

Week Six: Road to Redemption

Mark 12:1-12

Spend FIFTEEN - Day One

1. This week is going to be a reflective one, as we walk through Jesus' final days before the Crucifixion. To start, remind yourself of what significant event kicked off this week. What happened on the Sunday before the Crucifixion? (Check Mark 11:1-11 to see the event that started Jesus' final week.)
2. On Monday of His Passion Week, Jesus started with an activity that was of a much different tone than His Sunday. Read Mark 11:12-19. What did Jesus do in the temple?
3. What was Jesus' concern about the "church habits" of that time?
4. The Gospel writer Mark clearly placed this story of the temple alongside the story of the fig tree that didn't bear fruit. What connection might he have been making?
5. See what happened to the fig tree the next day. Read Mark 11:20-21. What happened to the tree? What parallel promise was Jesus making about the temple? (If you need help, read Matthew 24:1-2.)
6. In what ways should the church "bear fruit" in the lives of people who are part of it? How does your church life encourage you in your fruitful endeavors?
7. Finish your FIFTEEN in prayer. Ask God to bear much fruit in your life. Look at the list in Galatians 5:22-23; pick one of the "fruits" that jumps out to you and ask God to nourish that fruit in your life!

Spend FIFTEEN - Day Two

8. Yesterday, we saw how Jesus declared an end to the empty religion of the temple. Today, we see how He establishes the parameters of His new church. Read what He did on Tuesday of His final week: Mark 14:1-9. How did Jesus spend this day?
9. Whose house was Jesus eating at? According to the passage, what was apparently the defining feature of this man? How respectable do you think it was to have dinner with such a person?
10. What was the unusual event that happened while Jesus was eating?
11. Why did people have a problem with this act? What would have been a respectable thing to do with her money?

12. Based on these two examples, what would you say were some of the “principles” of a faith built around Jesus?
13. What are ways that we can embody these principles in our lives today?
14. Close your FIFTEEN by praying that God would show you ways to be radically inclusive of others who might be dismissed in our society. Ask for God’s spendthrift generosity towards others.

Spend FIFTEEN - Day Three

15. The Bible doesn’t tell us what Jesus did on this day of His final week. So today we shall spend our 15 minutes reading Psalm 118 meditatively. Read Psalm 118:1-29.
16. Read Psalm 118 again. Try to notice things you didn’t notice the first time.
17. Read Psalm 118 a third time. What would you say is the main theme of this psalm?
18. Read Psalm 118 a fourth time, and this time focus on verses 19-24. What is the imagery in these verses?
19. Now read Luke 20:17. Who is the “cornerstone”?
20. As you end your FIFTEEN, pray for the Holy Spirit to help you build your life on the foundation of Jesus Christ.
21. If you are in the St. Louis area, you are invited to come to the Prayer Labyrinth at St. John (15800 Manchester Road) anytime between 6:00pm-9:00pm.

Spend FIFTEEN - Day Four

22. Thursday of Jesus’ final week was a special day. Read about it in Mark 14:12-26. What historic holiday were Jesus and his disciples celebrating?
23. For the sake of background, read Exodus 12:1-13, 24-30. What are God’s people celebrating when they commemorate Passover?
24. In the Passover in Egypt, the blood of what animal saved the Israelites from death?

25. Now read 1 Corinthians 5:7 and John 1:29. Why is it significant that Jesus is given this title?
26. With this background, what is Jesus' blood accomplishing for you every time you receive it through Communion?
27. Take time to commemorate Jesus' last supper by visiting the Prayer Labyrinth at St. John (15800 Manchester Road) anytime from 6:00 in the morning until 9:00 at night today, March 29.

Spend FIFTEEN - Day Five

28. Friday marks the beginning of the end for Jesus' time on Earth. Read Mark 15:1-15. What is the main event in this passage?
29. What charge was laid against Jesus? (see verse 2 and verse 9) Was this claim true or not?
30. In earthly power structures, what are kings' duties expected to be?
31. Instead, what duty did our king, Jesus, endure for our sake?
32. Spend the last few minutes of your FIFTEEN reflecting on the cost that God was willing to pay for the sake of saving your life. It is appropriate for this to be sobering, as well as to feel grateful for God's amazing sacrifice. Give thanks to God through prayer for what He has done for your sake.
33. Take time to commemorate Jesus' ultimate sacrifice by visiting the Prayer Labyrinth at St. John (15800 Manchester Road) anytime from 6:00 in the morning until 9:00 at night today, March 30.