



Lenten Devotional, "Were You There?" Feb 16-18

Lenten Devotional -Friday Feb 16
Submitted by Mrs. Nona Culpepper

John 12: 1-19

Six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus lived, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. **2** Here a dinner was given in Jesus' honor. Martha served, while Lazarus was among those reclining at the table with him. **3** Then Mary took about a pint^[a] of pure nard, an expensive perfume; she poured it on Jesus' feet and wiped his feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.

4 But one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, who was later to betray him, objected, **5** "Why wasn't this perfume sold and the money given to the poor? It was worth a year's wages.^[b]" **6** He did not say this because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief; as keeper of the money bag, he used to help himself to what was put into it.

7 "Leave her alone," Jesus replied. "It was intended that she should save this perfume for the day of my burial. **8** You will always have the poor among you,^[c] but you will not always have me."

9 Meanwhile a large crowd of Jews found out that Jesus was there and came, not only because of him but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. **10** So the

chief priests made plans to kill Lazarus as well, **11** for on account of him many of the Jews were going over to Jesus and believing in him.

12 The next day the great crowd that had come for the festival heard that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem. **13** They took palm branches and went out to meet him, shouting,

“Hosanna!^[a]”

“Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!”^[e]

“Blessed is the king of Israel!”

14 Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, as it is written:

15 “Do not be afraid, Daughter Zion;
see, your king is coming,
seated on a donkey’s colt.”^[f]

16 At first his disciples did not understand all this. Only after Jesus was glorified did they realize that these things had been written about him and that these things had been done to him.

17 Now the crowd that was with him when he called Lazarus from the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to spread the word. **18** Many people, because they had heard that he had performed this sign, went out to meet him. **19** So the Pharisees said to one another, “See, this is getting us nowhere. Look how the whole world has gone after him!”

When I think of this beautiful story of sacrifice and love that Mary did for Jesus, I am shamefully reminded of the many opportunities I could do for others that I overlook and ignore. The poor will always be with you is significant in our times, our culture and our apathy, but we should love and help one another. Peter’s greed and selfishness is typical of our selfishness

If The last statement made by the Pharisees “Look how the whole world has gone after Him” were true today, we would see sacrifice, hope, love and faith.

In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Lenten Devotional -Saturday Feb 17

Submitted by Mrs. Patti Lyle

Mark 11:12-26

Jesus Curses a Fig Tree and Clears the Temple Courts

12 The next day as they were leaving Bethany, Jesus was hungry. **13** Seeing in the distance a fig tree in leaf, he went to find out if it had any fruit. When he reached it, he found nothing but leaves, because it was not the season for figs. **14** Then he said to the tree, "May no one ever eat fruit from you again." And his disciples heard him say it.

15 On reaching Jerusalem, Jesus entered the temple courts and began driving out those who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves, **16** and would not allow anyone to carry merchandise through the temple courts. **17** And as he taught them, he said, "Is it not written: 'My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations'^[a]? But you have made it 'a den of robbers.'^[b]"

18 The chief priests and the teachers of the law heard this and began looking for a way to kill him, for they feared him, because the whole crowd was amazed at his teaching.

19 When evening came, Jesus and his disciples^[c] went out of the city.

20 In the morning, as they went along, they saw the fig tree withered from the roots. **21** Peter remembered and said to Jesus, "Rabbi, look! The fig tree you cursed has withered!"

22 "Have faith in God," Jesus answered. **23** "Truly^[d] I tell you, if anyone says to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and does not doubt in their heart but believes that what they say will happen, it will be done for them. **24** Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. **25** And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive them, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins."

Devotion

Ask. Abba Father is listening. Our part is to have faith in God and to forgive. When you ask, be ready for an answer. It may not be what you expect, but He will answer. We can't control the outcome, but we can control the asking in faith. The answer could come when we least expect

it. It may come through an unusual source that God chooses to use. It may be subtle or could pop up right in our face. And sometimes, though hard to accept, the answer is a definite “no.”

We must trust that God knows what we need and that He always wants the best for us, His children. In faith, talk to God about what you need. He is there and He listens in love.

Lenten Devotional -Sunday Feb 18

Submitted by Bro Jaimie

Matthew 21:23-32

23 Jesus entered the temple courts, and, while he was teaching, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him. “By what authority are you doing these things?” they asked. “And who gave you this authority?”

24 Jesus replied, “I will also ask you one question. If you answer me, I will tell you by what authority I am doing these things. **25** John’s baptism—where did it come from? Was it from heaven, or of human origin?”

They discussed it among themselves and said, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he will ask, ‘Then why didn’t you believe him?’ **26** But if we say, ‘Of human origin’—we are afraid of the people, for they all hold that John was a prophet.”

27 So they answered Jesus, “We don’t know.”

Then he said, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

28 “What do you think? There was a man who had two sons. He **went to the first** and said, ‘Son, go and work today in the vineyard.’

29 “‘I will not,’ he answered, but later he changed his mind and went.

30 “Then the father went to the other son and said the same thing. He answered, ‘I will, sir,’ but he did not go.

31 “Which of the two did what his father wanted?”

“The first,” they answered.

Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God ahead of you. **32** For John came to you to show you the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes did. And even after you saw this, you did not repent and believe him.

"By what authority?"

Mmmm ... interesting question, isn't it? By what authority did Jesus do all that he did in his ministry? This is the quintessential question of the Gospel. This is the ultimate question each of us must ask ourselves. Did Jesus do what he did based on the authority of God, as God's Son? Or was Jesus just another crackpot, pretend messiah? The way we answer those questions must not leave us in a lukewarm and indecisive place. Either we recognize Jesus as LORD with all authority, or we do not.

Incredibly, the religious and political elite expected the journey through Jesus' crucifixion to be the asserting of their authority over a rebellious peasant. In fact, even the trial scenes reveal that Jesus is the only one through all of it who has true authority. The real question for us is whether we are ready to submit to that authority! Are you?

Prayer

Almighty God, I believe Jesus has all authority. I want to live more and more each day under that authority, yielding to your will and doing your work in the world. In Jesus' precious and powerful name, I pray. Amen.

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