

## Easter Prayer Guide

### *A 14-day Journey in Prayer Through the Words of Jesus*

As we approach Easter 2024, we invite you to pray in faith that God will move among us in mighty and powerful ways. It is not our desire to pray our own ideas, but we seek to anchor our praying in the heart of Jesus. And our best window into his heart is revealed in the things he said. The last words that Jesus spoke on the way to the cross and the first words he spoke after his resurrection uncover his heart for all of his disciples. Because of that, they give us an appropriate guide for our prayers. We want to journey to the cross and beyond the empty tomb over the next 14 days by praying and reflecting on the words of Christ. Each day, we will consider Jesus' words and then pray together for his kingdom to come and his will to be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Praying is spiritual breathing, essential for our life in God. As we meditate on God's Word, we breathe in the promises and purposes of God. In prayer, we also breathe out, responding to God's Word. We want to encourage you to set aside some time each day for focused prayer. You may want to begin your day with prayer. Use the prayer points to guide you. Read through them and ask the Holy Spirit to lead you as you pray. Don't try to move quickly through your prayers, but take time to listen and interact with God. Trust that God wants to meet with you and share his heart as you share your heart with him.

Here are some helpful tips on how you could pray this week:

- **Commit to a specific time each day to devote to prayer.** Find a place where you can be free of distractions and alone with God.
- **Use the prayer points and Scripture** in this guide to focus and fuel your praying. **Write** the Scripture and prayer point on a card and carry it with you, post it on your social media, make it the **screensaver on your phone**—whatever you can think of to keep these prompts in front of you. Use them throughout the day and invite others to join you in praying. You could even set up a Zoom call with friends, or members of your small group. Pray together as a family.

- You can take it a step further by **journaling** your prayers each day, simply writing out your prayers to God. This is a great opportunity to hide God's Word in your heart, working to memorize the verses as you meditate and pray.

### **How to Fast This Week**

Once again, we are inviting you to consider fasting one or more days during this time of prayer. As we begin this season of prayer, we're setting Monday, March 25 as a day of fasting for the entire church. We will use this day to kick off our Easter season of prayer.

**Why do we fast?** Simply put, the goal of fasting is to turn ourselves from worldly things and set our minds and hearts fully on God. It is not a way to manipulate God or coerce him to hear and answer our prayers; rather, it acknowledges our complete dependence on him. Fasting awakens us to the reality that we are so often driven by our fleshly desires and appetites. It humbles us and awakens us to our great need for and reliance on God. As you consider fasting, we want to encourage you to listen to the Holy Spirit. You may choose to skip a meal and use that time to pray.

**If you are new to fasting**, here are a few resources to help you get started: [Fasting for Beginners \(3-minute read\)](#), [The Secret Benefit of Fasting \(2-minute read\)](#), and [Pastor J.D.'s Wisdom on Fasting \(2-minute read\)](#).

## **Monday, March 25**

“Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” - Luke 23:34a (ESV)

What Jesus spoke that day on the cross is for us today. We've been offered forgiveness and cleansing. If we confess our sins, agreeing with what he says about who we are and what we've done, he has promised to forgive and cleanse us.

### *A Prayer for You*

- Start by asking God to reveal any unconfessed sin or rebellion. Confess, call it by name, admit that you were wrong, and repent.
- Ask God to help you live in complete surrender and obedience to him.
- Is there anyone from whom you have withheld forgiveness? Ask God to give you the grace to forgive and release them.

### *A Prayer for Others*

- Pray that God would make you aware of those around you who have not received forgiveness in Jesus. Pray for boldness as a witness, in sharing and inviting them to hear the gospel this Easter.
- Ask God, through the preaching of the Word and by the power of his Spirit, to bring conviction of sin and release from bondage.
- Pray that we would see many, including our own family and friends, come to hear and believe the offer of forgiveness and cleansing in Jesus.

## **Tuesday, March 26**

“Today you will be with me in paradise.” - Luke 23:43b

If there was ever proof that salvation is by grace through faith and not by works, this is it. Jesus offers salvation and eternal life to the worst of sinners, regardless of what they have done.

### *A Prayer for You*

- Praise God today and thank him for so great a salvation, that death has lost its sting and that we have eternal life through faith in Jesus.

- Ask God to help you cultivate eternal hope, as you set your mind and heart on things above and not on earthly things.
- Pray that you would always be aware of eternity—and that you would joyfully and sacrificially live with Christ’s return in mind.

*A Prayer for Others*

- Today, pray for specific people in your life who have yet to trust Jesus. Ask God to cause them to see and know, and to believe and confess that Jesus is the Son of God, the Savior of the world.
- Pray that your brothers and sisters in Christ would live with confidence and joy, knowing they are forgiven.
- Ask God to give us patience and endurance as we wait for Jesus’ return.

**Wednesday, March 27**

“Woman, behold, your son!” - John 19:26b

Even in the midst of his own agony, Jesus was mindful of the pain of others. His own pain didn’t keep him from noticing and even making provision for his mother. He sees your pain today, and he cares.

*A Prayer for You*

- Cast all your anxiety on him. Tell him what troubles you. Believe that he cares for you in everything you face.
- Ask God to supply whatever it is that you need today.
- Pray that you would be satisfied in his love, joyful and confident that he cares for you.

*A Prayer for Others*

- Ask God to open your eyes to those who are hurting around you. Pray that by his Spirit, he would show you how to care for them.
- Ask God to lead us, as a church, to protect, advocate, and care for the hurting around us.
- Pray that God would make us a church family who cares well for one another and for our community.

## **Thursday, March 28**

“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” - Mark 15:34b; Matthew 27:46b

Because Jesus bore our sins, because he became sin for us, he was cut off from the presence of God. He endured the agony of separation from the Father so that we wouldn't have to be excluded from his presence. It was the will of the Father that Jesus bear the penalty for our sin so that we could be made righteous by faith in him.

### *A Prayer for You*

- Rejoice in this glorious truth: He was forsaken so that you never have to be!
- Ask God to keep you from fear and make you aware of his presence even in difficulty and hardship.
- Pray that God would make his presence real and known to you today.

### *A Prayer for Others*

- Pray that those who feel forsaken would come to know the acceptance of the One who loves them.
- Ask God to lead you in sharing the good news with your family and friends that God has come to us in Jesus.
- Pray that many would respond to the invitation to come and hear the gospel this Easter.
- Pray that we would all experience the presence of God as we worship together.

## **Friday, March 29**

“I thirst.” - John 19:28b

John 19:28 indicates that Jesus said this so that the Scriptures might be fulfilled, specifically Psalm 69:21, which says, “They put gall in my food and gave me vinegar for my thirst” (NIV). All along the way, God foretold his plan for our salvation through Jesus and then fulfilled it according to the Scriptures.

### *A Prayer for You*

- Give thanks for the testimony of Scripture, where we see the thread of God's redemption story from Genesis to Revelation.
- Praise God that all his promises are "Yes" and "Amen" in Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 1:20).
- Ask God to give you a greater hunger for his Word and a deeper commitment to abiding in it.

### *A Prayer for Others*

- Ask God to make us a people who know and believe the Word of God. Ask God to give insight and wisdom to those who teach our kids and students.
- Pray that God would speak powerfully through the preached Word at the Summit.
- Pray specifically for Pastor J.D. and the message he will preach on Easter Sunday. Pray for clarity and conviction.
- Ask God to awaken those who hear his Word declared this Easter.

## **Saturday, March 30**

"It is finished." - John 19:30

Completed. Fulfilled. Finished. Done. At what looked like the moment of defeat, Jesus cried out in victory. Pray that on Easter we would joyfully celebrate the victory won by Jesus on our behalf. It is finished. There's nothing more to be done. The price has been paid. Jesus did what God purposed for him to do. He was obedient, and God gained the victory.

### *A Prayer for You*

- Thank God for Jesus' finished work. Praise him for the victory won by Jesus' humble submission and obedience unto death.
- Ask God to give you clarity about what he has called you to do. Pray for a steadfast commitment to live out the calling—to go where he calls you to go and to do what he calls you to do.

### *A Prayer for Others*

- Pray that The Summit Church would faithfully commit ourselves to the work God has given us to be witnesses in RDU and around the world.
- Pray that we would be “steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord [our] labor is not in vain” (1 Corinthians 15:58).
- Ask God to use us to raise up the next generation to be devoted disciples of Christ.

### **Sunday, March 31**

“Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!” - Luke 23:46

Just as he had prayed throughout his life and ministry, Jesus now cries out again to his Father. Having declared victory, Jesus now speaks a word of surrender, entrusting himself to the One who loves him. Even in death, he knows he can trust the Father.

### *A Prayer for You*

- As we celebrate the Resurrection today, ask God to fill you with joyful hope and eager expectation as you surrender to him.
- Pray that God would help us set our hopes on his purposes and plans for us.
- Even as you began in faith, ask God to strengthen your faith today.

### *A Prayer for Others*

- Pray that today, Easter Sunday, many would come to our Easter service and would respond in joyful surrender to God and his offer of eternal life.
- Ask God to give faith and courage to respond to the call to be saved.
- Pray that those who submit their lives to Christ today would commit to being disciple-making disciples for the rest of their lives.

### **Monday, April 1**

“Jesus said to her, ‘Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?’ Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, ‘Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.’ Jesus said to her, ‘Mary.’ She turned and said to him in Aramaic, ‘Rabboni!’ (which means Teacher).” - John 20:15–16

Jesus met Mary in her sadness and grief. He came to her in her confusion. He came looking for her, meeting her where she was. And he revealed himself to her as he called her by name. Thousands of years later, Jesus still comes to those who are hurting. He still reveals himself to those who are broken and confused. Our resurrected Lord still comes to seek and save the lost.

#### *A Prayer for You*

- Praise God that he came looking for you, revealing himself to you, calling you to life in him.
- Ask God to continue to fill you with faith and hope, even in the midst of grief and pain and loss, trusting him when you do not understand.
- Pray that the presence of your resurrected Savior would continue to give you joy and peace as you trust in him.

#### *A Prayer for Others*

- Give thanks to God for everyone who responded this weekend to the call to place their trust in Jesus.
- Pray that they would grow in their faith and that they would experience daily the glory of the indwelling Christ.
- Ask God to help them find and establish relationships in the church that will help them grow in their faith and walk in obedience to our God.

### **Tuesday, April 2**

“And he said to them, ‘O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?’”

- Luke 24:25–26

In spite of what they had seen and heard, many in Jesus’ day did not understand. Jesus spoke words of life, using the witness of the Scriptures to illuminate their hearts and minds. Even today, God speaks by his Holy Spirit through his Word to awaken us to truth. He grants understanding and faith that leads to salvation.



### *A Prayer for You*

- Praise God that he opened the eyes of your own heart to see and believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God.
- Ask God to open your own mind and heart to see and understand truth as you read and study the Bible.
- Pray that he would give you the ability and understanding to share the Word of God in a way that helps others learn to believe and trust in him.

### *A Prayer for Others*

- Pray for those who heard the truth on Easter but have not yet believed. Ask God to give them faith to surrender to Jesus.
- Ask God, by the power of his Holy Spirit, to continue to remind them of what they heard, bringing to mind gospel truth.
- Pray that God would continue to put believers in their path who would share the gospel again and again, so they might believe and be saved.

## **Wednesday, April 3**

“Jesus said to him, ‘Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.’” - John 20:29

Thomas had declared that he would not believe unless he saw the resurrected Jesus and touched his wounds. Jesus graciously revealed himself to Thomas, inviting him to believe. Jesus blessed Thomas but also promised blessing to those who would believe without seeing.

### *A Prayer for You*

- Give thanks to God for the way he revealed himself to you and called you to trust and believe.
- Praise him for the ways he has blessed you and enriched your life through your faith in his finished work on the cross. Pray that his goodness to you would increase your faith.
- Ask God to continue the work he began in you, growing you in your confidence in and dependence on him.

### *A Prayer for Others*

- Pray for those who are doubting, questioning, and searching for proof that Jesus is indeed the way, the truth, and the life. Ask God to open their eyes to see and believe.
- Pray that God would empower believers to share their faith boldly.
- Ask God to raise up a new generation of pastors and teachers who can clearly articulate the gospel in a winsome and compelling way.

### **Thursday, April 4**

“Then he said to them, ‘These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.’” - Luke 24:44

Jesus came to fulfill the Word of God. Paul would tell the church at Corinth to remember that “Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures” (1 Corinthians 15:3–4). From cover to cover, the Bible tells us the story of redemption and how Jesus would come to save us. Because of that, we can live with confidence in our risen Savior, Jesus Christ.

### *A Prayer for You*

- Ask God, by his Holy Spirit, to reveal himself to you and strengthen your faith as you read the Bible.
- Pray that he would lead you to faithfully set aside time to be with him in his Word and in prayer.
- Ask God to empower you to share truth from his Word as you seek to invest in and encourage others.

### *A Prayer for Others*

- Pray that those who have not yet believed would hear the good news of the gospel in the preaching of God’s Word.
- Ask God to use NextGen ministries at the Summit to teach our children and students to know and believe the Word of God.

- Pray that our pastors and teachers would be faithful to preach the whole counsel of God's Word. Ask God to strengthen his church to stand firm on the Word of God.

## **Friday, April 5**

"As they were talking about these things, Jesus himself stood among them, and said to them, 'Peace to you!'" - Luke 24:36

The prophet Isaiah said Jesus would be called the "Prince of Peace." Ephesians 2:17-18 says, "And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near. For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father." Peace with God. Peace with each other. And peace in a world gone mad. All of this is ours by faith in Jesus. He is our peace.

### *A Prayer for You*

- Ask God to fill you with faith to believe that there is now "no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:1).
- Pray that he would enable you to cast all your anxieties on him and rest, knowing that he cares for you.
- Ask God to help you mend any broken relationships and pray that his Spirit would restore peace and unity.

### *A Prayer for Others*

- Ask God to give his sons and daughters confidence in the finished work of Jesus.
- Pray for your brothers and sisters who are filled with anxiety and fear. Pray they would experience supernatural peace as they pray and present their requests to God.
- Ask God to lead us, as his people, to do our best to live at peace with those around us, even those who are hostile to us.

## **Saturday, April 6**

"Jesus said to her, 'Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brothers and say to them, "I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" - John 20:17

Jesus clearly saw his disciples as family, his brothers and sisters, children of God the Father. We belong to him and to each other. And he expects us to live in unity and love so that the world will know that he has come to save. Our relationships have a way of validating our faith.

#### *A Prayer for You*

- Ask God to open your eyes to see others as image-bearers of God, made in the image of his Son Jesus.
- Pray that God would give you a tender heart of love for all your brothers and sisters at the Summit, enabling you to love them as you have been loved.
- Ask God to show you how to actively protect and promote unity in the family of Christ, especially toward those who are different from you.

#### *A Prayer for Others*

- Ask God to make us one at the Summit, a family that lovingly nurtures and cares for each other.
- Pray that new believers would find their place in the family of God at the Summit, experiencing the love and care of their new brothers and sisters.
- Pray that we would be a people who look not only to their own interests, but also to the interests of others (Philippians 2:4).
- Ask God to make unity in our diversity a powerful testimony to his love and power.

### **Sunday, April 7**

“And Jesus came and said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.’” - Matthew 28:18–20

Jesus did not leave his disciples to live their lives relying on their own power and ability. No, he promised them his authority, his power (resurrection power), and his presence. He gave his disciples a Great Commission and a great confidence. All that was theirs is ours. We have a great work to do and a great source of help in our resurrected Savior.

### *A Prayer for You*

- Thank God that he has exalted Jesus over all things and given him the name that is above every name. Praise him that all authority belongs to Jesus.
- Ask God to fill you with resurrection power today as you seek to walk in obedience to him, knowing that he is with you as you seek to make disciples who make disciples.
- Pray for the leading and help of his Spirit as you look to see where he is already working, joining him in calling others to follow Jesus.

### *A Prayer for Others*

- Pray that every member of the Summit would see themselves as called to make disciples, diligently seeking to learn how to share the gospel.
- Pray that we would see hundreds take steps of faith and obedience in following Jesus and growing as disciples.
- Pray that many from the Summit will hear the call to go to the nations. Ask God specifically to raise up more than 100 to go in the next three years.