

Together in the Word



This home devotional tool is designed to facilitate a form of worship that can take place in the home outside of Sunday morning. It is not meant to replace Sunday Worship, but to supplement it, especially as we live in this historical moment with an inability to gather together. Each week's issue will be based on the appointed readings for the previous Sunday in the church year.

INVOCATION

Leader¹: In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Family: Amen.

PRAYER FOR GRACE² (Morning)

Family: O Lord, our heavenly Father, almighty and everlasting God, you have brought us safely to this new day. Defend us with your mighty power, and grant that this day we neither fall into sin nor run into any kind of danger; and in all we do, direct us to what is right in your sight, through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord. Amen.

OR

PRAYER FOR PEACE (Evening)

Family: Lord God, all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works come from you. Give to us, your servants, that peace which the world cannot give, that our hearts may be set to obey your commandments. Defend us also from the fear of our enemies that we may live in peace and quietness, through the merits of Jesus Christ our Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

SCRIPTURE:

See attached sheet for Scriptures, notes, and devotional questions.

PRAYERS:

Include prayers for yourself and others, based on what you read and discussed in the Scriptures.

BLESSING:

Leader: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all.

Family: Amen.

¹ In most homes, the head of household will serve as the leader and Scripture reader.

² Families may choose either prayer based on which time of day they are using this material.

THE SCRIPTURES: (WEEK OF PALM SUNDAY)

DAY 1: Zechariah 9:9-10 (Monday³)

Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion! Shout, Daughter Jerusalem!

See, your king comes to you, righteous and victorious, lowly and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

¹⁰ I will take away the chariots from Ephraim and the warhorses from Jerusalem, and the battle bow will be broken.

He will proclaim peace to the nations. His rule will extend from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth.

Some Notes:

Zechariah tells Jerusalem to rejoice when the messianic King comes to her, because he will have with him the righteousness she needs and the salvation she craves. This King would surpass the glory and power of all Israel's kings before him. King David's rule extended to the River Euphrates at its farthest—but this King's rule would extend from the Euphrates to the very ends of the earth, from sea to sea. His worldwide kingdom would mean the end of war and the advent of peace. All this he would do not with an army, but with his person—not with violence, but with gentleness. Rejoice, daughter of Zion! Your King comes to you. Hail him!

Think about it⁴:

1. What does this Word of God teach me?
2. For what does this Word of God lead me to give thanks?
3. What sins does this Word of God lead me to confess?
4. For what does this Word of God lead me to pray?

³ The suggested days are just that: suggestions. Your family can use the readings on whichever days you would like.

⁴ These questions don't have a right or wrong answer. They are meant to lead us to think about the Scriptures and what they say to us. They are based on Martin Luther's "A Simple Way to Pray" – a letter he wrote to his barber. Simply talk through the questions one at a time, giving each question some time for input from the family.

DAY 2: Matthew 21:1-11 (Tuesday/Wednesday)

As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, ² saying to them, "Go to the village ahead of you, and at once you will find a donkey tied there, with her colt by her. Untie them and bring them to me. ³ If anyone says anything to you, say that the Lord needs them, and he will send them right away."

⁴ This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet:

⁵ "Say to Daughter Zion,
'See, your king comes to you,
gentle and riding on a donkey,
and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.'"

⁶ The disciples went and did as Jesus had instructed them. ⁷ They brought the donkey and the colt and placed their cloaks on them for Jesus to sit on. ⁸ A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. ⁹ The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted,

"Hosanna to the Son of David!"

"Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!"

"Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

¹⁰ When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, "Who is this?"

¹¹ The crowds answered, "This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee."

Some Notes:

The great King comes to his city and to his temple! He could have come with all the power and glory of the Son of God. He could have ridden a thunderstorm as his chariot with legions of angels striding beside him and creation itself singing forth the praise of its Maker. But look how he comes: Not on the storm, but on a donkey; not accompanied by heavenly warriors, but by fishermen with a spotty record of faith; not to the sound of creation singing, but to the shouts of fickle pilgrims who cheered him on Sunday but would desert him by Friday. Why did he come so humbly? Because he came not to rule us, but to save us. He came, not to command us, but to invite us. He came not to demand anything from us, but to give everything for us. He comes in the name of the Lord to save us. Hail him!

Think about it:

1. What does this Word of God teach me?
2. For what does this Word of God lead me to give thanks?
3. What sins does this Word of God lead me to confess?
4. For what does this Word of God lead me to pray?

Day 3: Philippians 2:5-11 (Thursday/Friday)

In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

⁶Who, being in very nature^[a] God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; ⁷rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature^[b] of a servant, being made in human likeness.

⁸And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!

⁹Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,¹¹ and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Some Notes:

Jesus is our King, but he came humbly to save us. Though true God, he became man. Though all powerful, he became a servant. Though immortal and eternal, he died. He not only laid aside his glory, but he took our shame upon him. He not only humbled himself, but he died as one who was cursed. Yet in this great humility, he won the peace of forgiveness for us. The King came humbly because he wasn't on the way to a throne in Jerusalem, but to a hill called Golgotha where he would fulfill God's mission and save his people. Therefore, God would give him glory greater than his humiliation—every creature will bow the knee and hail him: Jesus Christ is Lord!

Think about it:

1. What does this Word of God teach me?
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3. What sins does this Word of God lead me to confess?
4. For what does this Word of God lead me to pray?