**I Love to Tell the Story**

***Some of the following days we gave already studied in the first three gospels. Look back and remember and then read John’s point of view…Do you see anything new?***

**Day 241 Jesus is arrested John 18: 1-14**

We read this story in Matt 26:47-56; Mark 14: 43-52; Luke 22: 47-53 and now in John…

Guided reflection from dat 198

This passage probably only took a few quick and chaotic minutes – Judas arrived, betrayed Jesus with a kiss and Jesus is seized and asked: “Judas – why the charade?” Peter must have felt guilty for the fact he fell asleep when Jesus needed him, so he was ready to spring into action now… and whacked off the ear of one of the servants… and Jesus rebuked him! Jesus healed the bleeding ear! Just imagine Peter’s confusion: Jesus told him he would betray him… but when he stepped up to protect him with what he knew to use – his sword – Jesus rebukes! What does Jesus want, anyway? What is going on, Jesus? Ever thought you were doing the right thing, only to find it was not right? All the Disciples cut and ran.

Guided prayer:

*“O God, the specifics of these passages help us to know the harsh realities of being a disciple. Your ways are not our ways… our ways of doing battle are not your ways. Help me to understand your heart when I am confused. Amen”*

**Day 232 Peter denies Jesus John 18: 15-19:16**

On day 199 we read this story in Matt 26: 57-75; Mark 14: 53-72; Luke 22: 54-71

Guided reflection:

This is a long passage… Jesus was on trial and his accusers twisted the truth to give them grounds for crucifixion. Jesus just stood there and took it! They began to beat him…and he did nothing. Peter did not cut and run with the others, he stood outside to watch. Peter did not know this Jesus – where is the Man who calmed the storm… the one who spoke to demons and they went running… the one who had more power than lameness, or blindness, or leprosy! Jesus looked powerless now! When they asked Peter if he was with that man in there, Peter denied even knowing him… three times he denied it and even cursed… just as the rooster crowed. Peter did not know the end of the story yet... all he knew was that this Jesus was being beaten to a pulp and wanted nothing of it! In this life, we do not always see the end from the beginning, do we?

Guided prayer:

*“I do not know what Jesus had to go through all of this – maybe when I get into your throne room in heaven, you can help me understand. Right now, I identify more with Peter than with Jesus. Forgive me for my lack of trust sometimes ! Amen”*

**Day 243 Jesus’ crucifixion John 19: 17-30**

We read Matt 27:45-56; Mark 15:33-41; Luke 23:44-49 on day 208 ..does John add new nuances?

Guided reflection:

I have stood by the bed of a dying one many times, and if it has been a long, painful death, there is a point when I know the end is coming and all of the sudden I am glad… his/her struggle is almost over. That is how I feel when I get to this portion of the story… it is almost over… but first, we have to hear the words “My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?” If Jesus was fully human as well as fully divine, he would need to enter into the whole of human experience. Have you ever asked “My God, where are you? Have you forsaken me?” Hold on, dear child, joy comes in the morning, weeping only lasts for the night. There has to be a death before there can be a resurrection! It is a spiritual cycle – after you surrender, you give up, you let go… then comes the answer. Does it feel like Friday in your life? This is not the whole of your story either… Sunday, resurrection is coming! Hold on!!! Reflect over your life – when has new life come after a dying time?

Guided Prayer:

*“Thank you, God that after dying times comes the resurrection. Thank you that Jesus was able to surrender his spirit to you.. Even in Jesus’ death, people were able to see that Jesus was your Son. Thank you for the times you have been with me when I thought you had forsaken me. The next time life throws me a time that feels like it is over, help me hold on and remember that it is out of brokenness that you create new life… that out of deaths come resurrections! Amen!”*

**Day 244 Jesus dies of a broken heart John 19: 31-42**

Guided reflection:

This little detail about not breaking Jesus’ bones and the soldiers piercing his side has been explained to me in the past by a physician. His observation was that when blood and water pour out, the heart has broken. In reality, Jesus died of a broken heart.

Guided prayer:

“*Did Jesus die of a broken heart? Of course, he felt the weight of the sin of the world…. But thanks be to God, this is not the end of the story! Amen”*

**Day 245 The Empty Tomb John 20: 1-23**

**Guided reflection:**

In John’s version of the empty tomb we find Peter being the one to go in… yet Mary Magdalene thinks she sees the gardener but really it is Jesus! Alive! Jesus shows up where the disciples are locked in, cowering in fear. How could they not be? They saw Jesus dead on the cross! They knew the determination of the Pharisees to stamp out Jesus believers. They had pinned all their hopes on Jesus! And he shows up\..alive…scars and all. But notice what Jesus tells them: “if you forgive the sins of any they are forgiven.. but .if you do not forgive the sins of any, they are not forgiven.” Could this be about our need to forgive, because if we do not, we keep carrying it along with us?

Guider Prayer:

Oh, God, I would have a hard time believing and I know the whole story! Please open my eyes that I might see glimpses of truth you have for me”. By the way, help me forgive others so they and I can be free. Amen.

I have stood by the bed of a dying one many times, and if it has been a long, painful death, there is a point when I know the end is coming and all of the sudden I am glad… his/her struggle is almost over. That is how I feel when I get to this portion of the story… it is almost over… but first, we have to hear the words “My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?” If Jesus was fully human as well as fully divine, he would need to enter into the whole of human experience. Have you ever asked “My God, where are you? Have you forsaken me?” Hold on, dear child, joy comes in the morning, weeping only lasts for the night. There has to be a death before there can be a resurrection! It is a spiritual cycle – after you surrender, you give up, you let go… then comes the answer. Does it feel like Friday in your life? This is not the whole of your story either… Sunday, resurrection is coming! Hold on!!! Reflect over your life – when has new life come after a dying time?

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