



He Is Risen Indeed

An Easter Meditation Series

Volume 1

Dedicated to Father Jerry Hardy and Madeline Gerrard

Chapter 1

Orientation in the Use of this Series

There are twenty-one meditations in the *He Is Risen Indeed* Easter series. Therefore, for manageability and practical reasons, the series has been broken up into three volumes, following Holy Week, Easter Week, and the seven Sundays of Easter.

First, for our purposes in this series, we hold a specific meaning for meditation. Some think of meditation as a synonym for prayer. Others refer to meditation as “thinking.” For our purposes, we hold a highly specific definition of meditation as a structured, disciplined, and dedicated process to allow God to speak directly to our hearts, minds, and/or our spirits. That is, it is “a listening.” Therefore, by this definition, meditation is not a time for us to speak to God, either for intercessions or for thanksgiving or praise. As advised in Ecclesiastes, “... there is a time to speak,” But, now is not that time. Now is “...a time to be silent....”

The meditations appearing in this manuscript follow a category of meditation known as Lectio Divina (Kaisch, 162-182). The main attraction to Lectio Divina for a meditations series like this that follows Gospel readings from a traditional season of the church is that Lectio prepares us in such a way that we, first, with faith and grace from God, close our connectedness to all things of this world, connect our hearts, minds, and spirit to God, followed by a living out of the words and life of Christ in a state beyond time, space, and physics. We are transcended by God into His world where He speaks directly to us, sometimes with undeniable clarity, sometimes in undetectable ways, and sometimes by His silence to our minds (but who knows but God of what may be recorded beyond our temporal sensory capabilities in our hearts and spirits.)

Other categories of meditation, however, for those who would like to expand their experiential horizons beyond Lectio, abound. These other types are:

- Contemplative Meditation
- Monologistic Prayer, like the Jesus Prayer (CF: Anonymous. R.M. French, trans. *The Way of the Pilgrim*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1965.)
- Sensory Meditation
- Recollection

For our purposes, expect to be guided by God, using the meditation method of Lectio Divina, into an experience with Christ through the Gospels of the season.

Second, journaling is an important component in your spiritual growth and development. For your convenience, a Reflections Journal appears as the last chapter of this book. Feel drawn by God to record His revelations to you. Do not feel obligated, however, to use this form of journal. Whether you journal in the Reflections Journal or another form of diary, is immaterial. It is the journaling process that is important.

Third, these meditations follow the *Book of Common Prayer* Gospel readings for the season of

Easter, beginning with Palm Sunday daily through Easter Sunday and throughout Easter Week, followed by each of the seven Sundays of Easter. If you were counting on your fingers and toes, you noticed that we have twenty-one meditations in the *He is Risen Indeed* series. Considering that each meditation lasts at least twenty minutes, that is a lot of mediation. It is for this reason that the *He Is Risen Indeed* Easter series has been divided into three volumes. Regardless, do not feel compelled to engage in a structured meditation following the daily schedule of Easter Gospel readings as contained herein. It is more important that we are ready to listen to God, not rushing to complete the meditation series. So, if it takes six months to complete the series, or if you skip half of them, do not be concerned, but rather feel drawn into your conversations with God, as He desires. You will know when the time with Him is just the right amount. Trust Him, not yourself, to gauge your schedule. If you feel drawn by God into a time of meditation, enjoy it. If you feel you are still absorbed in processing a past meditation, allow God to complete the process before moving on.

Finally, you may feel a particularly strong connection to God after a meditation. As you reflect on these revelations, prayerfully consider sharing your conversation, and any resultant change in your life or the lives of others, beyond your immediate sphere of influence. Should you desire editorial assistance in organizing your thoughts, I will be more than willing to help, as I am sure, will others close to you. As you share your mediations with me, depending on the topic and available space, it may be shared on our website and/or in a future meditation publication.

Chapter 2

Gospel Readings for the *He is Risen Indeed* Series (from Lectionary A, *Book of Common Prayer*.)

Holy Week - Vol 1

"Blessed is the Name of the Lord" - Palm Sunday - Matthew 21:1-11

At Dinner - Monday of Holy Week - John 12:1-11

Seeing Is Seeing - Tuesday of Holy Week - John 12:37-38, 42-50

My Betrayals - Wednesday of Holy Week - John 13: 21-35

Yes, Wash My Feet, Lord - Maundy Thursday - John 13:1-15

Alone With Pilate - Good Friday - John 19:1-37

With Joseph of Arimathea - Holy Saturday - John 19:38-42

Easter Week - Vol 2

He Is Risen Indeed !! - Easter Sunday - John 20:1-10

First Meeting - Monday - Matthew 28:9-15

With Mary at the Tomb - Tuesday - John 20:11-18

On the Road to Emmaus - Wednesday - Luke 24:13-35

How Can This Be? - Thursday - Luke 24:36b-48

Fishing Once Again - Friday - John 21:1-14

Strengthen Our Faith - Saturday - Mark 16:9-15, 20

Sundays of Easter - Vol 3

Breathe on Me, Jesus - 2d Sunday of Easter - John 20:19-31

How Can I Explain This to You? - 3d Sunday of Easter - Luke 24: 13-35

Teach Me to Hear You, Lord - 4th Sunday of Easter - John 10:1-10

Bestow Your Power in Me, O Lord - 5th Sunday of Easter - John 14:1-14

Make Me Good Fruit, O Lord - 6th Sunday of Easter - John 15:1-8

Praise Be To Thee, O Christ - 7th Sunday of Easter - John 17:1-11

Chapter 3

He Is Risen Indeed - An Easter Meditations Series

"Blessed Is He Who Comes in the Name of the Lord"

Palm Sunday - Matthew 21:1-11

Opening Prayer

As I enter this special time with you, O Lord, quiet my mind, quiet my ears, quiet my heart, that I may fully enjoy this communion with you. Speak to my heart, that your words may become your works in the flesh and keep me ever mindful of the opportunities you place before me. Through Him who reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. *Amen.*

Gospel Reading

As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, "Go to the village ahead of you, and at once you will find a donkey tied there, with her colt by her. Untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, tell him that the Lord needs them, and he will send them right away." This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet: "Say to the Daughter of Zion, 'See, your king comes to you, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.'" The disciples went and did as Jesus had instructed them. They brought the donkey and the colt, placed their cloaks on them, and Jesus sat on them. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road.

The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Hosanna in the highest!"

When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, "Who is this?" The crowds answered, "This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee." [Matthew 21:1-11]

Meditation

To begin this meditation, find a comfortable spot where you will be uninterrupted for several minutes. Seat yourself comfortably. Breathe deeply and slowly for two to three minutes. Visualize all the things that trouble you evaporate from your body like steam from the street after a summer storm, leaving your body restful and content.

In Jesus' time, visualize yourself sitting on a bench by the side of the city street after a tiring day. As the sun begins to sink over the rooftops, feel its warmth on your skin. Smell the fresh, warm air from the pastures in the east. Take in all that is going on around you -- travelers with donkeys, colts, and other beasts of burden being led on their tethers, merchants packing up their wares for the day. As you casually gaze around you, you notice two men struggling to pull a

donkey down the street. You watch in amusement for a few moments, but knowing that you have always been good with animals and wishing to aid the obviously tired young men, you approach the donkey. As you lay your hand on the donkey's neck, he immediately ceases his resistance and proceeds with the men. You hear one say, "We cannot thank you enough for your kindness. It is obvious you have a way with difficult beasts. We do not know what we would have done without your aid." You ask, "Where are you taking him?", to which the man replied, "Come with us and see." After a few minutes of walking up a gently sloped trail, you find yourself coming upon a small gathering. In the midst of them is the man they call Jesus, whom you have heard speak many times before. Some have even said He is the Messiah. You feel drawn once again to his voice - a presence you cannot fully put into words. As you sit down with the others, you notice his eyes rest upon yours. He seems to be talking just to you. He asks you, "I am not sure why you have come, but now that you are here, what would you ask Me?"

Search your heart for the next few moments. What is troubling you the most over the last few days or weeks? In what way have you felt most separated from God? Tell Him of your self. Calmly listen to His words to you - truly listen, not telling Him, but listening to Him. Do not feel rushed. Wait for His answer. Take as long as you need.

Feel your meditation come softly to an end. Feel the refreshing sensation Jesus has placed upon you and know that this sensation will stay with you all day long.

As the days pass, observe the changes Jesus is making in your life from this reflection. Record any special coincidences or revelations in your Reflections Journal calendar and/or on anything handy and refer back to them in two weeks.

Sharing Your Vision with Others

If you are so called, turn to Reflections Journal and, using the guidelines provided, share your mediation with us. Regardless of how insignificant you feel your meditation might have been, your small candle may become a floodlight for others. So, with all humility, prayerfully consider sharing Christ's revelations in your life with us so that we might share them with others.

At Dinner

Monday of Holy Week - John 12:1-11

Opening Prayer

As I enter this special time with you, O Lord, quiet my mind, quiet my ears, quiet my heart, that I may fully enjoy this communion with you. Speak to my heart, that your words may become your works in the flesh and keep me ever mindful of the opportunities you place before me. Through Him who reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. *Amen.*

Gospel Reading

Six days before the Passover, Jesus arrived at Bethany, where Lazarus lived, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. Here a dinner was given in Jesus' honor. Martha served, while Lazarus was among those reclining at the table with him. Then Mary took about a pint 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. But one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, who was later to betray him, objected, "Why wasn't this perfume sold and the money given to the poor? It was worth a year's wages." He did not say this because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief; as keeper of the moneybag, he used to help himself to what was put into it. "Leave her alone," Jesus replied. "It was intended that she should save this perfume for the day of my burial. You will always have the poor among you, but you will not always have me." 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. So the chief priests made plans to kill Lazarus as well, for on account of him many of the Jews were going over to Jesus and putting their faith in him. [John 12:1-11]

Meditation

To begin this meditation, find a comfortable spot where you will be uninterrupted for several minutes. Seat yourself comfortably. Breathe deeply and slowly for two to three minutes. Visualize all the things that trouble you fall from your shoulders like leaves from a tree, leaving your body restful and content.

Visualize yourself walking casually down the street. Observe those walking toward and past you, feel the breeze coming down the street on your face. You see someone approach you that you seem to recognize from church or neighborhood that you cannot place. After a couple of moments of greetings, she encourages you to attend a celebration that evening honoring Jesus. You become quite excited because you have heard Jesus on many occasions, but these events were always crowded with throngs of people straining to see and hear. An opportunity to visit with Him in a smaller setting would be a dream come true. As you enter the home in which the

dinner was being hosted, notice those around you, what they are saying, how they are dressed. Soon dinner seating begins and to your amazement, you find yourself sitting next to Jesus. After giving a blessing, bowls are being passed around the table. Shortly, Jesus begins speaking to you, asking where you are from, about your family, and other "get to know you" kinds of questions. You sense that He sees more in your life than you are revealing. He seems to see through and into your soul. Listen quietly as He speaks to you, revealing yourself to you, as you have never experienced before. He recalls your wonderful qualities and how you have helped others in ways that you had never considered important before. For several moments, allow Him to open your eyes to your wonderful nature.

Feel your meditation come softly to an end. Feel the refreshing sensation Jesus has placed upon you and know that this sensation will stay with you all day long.

As the days pass, observe the changes Jesus is making in your life from this reflection. Record any special coincidences or revelations in your Reflections Journal, calendar and/or on anything handy and refer back to them in two weeks.

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Seeing Is Seeing

Tuesday of Holy Week - John 12:37-38, 42-50

Opening Prayer

As I enter this special time with you, O Lord, quiet my mind, quiet my ears, quiet my heart, that I may fully enjoy this communion with you. Speak to my heart, that your words may become your works in the flesh and keep me ever mindful of the opportunities you place before me. Through Him who reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. *Amen.*

Gospel Reading

Even after Jesus had done all these miraculous signs in their presence, they still would not believe in him. This was to fulfill the word of Isaiah the prophet: “Lord, who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?” Yet at the same time many even among the leaders believed in him. But because of the Pharisees they would not confess their faith for fear they would be put out of the synagogue; for they loved praise from men more than praise from God. Then Jesus cried out, “When a man believes in me, he does not believe in me only, but in the one who sent me. When he looks at me, he sees the one who sent me. I have come into the world as a light, so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness. “As for the person who hears my words but does not keep them, I do not judge him. For I did not come to judge the world, but to save it. There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; that very word which I spoke will condemn him at the last day. For I did not speak of my own accord, but the Father who sent me commanded me what to say and how to say it. I know that his command leads to eternal life. So whatever I say is just what the Father has told me to say.” [John 12:37-38, 42-50]

Meditation

To begin this meditation, find a comfortable spot where you will be uninterrupted for several minutes. Seat yourself comfortably. Breathe deeply and slowly for two to three minutes. Feel all the things that trouble you become lifted from your shoulders, like someone invisible is physically lifting them from you, leaving your body light and at peace.

Visualize yourself beginning a walk in a peaceful rain forest. You can hear the mist striking gently against the leaves of the trees far, far above your head. You can feel the moisture in the air, smell its fragrance. You find yourself walking up a gentle slope. You see the trail curve to the right around gentle corners, this way, that way --- until you find yourself very near the top -- facing the entrance to a large cave. As you walk a few feet into the cave, you hear gentle waters in the distance. As you look behind, you can see the light of the exit, but as you face into the cave, the darkness prevents you from seeing its features clearly. You decide to sit here for a

moment. As the calmness of the distant stream brings a profound peacefulness upon you, you feel a distinct presence of Christ all around you. Take time to experience His presence. Soon, you hear Him telling you a story -- a story of a time when the pride and the fears of others prevented them from fully enjoying His presence. He tells you how this troubled Him deeply that they could not experience the true joy of the Kingdom of God. He tells you that He wishes for you to enjoy the peace He offers to you more than you are. He asks you to reflect back over the last five years and recount those times when you were too busy, too prideful around others, too wrapped up in the day-to-day desires of life to have fully lived in the Kingdom of God. Thinking back over the last five years, allow yourself to tell Him these things, feeling His love and compassion of your acknowledgement.

Feel your meditation come softly to an end. Feel the refreshing sensation Jesus has placed upon you and know that this sensation will stay with you all day long.

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My Betrayals

Wednesday of Holy Week - John 13: 21-35

Opening Prayer

As I enter this special time with you, O Lord, quiet my mind, quiet my ears, quiet my heart, that I may fully enjoy this communion with you. Open my eyes that I may see my betrayals, not in harsh judgment as you died for the forgiveness of my sins, but in truthfulness of my inherent sinful nature that I may lean on your grace and betray you less. Through Him who reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. *Amen.*

Gospel Reading

After he had said this, Jesus was troubled in spirit and testified, "I tell you the truth, one of you is going to betray me." His disciples stared at one another, at a loss to know which of them he meant. One of them, the disciple whom Jesus loved, was reclining next to him. Simon Peter motioned to this disciple and said, "Ask him which one he means." Leaning back against Jesus, he asked him, "Lord, who is it?" Jesus answered, "It is the one to whom I will give this piece of bread when I have dipped it in the dish." Then, dipping the piece of bread, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, son of Simon. As soon as Judas took the bread, Satan entered into him. "What you are about to do, do quickly," Jesus told him, but no one at the meal understood why Jesus said this to him. Since Judas had charge of the money, some thought Jesus was telling him to buy what was needed for the Feast, or to give something to the poor. As soon as Judas had taken the bread, he went out. And it was night. When he was gone, Jesus said, "Now is the Son of Man glorified and God is glorified in him. If God is glorified in him, God will glorify the Son in himself, and will glorify him at once. "My children, I will be with you only a little longer. You will look for me, and just as I told the Jews, so I tell you now: where I am going, you cannot come. "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." [John 13:21-35]

Meditation

To begin this meditation, find a comfortable spot where you will be uninterrupted for several minutes. Seat yourself comfortably. Breathe deeply and slowly for two to three minutes. Feel all the things that trouble you fall from you as dust particles in the sunlight, leaving your body light and at peace.

As you settle into your meditation, find yourself in the company of the disciples, enjoying dinner after a long day walking and explaining to small groups some of what Jesus meant during His sermons of the day. As dinner winds down, Jesus begins to speak and the talking of the disciples slowly ceases. You hear Jesus say. "One of you is going to betray me." All, including you, are

shocked by this revelation. Surely, He doesn't mean betrayal as you think of betrayal. Suddenly, the brash one that you have come to know as Peter, exclaims, "Lord, who is it?" He responds, "It is the one to whom I will give this piece of bread when I have dipped it in the dish." You see Jesus dip a small piece of bread into the dish and begin to walk your way. You observe that you are seated with Andrew and Judas. As Jesus approaches, you are shocked as you see Him lift His hand out to you -- too shocked to take it -- but you find yourself holding the bread not remembering ever taking it. Your heart has fallen to your stomach, you feel you cannot move. After a few moments -- you don't know how long -- the group begins to leave the room. You find yourself seated alone with Jesus. You find yourself asking, still almost in disbelief, "Jesus, in what way will I betray you?" You feel His hand lightly rest on your shoulder, saying, "That is entirely up to you." You ask, "But what can I do to gain knowledge of my betrayal before it is too late?" You hear Him respond, "As you reflect on your past life and project yourself into the next five years, where do you find yourself most vulnerable -- to pride, to greed, to the serving of yourself above seeing and responding to the needs of others?" As you envision the likely events of your next five years, and feeling immense compassion from Jesus, tell Him where you might be most vulnerable in the next five years. After you have recounted a few of these things, hear yourself ask, "What can I do to escape my vulnerabilities?" Allow Jesus to give you the advice you seek.

Feel your meditation come softly to an end. Feel the refreshing sensation Jesus has placed upon you and know that this sensation will stay with you all day long.

As the days pass, observe the changes Jesus is making in your life from this reflection. Record any special coincidences or revelations in your Reflections Journal, calendar and/or on anything handy and refer back to them in two weeks.

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Yes, Wash My Feet, Oh Lord

Maundy Thursday - John 13:1-15

Opening Prayer

As I enter this special time with you, O Lord, quiet my mind, quiet my ears, and quiet my heart, that I may fully enjoy this communion with you. Speak to my heart, that your words may become your works in the flesh and keep me ever mindful of the opportunities you place before me. Through Him who reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. *Amen.*

Gospel Reading

It was just before the Passover Feast. Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he now showed them the full extent of his love. The evening meal was being served, and the devil had already prompted Judas Iscariot, son of Simon, to betray Jesus. Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" Jesus replied, "You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand." "No," said Peter, "you shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me." "Then, Lord," Simon Peter replied, "not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!" Jesus answered, "A person who has had a bath needs only to wash his feet; his whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you." For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not every one was clean. When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you.

[John 13: 1-15]

Meditation

To begin this meditation, find a comfortable spot where you will be uninterrupted for several minutes. Seat yourself comfortably. Breathe deeply and slowly for two to three minutes. Feel all the things that trouble you become lifted from your shoulders, like someone invisible is physically lifting them from you, leaving your body light and at peace.

As you move into your meditation, you find yourself at the Passover meal with the disciples. Listen to what Andrew, your favorite, with whom you are speaking, tell you what he has been

doing today. He has visited his father, along with his brother, Peter, and helped him fish. He seems very close to his father and brother and you feel closer to him as he reveals so much of himself to you. Soon, you notice Andrew becoming immediately quiet as Jesus begins to move toward a water basin, taking John with Him. You see him begin to wash John's feet. This both surprises you and amuses you. You find yourself standing in a line before Jesus, and before you comprehend what is happening, you find Jesus washing your feet. You can see His love for you in His eyes. Although only your feet are cleaned, you feel strangely clean all over. You even feel the cleanness inside your body. You hear Jesus tell the disciples and others like yourself who are there to go outside into the hallway and begin washing the feet of all who have been traveling with you for the last several days. You find yourself toting a bowl with water into the hall and washing the feet of a man leaning against the door observing Jesus' washing of your feet. After two or three washings, you move unconsciously to the next person. As you begin to wash the person's feet, you look up into the person's face. To your horror, you find yourself washing the feet of the person you mistrust and despise more than anyone you have ever known. This is a person who has caused you much pain. You are overwhelmed with emotion, not knowing what to do or to think. You see Jesus approaching you. You sense He knows what has transpired, perhaps even had hoped for it to occur. Strengthened by the love of Jesus and your knowledge of His commandment to love others as He has loved you, you find yourself apologizing to this person for the hurtful things you have said about them. Although you have thoughts that your feelings and gossiping have been justified, you can feel that it was never your burden to judge, only to love and forgive. What do you find yourself saying?

Feel your meditation come softly to an end. Feel the refreshing sensation Jesus has placed upon you and know that this sensation will stay with you all day long.

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Alone with Pilate

Good Friday – John 19: 1- 37

Opening Prayer

Heavenly Father, Father of every living person, past present and future, Father of Jesus, Pilate and me, please open my mind and tenderize whatever hardness of heart that I may have. Help me to grasp a historical perspective on Pontius Pilate as I try to compare his acts to my acts at this time. Grant me an awareness of my shortcomings, as only You know them. In Jesus name, Amen.

Background

Pontius Pilate was the Roman military governor (procurator) of Judea from 26AD to 36AD. He had complete judicial control over all citizens who were not Roman. Many religious matters were decided by the Sanhedrin, the Jewish supreme council. However the Sanhedrin did not have the authority to pronounce the death sentence. It was considered treason and therefore against Roman law to proclaim one's self a Messiah; the punishment was death. In 36AD Pilate was recalled to Rome for trial for cruelty and oppression. It is reported that he committed suicide.

Gospel Reading

Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. The soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head. They clothed him in a purple robe and went up to him again and again, saying, "Hail, king of the Jews!" And they struck him in the face. Once more Pilate came out and said to the Jews, "Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know that I find no basis for a charge against him." When Jesus came out wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe, Pilate said to them, "Here is the man!" As soon as the chief priests and their officials saw him, they shouted, "Crucify! Crucify!" But Pilate answered, "You take him and crucify him. As for me, I find no basis for a charge against him." The Jews insisted, "We have a law, and according to that law he must die, because he claimed to be the Son of God." When Pilate heard this, he was even more afraid, and he went back inside the palace. "Where do you come from?" he asked Jesus, but Jesus gave him no answer. "Do you refuse to speak to me?" Pilate said. "Don't you realize I have power either to free you or to crucify you?" Jesus answered, "You would have no power over me if it were not given to you from above. Therefore the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin." From then on, Pilate tried to set Jesus free, but the Jews kept shouting, "If you let this man go, you are no friend of Caesar. Anyone who claims to be a king opposes Caesar."

When Pilate heard this, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judge's seat at a place known as the Stone Pavement (which in Aramaic is Gabbatha). It was the day of Preparation of Passover Week, about the sixth hour. "Here is your king," Pilate said to the Jews. But they shouted, "Take him away! Take him away! Crucify him!" "Shall I crucify your king?" Pilate

asked. “We have no king but Caesar,” the chief priests answered. Finally Pilate handed him over to them to be crucified.

So the soldiers took charge of Jesus. Carrying his own cross, he went out to the place of the Skull (which in Aramaic is called Golgotha). Here they crucified him, and with him two others—one on each side and Jesus in the middle.

Pilate had a notice prepared and fastened to the cross. It read: JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS. Many of the Jews read this sign, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and the sign was written in Aramaic, Latin and Greek. The chief priests of the Jews protested to Pilate, “Do not write ‘The King of the Jews,’ but that this man claimed to be king of the Jews.” Pilate answered, “What I have written, I have written.”

When the soldiers crucified Jesus, they took his clothes, dividing them into four shares, one for each of them, with the undergarment remaining. This garment was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom. “Let’s not tear it,” they said to one another. “Let’s decide by lot who will get it.” This happened that the scripture might be fulfilled which said, “They divided my garments among them and cast lots for my clothing.” So this is what the soldiers did. Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.

When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, “Dear woman, here is your son,” and to the disciple, “Here is your mother.” From that time on, this disciple took her into his home.

Later, knowing that all was now completed, and so that the Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, “I am thirsty.” A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus’ lips. When he had received the drink, Jesus said, “It is finished.” With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

Now it was the day of Preparation, and the next day was to be a special Sabbath. Because the Jews did not want the bodies left on the crosses during the Sabbath, they asked Pilate to have the legs broken and the bodies taken down. The soldiers therefore came and broke the legs of the first man who had been crucified with Jesus, and then those of the other. But when they came to Jesus and found that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. Instead, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus’ side with a spear, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water. The man who saw it has given testimony, and his testimony is true. He knows that he tells the truth, and he testifies so that you also may believe. These things happened so that the scripture would be fulfilled: “Not one of his bones will be broken,” and, as another scripture says, “They will look on the one they have pierced.” [John 19: 1-37]

Other Related Quotations

Matthew 27:11-26

.... Luke 23:14 “. . . I did not find this man guilty of any of your charges against him, neither did Herod...”

John 19:19-22 “Pilate also wrote a title and put it on the cross; it read, “Jesus of Nazareth, The King of the Jews.” ”The chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate “Do not write, ‘The King of the Jews’ but, ‘This man said, I am the King of the Jews.’” Pilate answered “What I have written, I have written.”

Mark 15:15 “So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released for them Barabbas . . .”

Luke 23:34 “And Jesus said, ‘Father forgive them for they know not what they do.

Our Revelation

Considering the role and actions of Pilate: did he believe that Jesus was truly guilty and how would we act in the place of Pilate? Was there a “Pilate” present at Ruby Ridge or Waco?

Pilate is a symbol for all human weakness and sin. We are all guilty of sins of omission, such as the failure to witness, to do the thing that we know that we should do. In the secular world it is far too easy to simply slip into sin. Abdicating responsibility is so easy. It is painful to recall the times we went along with the crowd, we failed to say or do the Christian thing at the time when our response was critical, and we continue to hold back. We even tell ourselves that our behavior is appropriate because if, nothing else, it is “politically correct.” How easy. How comfortable. How wrong!

We are continuously challenged in disciplining our children when we come home from a long day at work. How often do we relinquish our authority to the children by giving in?

The answer to these temptations is to remember the basic focus of the Brotherhood of St. Andrew- study the scriptures, pray regularly, and remember that Christ died for us. We are obligated by our commitment to Christianity to do the right thing, not the easy thing.

Meditation

This meditation demands courage, strength and the readiness to act differently. To prepare, please stand, head toward the heavens, eyes closed, feet close together, and arms stretched straight out to each side. Think deeply about this position! What is it like? Knowing that you resemble Jesus on the cross, concentrate on what you have read about Pontius Pilate. Relax your arms, lean against the wall, but keep standing while you focus all your thoughts on Pilate. To this writer Pilate resembles George Bush or maybe Bill Clinton. How do you think they, or the person you envision, would have ruled? Would they have released Barabbas, washed their hands, and then let the death penalty be carried out? Now for the tough part! Based on your past performance, how would you have handled the situation?

As the days pass, observe changes Jesus is making in your reflection. Record any special coincidences or revelations in your calendar and/or the back of this book and refer back to them in two weeks.

Sharing Your Vision with Others

If you are so called, turn to the end of the book and, using the guidelines provided, share your meditation with us. Regardless of how insignificant you feel your meditation might have been, your small candle may become a floodlight for others. So, with all humility, prayerfully consider sharing Christ’s revelations in your life with us so that we might share them with others.

Contributed by Bob Spreng 4/6/96

With Joseph of Arimathea

Holy Saturday - John 19:38-42

Opening Prayer

As I enter this special time with you, O Lord, quiet my mind, quiet my ears, quiet my heart, that I may fully enjoy this communion with you. Speak to my heart, that your words may become your works in the flesh and keep me ever mindful of the opportunities you place before me. Through Him who reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Gospel Reading

Later, Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate for the body of Jesus. Now Joseph was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly because he feared the Jews. With Pilate's permission, he came and took the body away. He was accompanied by Nicodemus, the man who earlier had visited Jesus at night. Nicodemus brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds. Taking Jesus' body, the two of them wrapped it, with the spices, in strips of linen. This was in accordance with Jewish burial customs. At the place where Jesus was crucified, there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb, in which no one had ever been laid. Because it was the Jewish day of Preparation and since the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there. [John 19: 38 - 42]

Meditation

In some cases, it is not possible to live a meditation more powerful than to Scripture itself. This is one of those times. To begin this meditation, find a comfortable spot where you will be uninterrupted for several minutes. Seat yourself comfortably. Breathe deeply and slowly for two to three minutes. Feel all the things that trouble you become lifted from your shoulders, like someone invisible is physically lifting them from you, leaving your body light and at peace.

As you move into your meditation, you find yourself in accompaniment of Joseph of Arimathea, carrying the body of Jesus. Live the events, through unbiased eyes and ears, as they unfold.

Feel your meditation come softly to an end. Feel the refreshing sensation Jesus has placed upon you and know that this sensation will stay with you all day long.

As the days pass, observe the changes Jesus is making in your life from this reflection. Record any special coincidences or revelations in your Reflections Journal, calendar and/or on anything handy and refer back to them in two weeks.

Sharing Your Vision with Others

If you are so called, turn to your Reflections Journal and, using the guidelines provided, share your mediation with us. Regardless of how insignificant you feel your meditation might have been, your small candle may become a floodlight for others. So, with all humility, prayerfully consider sharing Christ's revelations in your life with us so that we might share them with others.

Chapter 4

Reflections Journal

Record your reflections below. Consider sharing your reflections with us so that we might share them with others by emailing chip@chipcaldwellassoc.com or mail to:

Chip Caldwell
InnerPath Ministries
6226 Glynmoor Lakes Dr
Charlotte, NC 28277

Date	Scripture	Record your reflections, any coincidences that occurred in your life after the meditation or other thoughts worth recording for yourself below.

Date	Scripture	Record your reflections, any coincidences that occurred in your life after the meditation or other thoughts worth recording for yourself below.

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