**I Love to Tell the Story**

**Day 211 The Empty Tomb Matt 28:1-10; Mark 16: 1-8; Luke 24:1-11**

Guided reflection:

Aren’t you excited to get to this passage? This is it! This is what sets us apart from any other religion. We believe in a RISEN SAVIOR!!!! Not just a nice teacher. Not just a story of a hero. We believe in a risen Savior. A savior whose life, death, and resurrection had YOU at its center! Mark tells the details: Mary Magdalene had just had the worst night of her life and now she had to do that one thing she never dreamed possible. But they took his body! Can’t they just leave well enough alone? She asks the gardener where they have laid his body and she gets the surprise of her life! IT IS JESUS! HE IS ALIVE!!!! Why is it we seek the living among the dead? Notice that Jesus immediately asks them two things – to not be afraid and to go and tell the others. Again, try to put yourself into the story. Feel the loss and then the hope and then the thrill and wonder of it all!

Guided prayer:

*“O God, I love this part of the Story! It is such an emotional rollercoaster to go from being smug about being part of the “in crowd,” to being horrified that Jesus is actually dying as a criminal, to the horror of the details, to the despair of the dark night, to the glory of the new morning that brought resurrection. For ME! I know that my life is made up of all those emotions and experiences, but thank you for the hope of the resurrection that means I need not even fear death! This is not the end of the story – there is hope even beyond the grave! WOW! Thank you! Amen!*

**Day 212 Bribing the soldiers Matthew 28:11-15**

Guided reflection:

Aha! The Soldiers did see something and it sounds just like a modern day movie filled with intrigue! The soldiers were bought off to keep their mouths shut about what really happened and all agreed to tell the same story. The soldiers were promised that their backs would be covered. And some still believe their story. Well, to be honest, their story is easier to grasp than the miracle story. Thank God we serve a miracle working God! The resurrection story is THE story for us as Christians. If we truly believe, then why is it hard to believe that God is still a God of miracles?

Guided prayer:

*“O God, our world is still the same – people force others to take bribes or force them to deny reality. When will we get it? Help us to open our eyes to truth and may that truth set us free. Right now I pray for those who are victimized by others who use power games to get what they want. Help me to never join their ranks! Amen!”*

**Day 213 Jesus Gives the Great Commission Matthew 28:16-20**

Guided reflection:

Jesus hands over the reins of God’s love story to his disciples and thus to us. He had walked and talked with them; he had preached and taught; he had shared his highest moments and his darkest hours with them. Now, the point of all of that is to go and make disciples, baptize them, and teach them to observe what Jesus taught. This passage is the very reason I did this Bible Study for you – so that you could learn the stories of Jesus so you can grow as a disciple of Jesus. This is still our mission statement. So therefore, since that has not changed, then neither has the “lo I am with you always” part! We are not alone. We have a charge to keep. Let’s get busy!

Guided Prayer:

*“Lord, you give the great commission to heal the sick and preach the word. Lest the church neglect its mission and the gospel go unheard, help us witness to your purpose with renewed integrity. With the Spirit’s gifts empower us for the work of ministry. Amen”*

**Day 214 The Road To Emmaus Luke 24:13-35**

Guided reflection:

WOW! Can you imagine what it must have been like to be lost in the words of Jesus as he made all the stories and prophecies make sense? Just think, they had the risen Christ to themselves for all those miles. It must have felt like a short trip that day. They wanted more and begged him to stay. He did and then their eyes were opened. Talk about an epiphany! The lights came on in their minds and they knew they had walked on holy ground. Today we have a spiritual weekend, 72 hours, where men or women spend time “walking on holy ground.” If you have not experienced you own Emmaus Walk, please talk someone who has so you might have your own special time with God!

Guided prayer:

*“This story gives me hope. There are times when things do not make sense and I need some insight and wisdom. I know that along the way, Jesus will come and help me see love, even in the middle of scary times. Open my eyes that I might see, glimpses of truth you have for me! Amen”*

**Day 215 The Disciples experience the Risen Christ Luke 24:36-49**

Guided reflection:

I love it that Jesus showed up to his disciples and allowed them to acknowledge their doubt and to see his hands and his feet and his side. He shared with them how it all fit together from the OT prophesies to his resurrection. He promised that His spirit would be on them and then took them out to Bethany – outside of town – and blessed them and ascended into heaven. What joy! What energy! The same spirit that raised Christ from the dead was now theirs! And ours! WOW!

Guided prayer:

*“Open my eyes…empower my spirit with your spirit… and help me see your power instead of my helpless state! You want to use ME! Here I am, fill me and use me. Amen”*