

the crown

day 1

read Luke 4:14-21 and Isaiah 61:1-4.

Throughout his ministry, Jesus preached the coming of the Kingdom of God and as prophesied, this indeed is what the awaited-for Messiah would bring. *For a people living under Roman oppression, what kind of freedom were the Jewish people expecting from the Messiah?*

What do you think the people believed this Kingdom of God would be like?

day 2

read John 13:1-5 and John 13:12-17.

A king serves his subjects. The Son of Man washes feet.

The Kingdom of God turns things upside down.

read back through the Scriptures. **imagine** this from Jesus' perspective.

Even knowing what He was about to endure on the cross, he washed feet.

What kind of love moves someone to serve others in this way? Jesus tells

us we are "to do as he has done." In what ways have you experienced

sacrificial love or service from another follower of Christ?

describe what that experience was like.

How have you served and loved someone else? How did you feel doing this?

How ironic that the spotless Lamb of God dirtied himself with our filth!

pray: Lord Jesus, thank You for taking on our sin and making us clean.

Fill us with your sacrificial love and mercy that we may love and serve one another.

day 3

read John 12:12-13 and Mark 11:7-10.

What did the crowd mean by crying out Hosanna [save us] to Jesus as he entered Jerusalem? What did they want from a savior?

By the end of the week, it was clear that the reason they cried Hosanna was quite different than what the coming Kingdom actually meant.

The salvation Jesus provides is more than anyone could have hoped for or imagined. Through Jesus we've been made right with God and now can be called sons and daughters of God! Through Jesus' sacrifice, He conquered death - not an merely an empire.

What difference does this make in your life today?

Describe the difference between being saved from temporal circumstances and the eternal salvation which Jesus provides?

day 4

How did the crowd react when they realized Jesus wasn't going to save them in the way they imagined? (Mark 15:12-14)

How did the disciples react? (Matthew 26:50-56)

From our post cross and resurrection perspective, we understand the importance of trusting God's provision of salvation. Jesus could have easily freed the Jewish people from Roman rule. He could have restored the earthly throne to lineage of King David. He could have healed every disease and illness... and all of humanity would be without hope and lost for eternity. Despite our cries for our own imagined salvation, Jesus died to give us true salvation.

reflect and write your responses/thoughts to the questions.

What can Jesus save you from today? From what do you need to be saved?

From what circumstances in your life are you calling out to be saved?

Describe being saved in this situation. How might your understanding of God saving you differ from how He will save you? Will you trust how He wants to save you in your life's circumstances today?

When God's plans weren't what they wanted or imagined, the crowd responded with anger; the disciples responded in fear.

pray: Father, help me to trust You and Your plans. When You act in my life and my situation in ways I don't understand, give me faith to trust.

day 5 – good friday

Good Friday gives us the opportunity to do what the disciples were unable to do: to be present at the foot of the cross with Jesus. In fear, shock, and disbelief of the events that were unfolding, the disciples were unable to stand with Christ.

read the crucifixion account in Matthew 27:27-50.

picture the scene as vividly as possible. *What sounds do you hear?*

What smells fill the air? Walk with Christ on the way to Golgotha -

people pushing and shouting. Watch as the soldiers drive spikes into Jesus' wrists and feet... as they raise the cross.

As He hangs above you, what thoughts and emotions come to mind?

hear Him cry out to the Father.

Good Friday invites us to enter that most excruciating moment of standing in our own impotence, unable to stop the dying. We stand with Him, worship Him, and adore Him for the unimaginable sacrifice He's made for us.

read the verses again and whisper words of thanks as you read.

pray: Father, give me the grace to stand at the foot of the cross, to adore You Jesus, and to bless You because through the cross You've redeemed the world.