



# THE JUBILEE PROJECT

A FAMILY LENTEN DEVOTIONAL



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LENT 2021

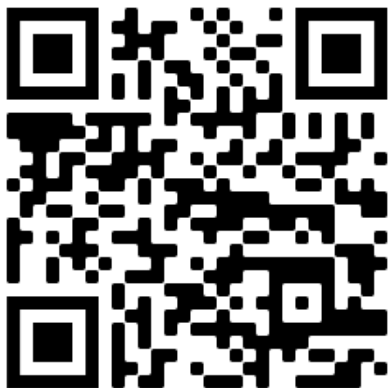
# WELCOME TO THE JUBILEE PROJECT: A FAMILY LENTEN DEVOTIONAL!

In the following pages, you'll find a Lenten Devotional Journey for your family. As we enter this season of Lent on Wednesday, February 17th, we offer this resource to inspire conversations about Lent and some major Christian themes like forgiveness, abundance, and grace. While we can't gather together in person just yet, we hope this devotion will help your family to draw closer to God in this season. There is one reflection for each week of Lent with a bonus one for Holy Week and Easter for a total of eight reflections. We encourage you to work through them whenever it is most convenient for your family. Sunday as a Sunday school class? Tuesday evenings with a pizza? Saturday morning? We hope you'll find a rhythm that works for your family.

In Lent, we try to look at our patterns of living and find where we are aligned, or maybe misaligned, with Christ. Each week features five distinct parts: an opening question to get everyone talking, a scripture reading, a short devotion to help make sense of the passage, some questions to continue the conversation, and a challenge to live it out as a family. Each week's challenge encourages you to set aside a little money, to be pooled by our congregation at Easter and used to forgive debt, via a nonprofit organization called RIP Medical Debt. Together, we will celebrate God's abounding grace and forgiveness by showing grace and forgiveness to others.

RIP Medical Debt uses donations to purchase bundled medical debt portfolios that have gone through collection agencies for months or years. Using third-party credit data providers, it targets debt incurred by people facing financial hardship, and then forgives it. On average, \$1 is leveraged to abolish \$100 in medical debt. Our hope is that together our donations will grow and together we'll be able to forgive thousands of dollars of medical debt. Together, we can ease the burden of families that are weighed down by extreme amounts of medical debt.

We recommend keeping track of how much you would like to donate each week. You'll see a spot to keep tally after each week's challenge. On Easter Sunday, we encourage you to tally it all up and submit your donation. You can send cash or check to Falls Church Presbyterian (225 E. Broad St. Falls Church, VA 22046) or use our online giving system ([fallschurchpresby.org/giving](https://fallschurchpresby.org/giving)) and designate your gift for RIP Medical Debt.



Scan this with your smartphone camera to be taken directly to the online giving system.

WEEK ONE [WEEK OF FEBRUARY 21]

# **FORGIVENESS**

Getting Started

**WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE MOVIE QUOTE OR SONG LYRIC?**

Scripture Reading: Luke 11:1-13

<sup>1</sup>He was praying in a certain place, and after he had finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples." <sup>2</sup>He said to them, "When you pray, say:

Father, hallowed be your name.

Your kingdom come.

<sup>3</sup> Give us each day our daily bread.

<sup>4</sup> And forgive us our sins,  
for we ourselves forgive everyone indebted to us.  
And do not bring us to the time of trial."

<sup>5</sup>And he said to them, "Suppose one of you has a friend, and you go to him at midnight and say to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread; <sup>6</sup>for a friend of mine has arrived, and I have nothing to set before him.' <sup>7</sup>And he answers from within, 'Do not bother me; the door has already been locked, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot get up

and give you anything.’ <sup>8</sup> I tell you, even though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, at least because of his persistence he will get up and give him whatever he needs.

<sup>9</sup>“So I say to you, Ask, and it will be given you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. <sup>10</sup> For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. <sup>11</sup> Is there anyone among you who, if your child asks for a fish, will give a snake instead of a fish? <sup>12</sup> Or if the child asks for an egg, will give a scorpion? <sup>13</sup> If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!”

## Devotion

Throughout Jesus’ ministry the disciples asked a lot of questions of him. I imagine they asked many more than were included in the Bible. Many of the disciples’ questions were answered in stories or parables. Jesus even often answered their questions with asking another question! Yet when the disciples ask how to pray, Jesus answers this question very directly. In his prayer, Jesus asks for three things: provision, forgiveness, and direction.

Each week, in worship, we pray the Lord’s Prayer. We ask God to forgive us of our own wrongdoing, and we say that we will, in turn, forgive those who have wronged us. As we enter the season of Lent, let us remember that God forgives

us, and we must go and forgive others who have wronged us. Do you think forgiveness could change the world?

## Discussion Questions

- ◆ What sticks out the most with you while reading the Lord's Prayer? Did you notice any difference from the prayer we pray on Sunday mornings in worship?
- ◆ What is a time you have asked God something and you heard or received a response?
- ◆ When Jesus prays he asks for three things: provision, forgiveness, and direction. When you pray, what do you ask God for?
- ◆ What is a time where you had to ask for forgiveness? What is a time where you had to give forgiveness?
- ◆ How do you feel before or after you ask for forgiveness?
- ◆ Where do you see acts of forgiveness in your life and the world around you?



## Challenge

Rewrite the Lord's Prayer together as a family; consider donating \$1 for each word of your prayer.

## **OUR ADAPTED LORD'S PRAYER**

WORD COUNT: \_\_\_\_\_

WEEK ONE DOLLARS DONATED: \_\_\_\_\_



WEEK TWO [WEEK OF FEBRUARY 28]

# SEVEN X SEVENTY

Getting Started

**WHAT IS SOMETHING THAT YOU COULD DO  
4,900 TIMES WITHOUT GETTING BORED OR  
TIRED OF IT?**

Scripture Reading: Matthew 18:21-35

<sup>21</sup>Then Peter came and said to him, “Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?” <sup>22</sup>Jesus said to him, “Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

<sup>23</sup>“For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. <sup>24</sup>When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; <sup>25</sup>and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. <sup>26</sup>So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’ <sup>27</sup>And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. <sup>28</sup>But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a

hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, 'Pay what you owe.' <sup>29</sup> Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' <sup>30</sup> But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. <sup>31</sup> When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. <sup>32</sup> Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. <sup>33</sup> Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?' <sup>34</sup> And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. <sup>35</sup> So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart."

## Devotion

"On Forgiving Each Other" from *Kneeling In Jerusalem*

A poem by Ann Weems

70 times 70...

A bit excessive, don't you think?

We're supposed to forgive each other 70 times 70.

Let's see: 70 times 70 is 4900,

But who's counting?

4900 for you and for him and for her and for them...

We'd need accountants!

How could we ever keep track?

Or is that the point?

## Discussion Questions

- ◆ Have you ever held a grudge against someone? What led you to release that grudge?
- ◆ Was there a time where you needed to be forgiven? What did it feel like to seek out the forgiveness of another?
- ◆ How long does it take you to lose patience with someone? How can you work on increasing the amount of patience given to another?
- ◆ Do you think forgiveness strengthens your relationships? Why or Why not?
- ◆ Have you ever told someone you forgive them and didn't mean it? How do you feel in moments like that?
- ◆ What would it feel like to keep score of everyone's mistakes? What would it feel like to know someone else kept a score of all your mistakes?

## Challenge

Try out having a forgiveness jar. This week every time you forgive someone or you are forgiven, put a quarter in a jar!

**FORGIVENESS COUNT: \_\_\_\_\_**

**WEEK TWO DOLLARS DONATED: \_\_\_\_\_**



WEEK THREE [WEEK OF MARCH 7]

# INVESTMENT

Getting Started

**IF TIME WAS UNLIMITED, WHAT SKILL WOULD YOU TAKE THE TIME TO MASTER?**

Scripture Reading: 2 Corinthians 9:6-15

<sup>6</sup>The point is this: the one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the one who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. <sup>7</sup>Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. <sup>8</sup>And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work. <sup>9</sup>As it is written,

“He scatters abroad, he gives to the poor;

his righteousness endures forever.”

<sup>10</sup>He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. <sup>11</sup>You will be enriched in every way for your great generosity, which will produce thanksgiving to God through us; <sup>12</sup>for the rendering of this

ministry not only supplies the needs of the saints but also overflows with many thanksgivings to God. <sup>13</sup> Through the testing of this ministry you glorify God by your obedience to the confession of the gospel of Christ and by the generosity of your sharing with them and with all others, <sup>14</sup> while they long for you and pray for you because of the surpassing grace of God that he has given you. <sup>15</sup> Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

## Devotion

Farming is a perfect representation for multiplying God's gifts. You start with one small seed, planting it, and taking care of it until the one seed has grown into a plant which, in turn, produces fruit. From this fruit, more seeds can be found and the process starts all over again plant, growth, repeat. The same is true with God's gifts. God gives you a seed and asks you to plant it and invest into it until one day you are bearing fruit that can be shared with others so they can have their own seeds to plant and grow fruit for themselves and people in their lives. This is how God chooses to work: asking for willing participation from others to join in the cycle of investing and producing.

## Discussion Questions

- ◆ What is a time you gave or invested in someone or something? What were the results of that action?
- ◆ Where have you seen God providing for you in your life? How was that blessing shared with others?

- ◆ God always takes note of your good deeds, when you give to others how do you see God grow that gift?
- ◆ When a farmer plants a seed, it always produces more than he gave. What seeds can you plant?
- ◆ Why do you think it is so important to God that God's people practice generosity?
- ◆ What gifts do you think God has given you? What steps can you take to continue to grow your gifts?

## Challenge

As a family, decide on a baseline financial investment for this week. Each day add 1 baseline investment to the previous days investment. For example: Each day add \$2 to a jar. Watch the investment multiply.

**BASELINE INVESTMENT: \_\_\_\_\_**

**WEEK THREE DOLLARS DONATED: \_\_\_\_\_**



WEEK FOUR [WEEK OF MARCH 14]

# BLESSED TO BE A BLESSING

Getting Started

**WHAT'S YOUR BEST MEMORY WITH YOUR PARENT(S)?**

Scripture Reading: Genesis 12:1-9

<sup>12</sup> Now the Lord said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. <sup>2</sup>I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. <sup>3</sup>I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

<sup>4</sup> So Abram went, as the Lord had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. <sup>5</sup> Abram took his wife Sarai and his brother's son Lot, and all the possessions that they had gathered, and the persons whom they had acquired in Haran; and they set forth to go to the land of Canaan. When they had come to the land of Canaan, <sup>6</sup> Abram passed



through the land to the place at Shechem, to the oak of Moreh. At that time the Canaanites were in the land. <sup>7</sup> Then the Lord appeared to Abram, and said, "To your offspring I will give this land." So he built there an altar to the Lord, who had appeared to him. <sup>8</sup> From there he moved on to the hill country on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east; and there he built an altar to the Lord and invoked the name of the Lord. <sup>9</sup> And Abram journeyed on by stages toward the Negeb came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, 'Pay what you owe.' <sup>29</sup> Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' <sup>30</sup> But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. <sup>31</sup> When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. <sup>32</sup> Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. <sup>33</sup> Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?' <sup>34</sup> And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. <sup>35</sup> So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart."

## Devotion

There's something so amazing in how God works here. Abram knew he was going to be blessed and God would work through him, but I don't think Abram understood the full extent of how far God's blessing would travel. Abram

became recognized as the father of a whole nation. In the same way, we don't fully grasp the impact God has on others through us. Our actions, no matter the size, can ripple all around us until they become massive waves. In this, we, as Christians, need to be aware of God's action in the world and be ready to respond in the moments when we are called to work continue God's work.

### Discussion Questions

- ◆ Have you ever seen or personally experienced God working in a person or the world?
- ◆ Is there anywhere in your life or the world where you feel like God cannot act? Why or why not?
- ◆ What blessings do you think you've experienced?
- ◆ What do you think it means to be "blessed to be a blessing?"
- ◆ Where do you think the world is in need of blessing?
- ◆ What is the best way for you to be able to pass on God's blessings to others and the world?

### Challenge

Roll Call! Count up the number of people in your family (those with whom you live) and consider donating \$5 per person! Want to up your impact? Count your pets in the number of family members!

**FAMILY MEMBERS: \_\_\_\_\_**

**WEEK FOUR DOLLARS DONATED: \_\_\_\_\_**



WEEK FIVE [WEEK OF MARCH 21]

# JUBILEE

Getting Started

**IF YOU COULD HAVE AN ENDLESS SUPPLY OF ANYTHING, WHAT WOULD IT BE AND WHY?**

Scripture Reading: Leviticus 25:1-24

25 The Lord spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai, saying: <sup>2</sup>Speak to the people of Israel and say to them: When you enter the land that I am giving you, the land shall observe a sabbath for the Lord. <sup>3</sup>Six years you shall sow your field, and six years you shall prune your vineyard, and gather in their yield; <sup>4</sup>but in the seventh year there shall be a sabbath of complete rest for the land, a sabbath for the Lord: you shall not sow your field or prune your vineyard. <sup>5</sup>You shall not reap the aftergrowth of your harvest or gather the grapes of your unpruned vine: it shall be a year of complete rest for the land. <sup>6</sup>You may eat what the land yields during its sabbath—you, your male and female slaves, your hired and your bound laborers who live with you; <sup>7</sup>for your livestock also, and for the wild animals in your land all its yield shall be for food.

<sup>8</sup>You shall count off seven weeks of years, seven times seven years, so that the period of seven weeks of years gives forty-

nine years. <sup>9</sup> Then you shall have the trumpet sounded loud; on the tenth day of the seventh month—on the day of atonement—you shall have the trumpet sounded throughout all your land. <sup>10</sup> And you shall hallow the fiftieth year and you shall proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you: you shall return, every one of you, to your property and every one of you to your family. <sup>11</sup> That fiftieth year shall be a jubilee for you: you shall not sow, or reap the aftergrowth, or harvest the unpruned vines. <sup>12</sup> For it is a jubilee; it shall be holy to you: you shall eat only what the field itself produces.

<sup>13</sup> In this year of jubilee you shall return, every one of you, to your property. <sup>14</sup> When you make a sale to your neighbor or buy from your neighbor, you shall not cheat one another. <sup>15</sup> When you buy from your neighbor, you shall pay only for the number of years since the jubilee; the seller shall charge you only for the remaining crop years. <sup>16</sup> If the years are more, you shall increase the price, and if the years are fewer, you shall diminish the price; for it is a certain number of harvests that are being sold to you. <sup>17</sup> You shall not cheat one another, but you shall fear your God; for I am the Lord your God.

<sup>18</sup> You shall observe my statutes and faithfully keep my ordinances, so that you may live on the land securely. <sup>19</sup> The land will yield its fruit, and you will eat your fill and live on it securely. <sup>20</sup> Should you ask, “What shall we eat in the seventh year, if we may not sow or gather in our crop?” <sup>21</sup> I will order my blessing for you in the sixth year, so that it will yield a crop for three years. <sup>22</sup> When you sow in the eighth year, you will be eating from the old crop; until the ninth

year, when its produce comes in, you shall eat the old. <sup>23</sup> The land shall not be sold in perpetuity, for the land is mine; with me you are but aliens and tenants. <sup>24</sup> Throughout the land that you hold, you shall provide for the redemption of the land.

## Devotion

This idea of Jubilee is pretty hard to wrap our minds around. In the passage you've just read, Moses is speaking to the Israelites about the promised land that they will soon enter. They have wandered in the wilderness for years dreaming of the promised land: a land that will belong to the people forever. As Moses speaks to the people of Israel, he delivers a message from God that all will work for six years. In the seventh year, they will take a sabbath year. This would have made some sense to the Israelites as they would observe the sabbath each week. They would work six days and rest from their labors and restore their minds, bodies, and souls on the seventh day.

The message Moses delivers next is radical. God says that after seven of those sabbath year cycles (49 years), the people would celebrate with a special year: a Jubilee year. God tells the people, through Moses, that all debts will be forgiven, slaves will be freed, and all property will go back to its original owner. It's a crazy idea! It's an idea that's really hard for us to wrap our minds around. God is telling the people of Israel that forgiveness and restoration are essential. The rest of the world couldn't imagine living this out. Much like we live today in the United States, people felt that whatever they worked hard for, they deserved because

they had earned it. What God is telling the people of Israel is that no matter how hard you work or how much wealth or favor or popularity you earn, all will be restored. God's forgiveness and restoration through Jubilee is available no matter what you have or haven't done.

### Discussion Questions

- ◆ What is difference between *fair* and *equal*?
- ◆ How would you define jubilee?
- ◆ What do you wish you got a jubilee from?
- ◆ Why do you think God cares that all debts be forgiven? Slaves be freed? Property go back to its original owners?
- ◆ What do you think a modern day jubilee would look like?
- ◆ What would happen if we gave everyone more than we think they deserve? How would it change the world?

### Challenge

Jubilee brings forth abundant forgiveness and in turn, joy! This week, keep track of how often you laugh (either individually or collectively as a family), at the end of the week, consider donating \$1 for each laugh!

**LAUGH TALLY:**

**WEEK FIVE DOLLARS DONATED:\_\_\_\_\_**



WEEK SIX [WEEK OF MARCH 28]

# ABUNDANCE

Getting Started

**WHAT'S THE BEST MEAL YOU'VE EVER HAD?**

Scripture Reading: John 6:1-11

6 After this Jesus went to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, also called the Sea of Tiberias.<sup>2</sup> A large crowd kept following him, because they saw the signs that he was doing for the sick.<sup>3</sup> Jesus went up the mountain and sat down there with his disciples.<sup>4</sup> Now the Passover, the festival of the Jews, was near.<sup>5</sup> When he looked up and saw a large crowd coming toward him, Jesus said to Philip, "Where are we to buy bread for these people to eat?"<sup>6</sup> He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he was going to do.<sup>7</sup> Philip answered him, "Six months' wages would not buy enough bread for each of them to get a little."<sup>8</sup> One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to him,<sup>9</sup> "There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish. But what are they among so many people?"<sup>10</sup> Jesus said, "Make the people sit down." Now there was a great deal of grass in the place; so they sat down, about five thousand in all.<sup>11</sup> Then Jesus took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated; so also the fish, as much as they wanted.

## Devotion

Enough. What does it mean to have enough? In this week's passage, the disciples are overwhelmed with the task of trying to feed a large crowd. How could they possibly find *enough* for all of these people? Have you ever felt like you have enough? Think about how many shoes are in your home. 5 pairs? 10 pairs? 20 pairs? 100 pairs? The truth is that one pair per person is *enough* since you can't wear more than two shoes at once, but we still will go out and buy new shoes for something particular. "I need new running shoes." "It's about time I upgrade my hiking boots." Sometimes we miss the examples of abundance all around us. How can you start to open your eyes to the places of abundance in your home, your life, the world?

## Discussion Questions

- ◆ What do you think it felt like to be one of the thousands fed that day?
- ◆ Why do you think Jesus performs this miracle?
- ◆ What do you think enough food to feed 5,000 people looks like?
- ◆ Is there anything in your house that you have way (abundantly) more than you need?
- ◆ What would it look like to only have exactly what you need?
- ◆ If you had unlimited resources, what would you give to those in need?



## Challenge

Take a look at your pantry. Take some time to count the amount of bread and meat you have in your house. Do you have enough food to feed 5,000 people? Consider donating \$1 for all the items you have at home. Think about how that will multiply to abundantly more than you have to give.

**PANTRY ITEMS: \_\_\_\_\_**

**WEEK SIX DOLLARS DONATED: \_\_\_\_\_**



MAUNDY THURSDAY/GOOD FRIDAY [APRIL 1-2]

# FATHER, FORGIVE THEM

Getting Started

**WHAT'S THE BRAVEST THING YOU'VE EVER DONE?**

Scripture Reading: Luke 23:26-43

<sup>26</sup> As they led him away, they seized a man, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming from the country, and they laid the cross on him, and made him carry it behind Jesus. <sup>27</sup> A great number of the people followed him, and among them were women who were beating their breasts and wailing for him.

<sup>28</sup> But Jesus turned to them and said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. <sup>29</sup> For the days are surely coming when they will say, 'Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bore, and the breasts that never nursed.' <sup>30</sup> Then they will begin to say to the mountains, 'Fall on us'; and to the hills, 'Cover us.' <sup>31</sup> For if they do this when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry?"

<sup>32</sup> Two others also, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with him. <sup>33</sup> When they came to the place that is

called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. <sup>34</sup> Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing." And they cast lots to divide his clothing. <sup>35</sup> And the people stood by, watching; but the leaders scoffed at him, saying, "He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Messiah of God, his chosen one!" <sup>36</sup> The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine, <sup>37</sup> and saying, "If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!" <sup>38</sup> There was also an inscription over him, "This is the King of the Jews."

<sup>39</sup> One of the criminals who were hanged there kept deriding him and saying, "Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us!" <sup>40</sup> But the other rebuked him, saying, "Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? <sup>41</sup> And we indeed have been condemned justly, for we are getting what we deserve for our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong." <sup>42</sup> Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." <sup>43</sup> He replied, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise."

## Devotion

As we have come to Holy Week, we are reminded of Christ's wrongful accusal and death. Jesus has been betrayed by one of his followers. He's been brought in front of crowds of people who have shouted to release a true criminal and crucify Jesus. Jesus is hangs on the cross and prays, "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they

are doing.” Jesus faces pain and death, yet he asks God to forgive the people who cheer for his death. Do you think you could forgive someone who cheered for your death? It is certainly a powerful moment that gives us another glimpse into the person of Jesus. Why does he willingly suffer for people who hate him?

## Discussion Questions

- ◆ Is there anything you could do that is unforgivable? Why or why not?
- ◆ Have you ever forgiven someone for something they didn't deserve to be forgiven for? OR have you ever been forgiven for something you did not deserve to be forgiven for? Why did you do that?
- ◆ Why do you think Jesus wants the people cheering for his crucifixion to be forgiven?
- ◆ What does that tell you about Jesus?
- ◆ How might you change the way you forgive people knowing how Jesus forgives?
- ◆ Is there anyone who the world says doesn't deserve forgiveness that you think deserves forgiveness? How might you contribute to helping provide forgiveness to those people?

## Challenge

Count the amount of times you say “sorry” in the next few days. Keep a tally of how many times you say it. Consider donating \$1 for each time you all said sorry.

**“SORRY” TALLY:**

**HOLY WEEK DOLLARS DONATED:\_\_\_\_\_**



## WEEK SEVEN [WEEK OF APRIL 4]

# GRACE

### Getting Started

## WHAT'S YOUR LEAST FAVORITE CHORE?

### Scripture Reading: John 13:1-15

13 Now before the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. <sup>2</sup>The devil had already put it into the heart of Judas son of Simon Iscariot to betray him. And during supper <sup>3</sup>Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, <sup>4</sup>got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. <sup>5</sup>Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him. <sup>6</sup>He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" <sup>7</sup>Jesus answered, "You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand." <sup>8</sup>Peter said to him, "You will never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no share with me." <sup>9</sup>Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!" <sup>10</sup>Jesus said to him, "One who has bathed does not need to wash, except for the feet, but is entirely

clean. And you are clean, though not all of you.” <sup>11</sup> For he knew who was to betray him; for this reason he said, “Not all of you are clean.”

<sup>12</sup> After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had returned to the table, he said to them, “Do you know what I have done to you? <sup>13</sup> You call me Teacher and Lord—and you are right, for that is what I am. <sup>14</sup> So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. <sup>15</sup> For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. <sup>16</sup> Very truly, I tell you, servants are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them. <sup>17</sup> If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them. <sup>18</sup> I am not speaking of all of you; I know whom I have chosen. But it is to fulfill the scripture, ‘The one who ate my bread has lifted his heel against me.’ <sup>19</sup> I tell you this now, before it occurs, so that when it does occur, you may believe that I am he. <sup>20</sup> Very truly, I tell you, whoever receives one whom I send receives me; and whoever receives me receives him who sent me.”

## Devotion

On Easter Sunday we celebrate Christ’s resurrection. Each Sunday is a “mini-Easter” celebration. We celebrate that Christ has been raised from the dead. We celebrate that death no longer has the final word. With all this in mind, it might seem odd that we are reading a passage of scripture from before Jesus was killed. Christ’s death and resurrection is all about the gift of grace.

Grace is kind of a complicated topic. We talk about it a lot at church, but what is grace? Maybe this explanation will help... imagine you've done something against the rules and your parent sends you to your bedroom to think about what you've done. Mercy is your parent opening the door, but grace is when your parent opens the door and takes you for ice cream. It's a gift that seems way more extravagant than anything you deserve.

Jesus demonstrates grace over and over again in his ministry, but this scripture passage may be the place that exemplifies grace the most. Jesus sits down with his disciples for dinner. Later in the night, he will be arrested. After eating together, he gets up to wash the disciples' feet. It's important to understand that in biblical times there weren't really shoes. Some people had sandals, but they still left their feet exposed to everything. Homes didn't have floors or rugs, just dirt, and the streets were used for everything: garbage, animals, human waste, water. So, it was customary for people to have their feet washed when they arrived at someone's home. This job was typically done by a servant because it was considered a dirty and disgusting job. The host would never do this job.

## Discussion Questions

- ◆ Why do you think Jesus washes the disciples' feet?
- ◆ How do you think the disciples felt to have Jesus wash their feet?



- ◆ Can you think of a time when you've experienced grace?
- ◆ Jesus gives up a seat of authority and power to wash the disciples' feet. Where can you give of yourself to shift the focus off of yourself and back to God?
- ◆ Going forward, how can you show grace more freely to others?

## Challenge

This week time yourself in the shower (or bath). How many minutes do you spend getting squeaky clean? Tally up the minutes you spent in the shower this week, and donate \$1 per minute!

**SHOWER/BATH TALLY:**

**WEEK SEVEN DOLLARS DONATED: \_\_\_\_\_**



# THANKS FOR JOINING US ON THIS SPECIAL LENTEN JOURNEY!

Use this page to tally up your weekly challenge totals and total your donations! At the end do the math to see the impact of your dollars!

## CHALLENGE TOTALS

Week One: \_\_\_\_\_

Week Two: \_\_\_\_\_

Week Three: \_\_\_\_\_

Week Four: \_\_\_\_\_

Week Five : \_\_\_\_\_

Week Six : \_\_\_\_\_

Holy Week: \_\_\_\_\_

Week Seven: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Dollars Donated: \_\_\_\_\_ x 100 = \_\_\_\_\_ Dollars of Debt  
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