

Keeping Vigil Small Groups: Week 5 (Meeting April 6 to April 12)

Journey with Jesus: Fourth AND Fifth Weeks of Lent

Group Start - pray this prayer together: “O Lord, You have journeyed to us, from heaven to earth, in the person of Jesus. Accompany us this Lent as we journey with him to Jerusalem—to the Cross, and the Empty Tomb. Bless us individually, to grow in both faith and repentance. And bless us as a small group, to grow spiritually and in our connections to one another. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.”

Questions (prep ahead individually, then discuss):

1. Perhaps we haven’t quite spent enough time just getting to know each other. What is something in your past that made a big difference to who you are today, and what is that difference? (It could be an event or experience, a phrase or attitude that stuck with you from a family member, friend, or church, etc.)
2. We are now approaching Holy Week. What kind of preparation or planned experience during Holy Week could enable you to experience it more deeply?
3. The 4th Monday’s devotion (p.28) describes the joy of a father who receives healing for his son from Jesus. It ends by noting, “This glad father, whose faith was magnified by the Lord, helped his family grow in faith as well.” How could we intentionally make gladness and gratitude a constant element in our home life?
4. In the 4th Tuesday’s devotion (p.29), Jesus asks another man if he wants to get well. But instead of answering whether he *wanted to*, the man gave reasons he “could not.” It is possible for us to “nurse our hurt” and find a weird kind of identity and comfort in it. What about you - do you *want* to be healed, or do you tend to nurse your hurt? (And remember: the hurt can be spiritual or emotional as much as physical)

5. The 4th Friday devotion (p.32) says: “Genuine understanding comes from obedience to truth, not just learning facts” (p.32). How should this change our approach to “bible study” and/or “spiritual life”?

6. The 5th Tuesday devotion (p.36) contrasts “going through the motions” with the “true intimacy” that Jesus has with his father. What helps you find true intimacy with the Father, rather than simply going through the motions?

7. Apply the closing questions of the 5th Saturday (p.40) to yourself: “Are there moments when you, too, resist the transformative power of Jesus because it threatens your comfort or status? Do you, in your stubbornness, contribute to division rather than to unity in Christ?”

Closing Prayers

- **1) Take concise prayer requests**
- **2) Then close with this prayer, together:** “O Lord, we thank you for meeting here with us this day. You have heard the prayers we have offered; work in each as only you can. And may the things we have discussed today bear fruit in our lives, that we might return to you with our *whole* hearts and truly love our neighbors as ourselves. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.”

Final Scheduling Reminders:

- Remember that you do NOT meet during Holy Week, but you ARE encouraged to say hi and sit *and commune* together at Holy Week services.
- Your final meeting will then be the week of April 20-27. For Sunday groups, I encourage meeting at the end of week for that one (the 27th) not on Easter (the 20th). Obviously.