was buried nearby – but the defeat belongs to satan, sin and death. It is because of that battle the God/man won there that we have peace now and forever.