

## **Welcome to the Day of Prayer!**

**Good Friday  
April 10, 2020**

Before you pray take time to quiet your heart. Reflect for a few quiet moments on this commentary as you turn your focus from your busy day to the Lord, your Savior and your God. Now relax. Be assured that God brought you here today.

Today is Good Friday. This is the day we remember what Our Lord and Savior went through to save us from our sins—the mocking, the humiliation, the scourging, the spitting, the nails, and the painful separation from His Father. The Bible tells us in Matthew 21 that five short days before this event He received a hero's welcome, when all Jerusalem cheered as He rode into the city on a donkey. It was seen as a triumphal entry for Jesus, the man the people praised as their King. The celebration was premature because the people who cheered didn't understand Christ's real triumph. When the "Hosannas" turned to shouts of "Crucify Him" on Good Friday, Jesus triumphed over death and sin, over Satan and hell.

We can see some similarities between what happened in Jerusalem more than 2000 years ago and what is happening in our country now. Just a few short weeks ago we were celebrating because God was bringing us new a Lead Pastor as an answer to our prayers. We were looking forward to a proper and fitting celebration with Pastor Steve passing the baton to Pastor Billy during worship services that would be overflowing with members of a grateful Redeemer's Fellowship family. Today our church building is empty and we are worshiping online; together but not face to face. Some of us are concerned about our future as a nation, as a state, as a community. Some of us probably feel as the followers of Jesus must have felt that weekend between the crucifixion and the resurrection – is it over?

So, is it over? The answer is no. Not just no but a resounding NO! God has promised NEVER to forsake us (Deuteronomy 31:6). Jesus promised that He will be with us to the end of the age (Matthew 28:20). Just as the lifeless body of Jesus began to breathe on that resurrection morning so many years ago, our people will again fill our Worship Center and sing praises to our Friend and Savior, Jesus the Risen Christ. God was not surprised by the coronavirus. God is not surprised that our places of worship are empty now. God is not surprised that we are worshiping together online. In fact, God has been preparing us for this very moment. That is why we need to approach this with peace and not panic, with love and not fear, with hope and not despair, with praise and not apprehension.

The Scriptures tell us that God hears all our prayers. Praise Him for that as you pray on faithfully. Remember – prayer is never wasted, never in vain.

Now, it is time to pray.

## **ADORATION OF GOD:**

Start your prayer time by telling God what you know about His character and think of Him. When we ponder and praise God first, our problems are quickly put in perspective. Praise Him for His characteristics:

- **God is self-existent;** *He created all things; every living thing owes its existence to Him.*
- **God is infinite** in time (*He is eternal*), and space (*He is omnipresent*), and in power (*He is omnipotent*), and in knowledge (*He is omniscient*).
- **God is absolutely holy;** *there is none like Him, and no wickedness or evil is a part of His nature.*
- **God is personal;** *He isn't just a force, but a person, and deals personally with every other person.*
- **God is righteous;** *He Himself is the standard by which we know right and wrong, and He will judge the world one day in righteousness.*
- **God is immutable;** *He does not change or grow. He is absolutely faithful to His word, and remains the same yesterday, today and forever.*
- **God is loving;** *He defines and embodies love; He seeks our best interests regardless of the cost to Him or the worthiness of the recipient.*
- **God is sovereign;** *He accomplishes His will unhindered by external influences or forces; He exercises supreme power and authority.*

## **CONFESSION TO GOD:**

The Apostle Peter was sure that he would follow Jesus wherever he went. In Matthew 26, after Jesus said His disciples would all fall away: "Peter said to Jesus, 'Even if I must die with you, I will not deny you!' And all the disciples said the same." That same night, the night before the crucifixion, Peter denied Jesus three times and then wept bitterly because he had failed, as Jesus knew he would. Peter must have been devastated by his sin and may have thought he could no longer be of any use to His Savior. But we know because of 1 Corinthians 15:5 that the risen Christ appeared to Peter (the text says Cephas which is another name for Peter) probably to tell him personally that his sins had been forgiven. What a blessing for Peter.

Like Peter, we recognize the truth in God's Word, which says, "all have sinned and fall short of the Glory of God" (Romans 3:23). We also know the blessing of complete forgiveness thanks to what our Savior did on the cross on that horrible and blessed day.

Now quietly, whisper to God what He already knows, what is never hidden from His gaze—acknowledge all your failings and sins; tell Him all the things you have done wrong and the things you have left undone that you should have done.

Having confessed, claim His forgiveness:

*If we confess our sins,  
He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins  
and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9)*

### **THANKSGIVING TO GOD:**

*For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son,  
that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.  
For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world,  
but in order that the world might be saved through him. (John 3:16-17)*

Good Friday is the day the Psalmist referred to when he wrote in Psalm 118:24, "This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it." This is the day Jesus suffered and died as a sacrifice to cover all of our sins, now and forever; the day that Jesus was rejected, mocked, beaten and crucified. This is the day that Christ died for our sins so that we would have new life with Him when He rose from the grave on Easter morning. Good Friday is a day to rejoice and be glad—so, REJOICE AND BE GLAD that Jesus, your Savior, suffered and died for you!

Today is also a day to give thanks. Give thanks to the Lord for loving us. Give thanks to Jesus for willingly dying to cover our sins with His blood. Give thanks to God for raising His Son from the dead so we can have new life with Him and have it abundantly. Give thanks to the Lord for providing for us. Give thanks to the Lord for caring for us. Give thanks to the Lord for never leaving us. Give thanks to the Lord for... (add your own reasons).

Give thanks to the Lord because His steadfast love endures forever and ever. Amen.

### **SUPPLICATION TO GOD:**

Philippians 4:6-7 reminds us:

*Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything,  
by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.  
And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding,  
will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

Matthew 7: 7-8 commands us:

*"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find;  
knock, and it will be opened to you.  
For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds;  
and to the one who knocks it will be opened."*

Pour your heart out to God. Tell Him all your needs, your worries, your requests. Ask Him to answer and intervene, to do so according to His great power, infinite wisdom, and incomprehensible love. Remember to pray for leaders, for the health and strength of marriages and families, for the physical and financial needs of others, for those who do not know Christ to come to trust Him as Savior, and for all of us who are part of Redeemer's Fellowship—for our spiritual health and growth.

Redeemer's Fellowship has set a mission target to baptize 100 new believers in 2020. Ask God to show you ways you can support the mission target:

*Father God, what can I do to support our mission target? Who do I need to talk to about Jesus, about salvation? What do I need to do to prepare for that encounter? Help me to trust You for the right words to be said at the right time, in the right place to help (insert name of person you are planning on talking to) find and follow Jesus. Thank You for bringing more people into my life who I can talk to about Jesus.*

Pray now for our nation, our state, our county, our town, and our church to be restored in a way that will bring glory to the Name of Jesus. Pray that people will be healed, spiritually, physically, and economically.

As you continue to pray, you might use this prayer to stimulate your own prayers:

*Lord God,*

*You are older than the stars. You are called "The Ancient of Days," and before time began You existed forever. You created our world and everything in it. By Your Word the sun and stars and heavenly bodies and the entire universe appeared. By Your Word the dry land, the oceans and the mountains came into existence. You spoke and living things at once existed — plants, trees, animals, birds and fish. By Your own hand You created man from the dust of the earth and from man, made woman. You breathed life into them, gave them a spirit and a soul, and they lived. You created them to be husband and wife and to love one another as You have loved us. Your creation continues to this day. Long after this world is done, You still will be God.*

*You are alive as no other; in fact, all life has its source in You. With every birth, we see the marks of Your creative genius. With every death, we are reminded that our hours are in Your hands. You give breath to every living thing, and when You take it away, our days end.*

*You know us better than we know ourselves, love us better than we love ourselves, and order all things according to the pleasure of Your will. Every pleasant thing in our lives, every answer to prayer, every provision of need, every friend we enjoy, and every trouble we escape is a sign of Your steady goodness.*

*We confess that we tend to take for granted all You have done for us. You have been so good for so long that we expect Your gracious gifts to continue. We confess that at times we have lost sight of Your purposes for us, and have instead become enamored with our expected standard of living. We have lived for pleasures and diversions, but we have forgotten that people around us are without forgiveness and hope; their eternal future is eclipsed by our present convenience. Forgive us.*

*We want to be more responsive to the promptings of Your Spirit, and less enslaved to our plans and to-do lists. We want Your Word to fill our minds, to bubble up in our quiet moments, reminding us who You are, who we are, and the directions You intend for us to go. We want to see You work in us so that yesterday's failures and frustrations have less control over us tomorrow. We want You to work through us to do those things that are lasting. And we want You to work apart from us, to see Your power and glory evidenced in ways that strike awe in our hearts and remind us that You alone are God.*

*Thank You, Lord, for our church—for each person woven into the fabric of this fellowship. Thank You for each new person who enriches us with fresh stories of Your working. May those who are seeking You in our midst find You; may each one come to understand and believe You are the Savior, the giver of grace, the one who changes hearts and restores relationships. Thank You for our Elders and leaders who love us and so faithfully serve us as a church. Thank You for each person who serves our children and our young people, who love them and care about what happens to them spiritually in the days ahead. Thank You for those who serve us in hundreds of practical ways, but who rarely are seen or thanked. God, may You whisper to them how important they are and what they do. Thank You for the generosity and faithfulness of each person who gives; may You out-give them, Lord!*

*God, we ask for Your hand of protection to be on our Elders and leaders. Protect them from the schemes of the evil one. We pray that they would shepherd us with Your wisdom and love and that they would have joy in their tasks and callings. Use them beyond what they'd ever think possible, for Your own glory.*

*We lift up our new Lead Pastor Billy Rieder and his family to you. Please put your banner of protection around them as they adapt to their new life here in Roseburg. We pray for health in their bodies, wisdom in their minds and love in their hearts. We pray that the Rieder family will fall in love with the Redeemer's family as we fall in love with them. Thank you Father for the great work you began here under Pastor Steve's leadership and for continuing that great work with Billy as the Lead Pastor.*

*We pray also for Pastor Steve and Barb, as Steve steps down from being Lead Pastor, a role he has held for more than 30 years here. We give thanks for all the great things You have done here at Redeemer's under his leadership and ask You to bless Steve and his family as they adjust and prepare for the next great thing You have in store for them.*

*We pray for both Steve and Billy as they work together during this transition to bring Glory to Your Name and help Redeemer's prosper. We know, Father, that You want the best for Redeemer's Fellowship, so we pray that Billy will soak up whatever wisdom he needs from Steve as they spend time together over the next few months. We pray for both Billy and Steve to grow as wholehearted followers of Jesus as they adapt to their new roles. We pray for each person who worships at Redeemer's to grow as a wholehearted follower of Jesus during this transition year.*

*We pray, Father, for our Pastors, staff, and volunteers who serve us here at Redeemer's. You have assembled an amazing team, and we ask You to guide them and bless them. Help them to continue to rely on You and Your Word to accomplish Your will for Your people here in Roseburg. Put Your banner of protection around them and their families. We are grateful for them, Father.*

*Now, Lord, we ask that You would provide for those of us who are serving You elsewhere, and also under quarantine: For Sarah, to be refreshed, recharged, and encouraged while she is home with us, and as she weighs whether and when she can return to Asia. We pray for discernment, wisdom and strength for all of the wholehearted Christ followers who live and serve in Asia. For Dave and Bethany, as they assess the greatest needs and the best uses of their time and efforts, and for Bethany as she hopes to resume graduate school when her university is opened again. For Matt and Angela, especially for healing as Angela is dealing with health issues while caring for their family. For Jason and Kaely as they reach college student athletes with the Gospel and develop leaders in universities all over the Pacific Northwest, which is especially challenging as students and athletes have been sent home. For David and Kristin, as they desire to develop relationships with those who are lost but are curious about the Gospel. For Steve and Sharon, who have returned home because of health concerns. Pray for them as they assess their future plans. For our Strategic Partners, Roduel and Hilda, as they work with online tools to teach and disciple others in the Ixcán region of Guatemala. Help others who are even now considering how they will partner with bringing the Good News of Jesus to the nations. May each of our partners find encouragement in doing Your work, and may they also know of our love for them as they are serving You.*

*Lord, there are many among us who are suffering physically, spiritually and financially. We ask for Your healing power to come upon them. We pray that as the Great Physician, You will work in and through the doctors, nurses and medicines and miracles to heal those who are ill. We pray that Your Holy Spirit would be alive and powerful in the lives of those who need spiritual uplifting. And we pray that those who need financial help would find the blessings they need through work, support, and miracles. Through all this we pray that Your Name would be glorified, so all would know that You are the author of life and salvation and love.*

*What is going on in our life right now is unprecedented, unexpected, and troubling. We are concerned about our health and the health of our loved ones; we are concerned about our jobs and our financial well-being; we are concerned about the nation's economy and the stock market. We wonder when or if things will ever be back to normal. Father, even as we know You are not surprised by any of these things that are happening, we know that You offer us peace and comfort when we come to You in prayer. Still, this time is really hard, God. It's scary. We don't know which way to turn. Well, we know we're supposed to turn to You. But it's not easy, Lord, because even though we know this will end, we don't know when or what things will be like when it's over. So help us, Father, help me, to remember that You are God and there is no other. Help me to know that You are "...our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble" (Psalm 46:1). Help me to trust in You, because we know that "You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on You" (Isaiah 26:3). So please, Jesus, restore order to our lives, our jobs, our town, our state, our nation and our world. Get us back to work and back to worshiping together. We pray that You would give our leaders wisdom to do the right things and make the right moves to help us get past this crisis as quickly as possible. We pray for the medical personnel and first responders who are on the front lines battling against COVID-19. We ask that You give guidance and wisdom to those who are working to develop vaccines and treatments to heal and prevent this from happening again. Let us pray as Peter did in 1 Peter 5:6–11:*

*Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you. Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world. And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you. To him be the dominion forever and ever. Amen.*

*Lord, the world does look very dark right now, but we will always focus on Your light of hope and truth. We know what's at the end! And we pray that we'd take the window of opportunity to present clearly the Good News of Jesus. May many, many individuals pass from death to life because of Your working through us!*

*Father God, as we connect this weekend — in person or at a distance — with family and friends, we pray that we would remember and celebrate all You have done for us. We pray that when our family and friends look on us this year they will see Jesus. And we pray especially that those who do not know You will see something of Jesus in us that will allow Him to draw them into a personal saving relationship with Him.*

*Thank You, God, for all You are and all You have done. Thank You for Your promises and Your unfailing love. Thank You that, because of Christ, You will never treat us as our sins deserve. Thank You that You will never leave or abandon us. With hearts of gratitude, we pray confidently in Jesus' name. Amen.*

Don't withhold anything from God. Tell Him everything that concerns you. Entrust to him your specific requests and ask Him to work according to His great love, His limitless power, and His perfect wisdom and will.

### ***CLOSING THOUGHTS:***

As you finish your dedicated prayer time, ponder this thought adapted from a commentary on Mark 15:39 in *A Closer Walk New Testament*, from Walk Through the Bible Ministries:

There is no greater success story, no greater victory, no greater conquest than the Resurrection. The day Christ rose from the grave was the day the apparent tragedy of the His crucifixion was transformed into eternal triumph!

And as if that weren't enough, there's more. Christ's resurrection makes His success story your success story because He lives in you.

He lives in the lives of all Christians who know the truth of this verse: "I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." (Galatians 2:20)

That's a success story with new chapters being written every day

One of those chapters is reserved for you. How will today's page read?

This Good Friday, as we look forward to Easter Sunday, may your heart be filled with gratitude for your Savior, and may your heart be flooded with hope.

***WORSHIP AND COMMUNION:*** *Join us online at 6:30pm this Friday, April 10, for a focused time of worship and in-home communion (info at [redeemers.org](http://redeemers.org)).*