

Join Us for Praise & Prayer for Holy Week

Holy Week



Praise & Prayer

Holy Week is a time for us to praise, pray, and prepare ourselves for Easter Sunday. Mary and I would like to invite you to join Only By Prayer as we spend some time together this week doing just that.

Each day this week starting on Palm Sunday, we will post a scripture from the Psalms for you to meditate on. **We will use this same post for the entire week, so we will simply add the new scripture to this post each day.** Be sure to check back each day. We are taking the suggested reading from the

Here is a possible way you could interact with each day's scripture, but feel free to let the Holy Spirit lead you.

1. **Read** the day's selected verses.
2. **Praise God** using any themes that stand out to you as you are reading.
3. **Pray** that the Holy Spirit will help you to incorporate those themes into your own life, into the life of your family and friends, and into our nation.
4. **Write down** any takeaways you want to remember from that day's reading and prayers.
5. **Share** any of your praises, prayers, and thoughts in the comment section of the post. Feel free to respond to others' comments as well.

Thank you for joining us. You're more than welcome to invite others to journey along with you this week too! We'll be praying for us all that God will prepare our hearts for Jesus' Resurrection Sunday.

Blessings,

Jane & Mary of Only By Prayer

Day 1 Palm Sunday

The scripture for today: **Palm Sunday**-Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29

Day 2 Monday April 15

The scripture for today: Psalm 36:5-11

Day 3 Tuesday April 16

The scripture for today: Psalm 71:1-14

Day 4 Wednesday April 17

The scripture for today: Psalm 70

Day 5 Maundy Thursday April 18

The scripture for today: Psalm 116:1, 10-17

Day 6 Good Friday April 19

The scripture for today: – Psalm 22

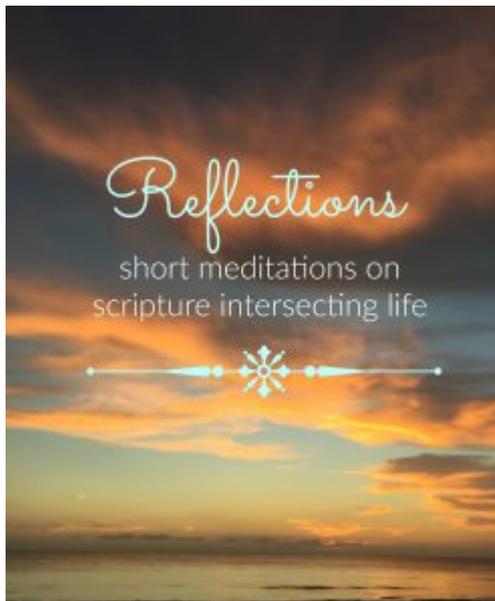
Day 7 Holy Saturday April 20

The scripture for today: Psalm 31:1-4, 15-16

Day 8 Easter Sunday April 21

The scripture for today: Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24

Reflections #20, Your Promised Land



Today's verse is Nehemiah 9:31, but if you have time, read all of Chapter 9.

It helps to know a bit of Israel's journey to the promised

land as we discuss this reflection.

Three thoughts stand out to me from Nehemiah's reflection on Israel's history.

- 1) God had set aside the promised land for Israel, but they still had to go in and take possession of it.
- 2) God sustained them in their exile on the way to the promised land.
- 3) Once they were in the promised land, their sin caused them to be taken from their promised land as slaves to a foreign country.

Even though I don't like to admit it, my reactions to life's circumstances aren't always that different from the Israelites'. Listen below with *Only By Prayer* to see how this may apply to your life too.

Feel free to leave a comment, and if you'd like, subscribe to our podcast on iTunes.

Jane

New Year, New Habit: James Bible Reading Plan



onlybyprayer.com

Welcome to OnlyBy Prayer's week-long Bible reading plan to kick off New Year's! Thank you for joining us. This week (Monday-Friday) we will read the book of James and then discuss our reading. It's a simple plan, but it will help us start the New Year on a good note.

Mary and I will add our thoughts on each day's reading under

the heading for that day. Please add your thoughts each day in the comment section. Feel free to respond to what other people have written as well. Ready? Let's get started.

January 8, Day 1: Read James 1:1-27

Mary's Thoughts!

We have been scattered so we can gather! Gather in at school, at work, across nations, towns and workplaces. God calls us to gather his people. While we are walking out our faith, we will experience trials. These trials contain gifts, blessings and that we must open our hands to receive (James 1:7, 12, 21). Some works of God in us will only be completed through trials. Trials are tailor made to benefit us not destroy us. This doesn't mean the circumstances of our trials are good, but that God can work them to bring us good.

Good from suffering. Good from pain. Good from desperate hurt. Hang on and hold out your hands.

To thrive and gather through our trials we need wisdom, patience, love and faith. Ask God for these things and hold out your hands to receive them (holding out your hands day upon day upon week is an act of faith!).

Believe. Seek. Receive. Repeat.

God is good!

Jane's Thoughts!

I am focusing on James 1:5-8. What stood out to me is that I don't want to be a double-minded woman. A double-minded person constantly waffles back and forth between trusting God and then not trusting God. I want to have a steady faith that God will do what is best for me and His purposes. Part of trust is

realizing that this can be different than what I think is best. Once I ask, I need to 1) trust and then 2) be content with whatever God's answer is: yes, no, or wait.

Sometimes I think that this issue is too trivial or I am too trivial to come before God for help. That is wrong. That is the enemy's thinking, not God's. The enemy plants the thoughts "Who are you to come before God? You're not important enough," or "You can handle that issue on your own. Don't bother God with it." Both are wrong. Nothing or no one is too small (or too big) for God to handle. He wants us to come to Him. He values each one of us so much that He sent Jesus to die for our sin.

Don't let the enemy rob you of taking your concerns before God and seeking His wisdom and help. He will answer.

January 9, Day 2: Read James 2:1-26

Mary's Thoughts!

Partiality is always under-girded by a lack of mercy. Partiality shows a lack of wholeness. We don't whole-ly love others because we don't whole-ly love or trust God, who is the God of mercy and grace. Souls of others are won by mercy and grace. No one has ever come to Christ through the condemnation and scorn of another.

Faith is for EVERYONE. So what am I doing to get it to everyone? The poor, the dirty, the sick, the homeless ... in Jesus own words the CHOSEN. Chosen by God to inherit His grace and peace and love. So what am I doing to get this good news to EVERYONE?

Because believing requires doing. working. giving. sacrificing.

There can be works without faith, but there can be no faith without works.

So what will I do?

Believe. Seek. Share. Repeat.

January 10, Day 3: Read James 3:1-18

Mary's Thoughts!

The hardest thing to tame on earth is not an eagle, a lion or a bear; man can tame all these things. The un-tameable creature is the tongue. So powerful and potentially destructive only God can tame it. And we need him to. Why? Because our words direct our actions and ultimately our destiny.

How does God tame the tongue? Through His Word.

His Word can change our words.

Jesus is the Word. In the beginning was the word. The word was God and the word was with God. If we want a changed life, we must have changed words. Remember, God used words to create. We have the choice to use our words to create or destroy. The more I am in the word, the more his word will be in me, creating, remaking, healing, restoring.

“Go and I will be with your mouth, and I will teach you what to say.” Exodus 4:12

Amen.

January 12, Day 5: Read James 5:1-20

Mary's Thoughts!

Why do our riches, gifts and talents get rusted and moth-eaten? Because of lack of use. The other day my husband told me he was *rusty* at his guitar playing. It had been a while since he had strummed his 6-string. He was rusty and it was hard to get going again. Same thing with our gifts and talents. We try to save them for ourselves but when we do that, we end up losing them. We must use 'em or lose 'em. Our clothes get moth eaten and our food gets moldy while the world shivers and starves.

Convicted.

We have a choice according to James 5, we can fatten our hearts or establish them. We are so afraid of suffering. A little pain, a little sacrifice so we store everything up for ourselves. What about Job? Have we suffered as much as Job? For most of us, not even close. He suffered much and was able to endure. I can too.

I can endure not having another dress, another gourmet meal, another Starbucks. I can give a little so another can be warmed and be filled.

Amen.

Jane's Thoughts

When are we to pray? All the time. When we are suffering ... when we are cheerful ... when we are sick James 5:16 tells us prayer is powerful: **"The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much. "**

My Spirit-filled Life Bible makes these points about prayer:

1. Prayer is empowered by the Holy Spirit. It is God's power infused in our prayer. So this means that this is relationship-based prayer. We have to be Christ followers before we can be filled with the Holy Spirit.
2. This type of prayer should be the norm for all believers, not just pastors, or apostles, or prophets.
3. Our prayers when energized by the power of the Holy Spirit, cause things to happen. Amazing!
4. We can always plant a prayer in another person's life.

Let's be prayer planters today!

SaveSave

Lent 2017: A Verse A Day



Ready or not, Lent starts this week, and at Only By Prayer, we'd love to have you join us as we prepare our hearts for Easter.

Our focus this year is A Verse A Day. We'll start on Wednesday, March 1, and will continue until Easter on Sunday, April 16. Here's what you need to know.

- Weekly themes
- Focus on living out one verse per day. Each morning, check our Lent 2017 Facebook group for that day's verse and decide/look for opportunities on how you will live it out. Later that day, log back on to the Facebook page and tell us/show us how you interpreted the verse. Need some suggestions? Here's a few to start, and be sure to leave any ideas you may have in the comment section.
 - Take a photo
 - Make a meme
 - Create a work of art around the verse
 - Record a video relating to the verse
 - Write a poem
 - Do an act of service for someone

That's all there is to it, simple yet effective. Please invite

your family and friends to join you. Sign up below, and once we receive your information, we'll send you an invitation to the Facebook group. **Please be sure to respond to the opt-in email to the group when you receive that verification email from Only By Prayer/Aweber. And also watch for a separate email to join our Facebook group. Check your junk email for both emails if you don't see them in your inbox within a few hours of signing up. They often end up there!**

Thanks for joining us, and we can't wait to get started!

Jane and Mary of Only By Prayer

i pray: cultural war of words



i pray

short podcasts to bring the sacred into your everyday

*Do you only have a few minutes for prayer today? You're in the right place! Try one of our new **i pray podcasts**. A few minutes is all you need to pray God's word into any situation by interceding for friends, family, and yourself.*

Show Notes

I don't think social media has improved our manners any. Our virtual, semi-anonymous world seems to bring out the worst in people, enabling them to say whatever nasty thing pops into their head. I've been horrified at comments from all sides. With controversial topics hogging the headlines and dominating social media, it feels that no matter what we say, we're about to step on a landmine.

As I've prayed about how to handle this, this verse from Matthew 10:16 seems especially appropriate:

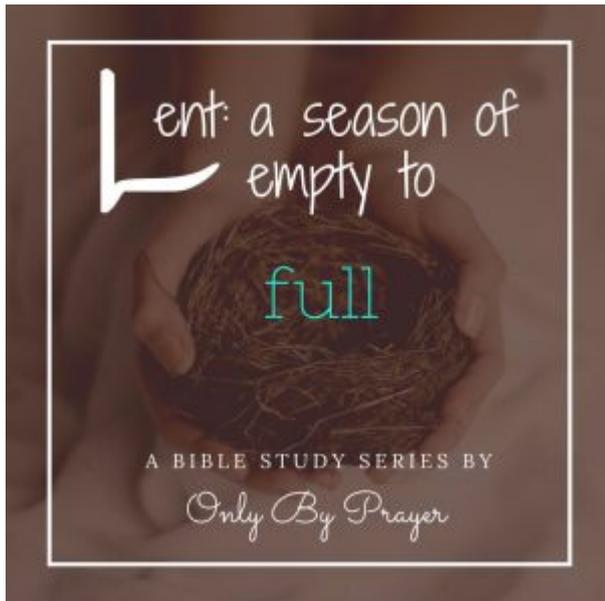
I am sending you out as sheep among wolves. Therefore be as wise as serpents and as gentle as doves.

To pray with Only By Prayer through this topic, just click on the arrow below. You can also subscribe in iTunes. Feel free to add any helpful suggestions in the comment section too!

Pray on!

Jane

Empty to Full: 7-Week Guide to Lent



Would you like to approach Easter this year with a heart that is prepared for the Resurrection?

Too often it seems, Lent flies by and before we know it, Holy Week is upon us and we're rushing to prepare home and heart for Easter. At Only By Prayer, we're ready to help you more mindfully prepare with our 7-Week Guide, Lent: A Season of Empty to Full and accompanying Facebook page.

Ready to sign up now?

What Is Empty to Full?

Each week of Lent we will identify a theme for that week and email you a multi-media bundle of posts, videos, podcasts, illustrations, and Bible studies that you can use to help prepare your heart. We'll include a simple guide, just in case you want one, but **feel free to do them in any order you choose and at your leisure.** If the Spirit leads you to slow

down and spend the entire week diving deep into one resource, by all means do that. We will also set up a private Facebook page for just this group to share insights, ask questions, and pray for each other. **There is no cost. We simply ask that you sign up in the opt-in form below so that we may email you the resources each week.**

Weekly Topics

We've chosen a different spiritual discipline for each week. Here's the list:

- Week 1: Simplicity
- Week 2: Examen
- Week 3: Prayer
- Week 4: Fasting
- Week 5: Study
- Week 6: Service
- Week 7: Celebration

Ready to get started? Simply sign up below. Be sure to reply to the email you should immediately receive (check your spam or trash if you don't see it within a few minutes) so that you are added to our list. Your first bundle will arrive on Ash Wednesday, February 10, the first day of Lent. Thereafter, you'll receive a bundle every Monday. **We will also add you to our private Empty to Full Facebook page so that you can participate in the forum with us if you would like to.**

We look forward to the next seven weeks! Thank you for journeying with us.

Sign up here: