

## The Last Supper

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, bread is such a basic food. Teach me that your life and your love are just as basic to my spiritual health. Make my heart as hungry for your life and love as my stomach gets for food and drink. Amen.

### What Is *Your Price*?

#### MONDAY **Matthew 26:14-16**

We read about “the Twelve,” but Jesus had more than twelve followers. (In Luke 10, he sent out at least 70.) All four gospels specify that Judas was “one of the Twelve,” because “the Twelve” were the ones Jesus was closest to. Treachery is always sad, but this was a shocking betrayal by a member of Jesus’ inner circle.

- Exodus 21:32 said if you accidentally killed or badly hurt a slave, you owed the owner 30 pieces of silver. That was about five weeks’ wages for an average worker, a modest price—but it was Judas’ price. What does it mean to you to be loyal to Jesus? In what ways do you show how much that loyalty means to you?
- On pages 29-30 of *40 Days of Reflection*, Pastor Hamilton reviews the main views of why Judas sold Jesus out. The only reason the gospels give for his choice is a desire for money (e.g. John 12:4-6). How easy or hard do you find it to accept Jesus’ teaching that “life does not consist in an abundance of possessions” (Luke 12:15)?

### I Go to Prepare a Place for You

#### TUESDAY **John 14:1-3**

In John 13:33, Jesus told the disciples, “I will be with you only a little longer.” Peter almost immediately asked, “Lord, where are you going?” To what was probably a circle of worried faces, Jesus said, “Do not let your hearts be troubled...I will come back.” Jesus couldn’t leave, they thought. How would they get along without him?

- At times we tend to ‘sell’ people on heaven by listing benefits— golden streets, no death, mansions. (Translators believe a phrase like “my Father’s house has plenty of room” is more accurate than “many mansions.”) What one feature of the future life did Jesus mention in verse 3? What do you most look forward to in being with Jesus?
- John says Jesus promised the disciples a “comforter” or “advocate” (Greek *Paraclete*, literally “one who stands with”). In verse 18 he said the Holy Spirit’s presence was the same as his: “I will not leave you as orphans; **I** will come to you.” How have you sensed Jesus with you through the Holy Spirit’s work in your life?

### The Mandates of Maundy Thursday

#### WEDNESDAY **John 15:5, 8-13**

Old Testament writers (e.g. Hosea 10:1, Jeremiah 2:21) spoke of Israel as a vine God planted. In Jesus’ day, a golden vine in the Temple symbolized Israel’s link to God. But Jesus said Israel’s faith found its fullest expression in him; he is the vine. The image led to a key object lesson: no branch grows and bears fruit unless it stays joined to the vine.

- What are some of the ways that you “abide” in Jesus? What commitments or behaviors have you heard other Christians say have helped them to remain “connected to the vine”? Prayerfully choose one new way you will seek to deepen your abiding in Jesus.
- Jesus said his way of life leads to love and joy: “I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete...Love each other as I have loved you” (verse 11-12). Would those who know you best say “love” and

“joy” describe your life? What experiences or fears block you from experiencing God’s love and joy?

## **A Song of Praise in the Face of Death**

### **THURSDAY                    Mark 14:26; Psalm 118:1-29**

Mark put no detail in his brief account of how the Last Supper ended. Perhaps that is because anyone who knew the Jewish faith would have known that the last hymn sung at the end of Passover was Psalm 118. Pastor Hamilton, in his devotional for today, invites us to read Psalm 118. See what part of the psalm speaks to you most strongly.

- Psalm 118:6 says, “The LORD is with me; I will not be afraid. What can human beings do to me?” What do you think those words would have meant to Jesus as he sang them in the upper room hours before his crucifixion? How do those words speak to any fears you carry in your heart?
- Psalm 118:17 says, “I will not die but live, and will proclaim what the LORD has done.” Again, try to imagine the thoughts and feelings Jesus might have had as he sang those words. We’re tempted to think suffering means God hasn’t done anything for us. What can you say about what the Lord has done for you in and through suffering?

## **The Mount of Olives**

### **FRIDAY                    Luke 22:39**

Jesus didn’t “just happen” to be on the Mount of Olives at his arrest. Luke says Jesus went to the Mount “as usual” (literally “as was his custom”). This fits with what we know of Jesus’ disciplined way of life. Pastor Hamilton’s devotional connects Jesus’ custom with Zechariah’s prophecy (Zechariah 14:4) that Judah’s king would stand on the Mount of Olives.

- John 18:2 says Judas knew just where to find Jesus because Jesus had often met there with his disciples. God’s can meet us anywhere, but Jesus (like many of God’s people) knew the value of having a special place of prayer. Have you chosen such a place for your own prayer life? If not, will you choose one and use it often?
- We keep finding “king” and “kingdom” images. We are used to living in a democracy, so these can be tough. Like all images, they have their limits. God, for example, does not rule by coercion and fear, as many kings have. What does it mean to you to make Jesus your king? In what ways is it hard for you to submit to him totally?

## **He Began to Be Distressed and Agitated**

### **SATURDAY                    Mark 14:32-34**

There are olive trees in the Garden of Gethsemane so old they may have been in the garden when Jesus prayed there. (To see a photo of some of these trees, go to **[Valerie, insert link for Rob Webster’s video frame capture.]**) Historically, Christians believe Jesus was fully human and fully divine. His anguish in the garden shows an aspect of what “fully human” means.

- When was the last time you were “deeply distressed and troubled”? Did others tell you (or did you tell yourself) that you ought to be stronger, that you shouldn’t feel what you felt? Hebrews 4:15 says Jesus is not “a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses.” He knows what terrible grief and fear feel like, and he weeps with you and walks through the feelings with you.

**Family Activity:** Even though Jesus knew He could pray to God anywhere, He used the Mount of Olives as a special place of prayer. We can also pray to God anywhere, yet we can follow in Jesus’ footsteps and identify a special place of prayer. As a family, walk around the different rooms in your home. Where does your family feel most comfortable and at peace? Where would you enjoy spending time talking to

and listening to God? After listening to each other's ideas, discuss and agree upon a special place where you can pray together as a family this Lenten season. Invite each person to place a symbol or an object in the prayer area that will help your family focus on spending time with God.