



SLG Gospel of John
Week 9 Day 57-63

Daily Devotion Guide
Life Together Series: Five-Year Plan
www.totalgrowth.org

Week 9

Day 57-63

I. Invocation and Adoration:

1. Invocation Prayer

“O Master, show me this morning how to yield myself up to Thee completely, and then how to ask of Thee things great enough to be worthy of a King’s giving. Make me equal in my requests to Thy infinite eagerness to give. Touch with Thy Pierced Hand the hidden springs that will cause every part of my being to fly wide open to Thee, my Lord and my God.” Amen. (Streams in the Desert, 3, 272)

2. Adoration through Psalm 143

(We’ll use this Psalm, not for today’s Bible reading, but for the sake of focusing our thoughts on God.)

Read slowly this passage at least three times and each day gather one thought about this psalm that points to God’s character and translate it into a prayer of adoration.

II. Confession

Pause now and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you your sins and ask for forgiveness.

III. Thanksgiving

List, one by one, things for which you should give thanks.

IV. Scriptural Reflection: John 17:20-26

This week we shall continue the study of the Gospel of John. Read slowly and reflectively the assigned passage twice at least and consider the questions below each day.

This short portion of Jesus' prayer is loaded with significance and deserves our careful reflection:

17:20-23—praying for complete unity

- (1) Jesus specifically mentions that He is praying for “those who will believe in (Him) through their message”:
 - a. What is its implication to these disciples who were in sorrow and fear because of Jesus' impending death and departure?
 - b. What is its implication to us for whom Jesus prayed?
- (2) Why would such oneness contribute to the world's belief in Christ? (See Jn. 13:35 as well)
- (3) What glory has He shown to the disciples?(See Jn. 1:14; Lk. 9:28ff; Rev. 1:12ff)
- (4) What glory has He given to the disciples? (2 Pet. 1:4; 2 Cor. 3:18; Heb. 12:10; 1 Jn. 3:2 & Romans 8:30)
- (5) How would this giving of glory make them one as He and the Father are?
- (6) Obviously, as it is, the oneness of “all” believers is not quite complete, so that Jesus prays for “complete unity”: what does He mean by “complete unity”?
- (7) Such “complete unity” will enable the world to know (i) that the Father has sent Him, and (ii) the Father has loved us just as He has loved Him: How will such unity make this possible?

17:24-26—praying for seeing the future glory

- (8) Where would Jesus be after His resurrection?
- (9) What will it be like when we are taken to be with Him? (See 1 Jn. 3:2; Col. 3:4; 1 Cor. 13:12 & Job 19:25-27)
- (10) How will Jesus continue to make the Father known to us?
- (11) Have you experienced the result of continuous growth in knowing the Father's love and the presence of Christ in you?
- (12) What is the main message to you today and how may you apply it to your life?

V. Meditative Reflection: The Glory of God

“I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one.” (Jn. 17:22)

I will leave it to the scholars to debate what this glory given by Jesus to us really refers to, although I tend to agree with Lenski that “It is impossible to dissociate the glory of the Father has given to Jesus from the glory mentioned in v. 1 and 5...The gift of the divine glory could not have been made to the divine nature of the Son, for this nature never was without glory, in fact, this glory is His divine nature. This glory (mentioned in Jn. 17:22) was given to Jesus in His human nature at the incarnation when the Logos assumed that nature.” (Lenski, John, 1160).

As far as the complete oneness is concerned, “Union with God and with Christ makes us a unit in ourselves (in distinction from and in opposition to the world)...Every deviation in doctrine, life, and practice from the Word mars and disrupts our oneness and hinders the fulfillment of Jesus’s prayer” (Ibid, 1157)

While I do not fully understand what this “glory” means:

- I think of “the Unapproachable Light that no one has seen or can see” (1 Tim. 6:16) and in whose presence all darkness flees;
- I think of that glorious figure of Christ who appeared to the disciples on that mountain in Luke 9:28ff and to John in Revelation 1:12ff before whom I too, must have lay dead — too awesome, too powerful, too immortal;
- But I also think of the Cross on which the Prince of Glory died defeating death, sin and Satan;
- I think of that glorious Easter morning when the stone was rolled away and the grave could not hold Him captive as Christ rose from the dead to the shouts and joy of angels and all creation; and finally

I think of the day of His return when we shall rise too to be gathered to Him in glory — Oh, what glory it will be!

Day 58

IV. Scriptural Reflection: John 18:1-14

Read slowly and reflectively the assigned passage twice at least and consider the questions below each day.

- (1) Why did John purposely point out that Jesus knew “all that was going to happen to Him”?
- (2) Did Judas know that they would bring soldiers with weapons to arrest Jesus and His disciples?
- (3) What did Judas expect to happen when they were being arrested?
- (4) Did the disciples suspect that Judas would betray Jesus at all?(Jn. 13:29)
- (5) Why did Jesus’ words — I AM (Ἐγώ εἰμι) — cause the soldiers to draw back and fall to the ground?
- (6) Do you think they maintained the same tone of voice as they answered “Jesus of Nazareth” the second time?
- (7) Look up John 6:39 and compare it to John’s remark in v.9 here: do you think John’s quote was appropriate? Why or why not?
- (8) We like to blame Peter for his denial of Jesus, but Peter did own up to his commitment to die with Jesus (Jn. 13:37)
 - a. Why did Jesus stop him?
 - b. Why then would Peter suddenly become a coward later and deny Jesus?
- (9) Jesus said, “Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me?” How do these words speak to you?
- (10) What is the main message to you today and how may you apply it to your life?

V. Meditative Reflection: Victim or Victor?

**“When Jesus said, “I am He,” they drew back and fell to the ground.”
(Jn. 18:6)**

These days there are fewer people who would dismiss Jesus of Nazareth as a myth and recognize Him as a historical figure. However, most people still consider Him a mere man — albeit a highly ethical rabbi of peace and love who fell victim to both the religious and political rulers of His time.

Being so close to the time of Jesus and still with surviving witnesses who “have heard...have seen...and have touched” Him, like the Apostle John, I believe people living in the first-century Palestine and Rome would not dismiss Jesus as a myth either. However, they would doubt if He was a mere human as well. This was perhaps one of the reasons why the Apostle John chose to write yet another book of the Gospel, being the lone surviving Apostle toward the end of the 1st century. He wanted to assure the believers and prove to the unbelieving world that Jesus is more than a mere man, He is God Himself.

This is why John forcefully records the several public declaration of Jesus addressing Himself as the Great “I AM”, the very name of Yahweh (see Meditative Reflection of Day 29 of Week #5). And, in this account of Jesus’ arrest, John supplements the accounts of the Synoptic with these words:

“Jesus, knowing all that was going to happen to Him, went out and asked them, ‘Who is it you want?’ ‘Jesus of Nazareth,’ they replied. ‘I am He,’ Jesus said. (And Judas the traitor was standing there with them.) When Jesus said, ‘I am He,’ they drew back and fell to the ground.” (Jn. 18:4-6)

John emphasizes that Jesus was not a helpless victim but that He knew “all that was going to happen to Him”, but John goes on to affirm once again who Jesus really is with His reply of “I AM”. While the NIV translates, “I am He”, the original Greek simply says, “I AM (Ἐγώ εἰμι)”. At the sound of this name, these soldiers drew back and fell to the ground! No, it was not the loudness of the voice of Jesus that threw them to the ground, it was the power of this name — the name of Yahweh!

Indeed, Jesus was no victim, He was no mere man, but God Himself who has come to “drink the cup” of suffering and death on our behalf so that the sin of world might be redeemed! He is our Redeemer, our Savior, and our God. He is the Victor, not a victim!

Day 59

IV. Scriptural Reflection: John 18:15-28

Read slowly and reflectively the assigned passage twice at least and consider the questions below each day.

- (1) When basically all others had fled, why did Peter choose to enter such a dangerous place as the high priest’s courtyard? Why was he there?
- (2) Peter was brave enough to cut off the ear of a man (likely arm-bearing); why then did he fall at the mere words of a servant girl? What had happened between these two incidents?
- (3) Compare Peter’s answer to the girl at the door in v.17 and Jesus’ answer to the soldiers in v.5 earlier. What is the difference?
- (4) Why did Peter stick around even after several questionings?
- (5) What if the rooster did not crow?
- (6) Why did Jesus choose to respond to Annas’ questions? Should He have remained silent? (Isa. 53:7)?

- (7) Jesus' answer was in essence an appeal to those who had heard Him to defend Him. Did anyone respond to His appeal? Did Peter?
- (8) Obviously, the other Synoptic Gospels have already covered this trial before Caiaphas and Annas in greater details, therefore John has chosen to give a brief account only. Why did John still choose to give a brief account of Peter's denial? (see John 21, the event that restored Peter)
- (9) What is the main message to you today and how may you apply it to your life?

V. Meditative Reflection: A Slippery Slope

**“Again Peter denied it, and at that moment a rooster began to crow.”
(Jn. 18:27)**

All three Synoptic Gospels have already dealt with the trial of Jesus before the high priest and the whole Sanhedrin in varying details; it was natural that John did not see the need to go into greater details in his Gospel account. However, it is interesting to note that in his brief account, he still chose to include the denial of Peter, and in so doing, we see a great contrast between Jesus' answer to the arresting soldiers with the firm and powerful “I AM” (Jn. 18:5) and Peter's answer to a mere servant girl's question of “I am not” (Jn. 18:17). The contrast is unmistakable! It highlights the fact that as God-loving as Peter was, and as brave as Peter was, he was just human; he was not God!

Yes, Peter was brave, far more courageous than the other disciples. He was the only one brave enough to defend Jesus by cutting the ear of the high priest's servant who was obviously arm-bearing! And, he was the only disciple who followed Jesus all the way to the court of high priest. Although, many think that “another disciple” known to the high priest was John (Jn. 18:15), based on him being the son of a fisherman, it was unlikely he had such a connection, and Calvin considers such an opinion as pure “weak conjecture”. The more credible suggestion was this disciple was someone like Nicodemus or Joseph of Arimathea (Jn. 19:38ff).

However, how could Peter's courage dissipate into thin air when he was confronted by the words of a mere servant girl? And how could he then insist on his denial when he was questioned two more times, ending with his calling down curses on himself (according to Mk. 14:71).

I believe his cutting of the servant's ear was more of a knee-jerk reaction, a spur-of-the-moment kind of courage, especially in the company of the other 10 disciples and Jesus whom he must have expected to exercise His divine power once again, and perhaps, simply “slip away” (Jn. 8:59).

But now is different!

Jesus did not exercise His divine power at all; He was arrested like a helpless coward, and all His companions, the other ten disciples, had fled away.

We have to admire him, not so much his courage, because by now he must have lost all his courage; what remained in him was love — intense love for his Lord! It was love, not courage that spurred him into taking the risk to follow Jesus all the way to the trial! But alas! At the first questioning of a maid servant, his fear took over. He must have acted in such a way, or perhaps even put on some form of disguise so as to avoid being recognized but to no avail. As he was caught by surprise, he reacted again in a knee-jerk way, lying through his teeth!

As with all lies, one lie must lead to another; he denied the Lord three times! If the rooster did not crow, perhaps, he would have lied the fourth time or even the fifth! But, by the grace of God, the rooster crowed, and he was awakened from his sins of betraying his Lord and “he went outside and wept bitterly” (Lk. 22:62)!

Are you, like Peter, on a slippery slope that your lie to God and yourself could not stop? The rooster has crowed, and it is time to “go outside and weep”!

John, unlike the other three Synoptic authors, ends his Gospel account with the restoration of Peter by Jesus after His resurrection when He renewed His call to Peter, “Follow me” (Jn. 21:19).

Day 60

IV. Scriptural Reflection: John 18:29-40

Read slowly and reflectively the assigned passage twice at least and consider the questions below each day.

- (1) Why didn't they enter the palace of Pilate? What does this tell you about these Jews who cared so much about ceremonial cleanliness and observed Passover with such seriousness?
- (2) What was implicit in John was explained more plainly by the other gospels:
 - a. What was the real reason for their desire to put Jesus to death? (Mk. 14: 63-64)
 - b. What was the charge they laid against Jesus before Pilate? (Lk. 23:1-3)
- (3) Were these Jews any different from the Islam Extremists of our days?

- (4) In his interrogation, why did Pilate, of all things, ask Jesus if He was “king of the Jews”?
- (5) What did Jesus’ response in v. 34 serve to direct Pilate’s attention to?
- (6) I think Jesus’ words are timeless in that such a question needs to be answered by everyone, Jews and non-Jews alike throughout the ages: do you agree?
- (7) Pilate’s response in v. 35 was not unexpected, which really amounted to saying, “Who you are has nothing to do with me”:
 - a. What was Jesus’ reply?
 - b. How did Jesus correct his erroneous view about Him in v. 36?
- (8) Now that Jesus affirmed that He is a king of another world, He linked His kingship and kingdom with “Truth”:
 - a. What kind of a kingdom is it that includes everyone on the side of truth?
 - b. What did Pilate (or for that matter the people of the world) understand by “truth”?
 - c. Now that Jesus makes clear that (i) He is a king, (ii) and His kingdom is of another world that includes everyone on the side of truth, and (iii) He has come to testify to the truth: how different is this “truth” from “objective truth” as understood by the world?
- (9) With saying, “What is truth?” Pilate evaded further probing of what truth is and who Jesus really is. What do you think was the meaning behind Pilate’s counter-question:
 - a. Nobody really knows what truth is?
 - b. This is a question capable for many answers? Or
 - c. There is no absolute truth?
- (10) What is the main message to you today and how may you apply it to your life?

V. Meditative Reflection: The Evil of External Religion

“We have no right to execute anyone.’ The Jews objected.”(Jn. 18:31b)

As the Jewish officials sought to manipulate Pilate into their executioner of their Messiah whom they supposedly had been eagerly awaiting, the evil of an external religion void of the fear and love of God was fully revealed. However, students of the Bible often wonder if the Jews really had the right to inflict capital punishment by themselves under the Roman rule. Allow me to share with you the insights of Leon Morris in this respect:

“The statement in John 18:31 is categorical: the Jews had no legal right to inflict the death penalty. But the situation is complicated by the fact the Romans clearly had no hand in the execution of Stephen. It is, of course, possible to regard this death as a lynching rather than an official legal

executed...but on the other hand the stoning may have taken place in proper legal form, for the witnesses laid down their clothes, apparently in an orderly manner, at the feet of a young man called Saul (Acts 7:58).

Josephus (the famous Jewish historian) mentions another stoning at a slightly later time, namely that of James the Lord's brother (*Ant.* 20, 200). But this was carried out at a time when there was no governor in the country and Josephus makes it clear that it was considered highly irregular. Indeed, the high priest was deposed on account of it. The Mishnah (a written redaction of the Jewish 'Oral Torah'), in addition to giving many and detailed regulations about the method of execution, tells us that R. Eliezer spoke of the execution of a priest's daughter for adultery...It is inherently likely that the Romans would forbid the Jews to execute people, for to permit such a practice would open up the way for subject people to engage in judicial executions of the supporters of Rome. The number of executions cited by those who hold that the Jews did have the right to carry out the death penalty is very low indeed, which seems to indicate that the procedure was rare and irregular.

The facts are best explained if we hold that the Romans retained for themselves the right to impose the death penalty, but that, in exceptional circumstances, when there was considerable popular support, the Jews might take the law into their own hands without much fear of Roman reprisals. Another view, which amounts to much the same thing, is that they could pass the death sentence, but carry it only when Roman authorities confirmed it. On this occasion, however, the amount of popular support on which the priest could rely was very uncertain. They themselves feared to arrest Jesus during the feast lest there be a riot (Mk. 14:2). Clearly this was a time for sticking to the letter of the regulations, and getting the Romans to take action (and bear the responsibility!)...The best discussion still appears to be that of A. N. Sherwin-White. He makes it clear that, 'the capital power was the most jealously guarded of all the attributes of government, not even entrusted to the principal assistants of the governors,' and that the available evidence strongly supports John's statement (in Jn. 18:31)."(NICNT, *John*, 695-7)

Day 61

IV. Scriptural Reflection: John 19:1-16

Read slowly and reflectively the assigned passage twice at least and consider the questions below each day.

John appears to give us a slightly different angle about Pilate from the other Gospel accounts. Let's reflect on this passage looking at the main characters:

Pilate:

- (1) What was his own verdict on Jesus (19:4, 6)
- (2) Given his own verdict:
 - a. Why did he still have Jesus flogged? (19:1)
 - b. Why did he ask the chief priests to crucify Jesus themselves? (19:6)
 - c. Why did he eventually have Jesus crucified? (19:16)
- (3) In the course of negotiating with the Jews, what made Pilate afraid? (19:8)
- (4) Why did he ask Jesus where He came from? (see 18:36-37)
- (5) Why didn't Jesus' reply?
- (6) Why did He eventually say that Pilate was guilty of a lesser sin?
- (7) What do you think Pilate was guilty of ultimately?

The soldiers:

- (8) The verdict was not yet pronounced, what did the soldiers do to Jesus?
- (9) Did they take the claim that Jesus is the king of the Jews seriously?
- (10) What sin were they guilty of?

The Chief priests and the Jews:

- (11) When the chief priests and their officials saw Jesus brought before them in His crown of thorns and purple robe, why did they shout, "Crucify! Crucify!"? (19:6)
- (12) While they initially accused Jesus of inciting rebellion, and now Pilate essentially cleared Him of such charges, what basis did they now seek to pressure Pilate to crucify Him? (19:7)
- (13) Was it a crime chargeable under Roman law?
- (14) When Pilate sought to free Jesus based on His innocence, what tactic did the Jews use to pressure Pilate into executing Jesus?
- (15) Did they succeed?
- (16) What sin were they guilty of, especially based on what they said in 19:15?
- (17) What is the main message to you today and how may you apply it to your life?

V. Meditative Reflection: Who Really Has Authority over Jesus' Life?

"Do you refuse to speak to me?" Pilate said. "Don't you realize I have power either to free you or to crucify you?" (Jn. 19:10)

This was a well-known fact that the Romans despised the Jews, and as the governor of the land, Pilate obviously did not care too much about the disputes among the Jews over issues of their own law. At first, he must have treated the bringing before of Jesus by the Jews a nuisance. As the Jews were adamant in killing Jesus, Pilate came to realize the seriousness of the situation, because it was not just a matter of killing a Jew, but had ramifications about the administration of fair justice which he ultimately had to give an account back to Caesar, especially should the event develop into some kind of unrest.

The piercing statement about His kingdom being not of the world plus now the charge by the Jews of Jesus alleging Himself as the Son of God (and no doubt compounded by the dream of his wife as mentioned in Matt. 27:19), Pilate, the ruthless ruler, became “even more afraid” (Jn. 19:8).

But Pilate turned his fear into anger and confronted Jesus with a rhetorical question, “Do you refuse to speak to me?” What he meant was, as the Roman governor, he had tremendous authority and power over Jesus. He was the man before whom to stoop, to whom humbly to appeal. He considered Jesus’ silence an overt insult to him. What’s more, given the present situation, he was the only one who could bestow life or death to Jesus at will with the turn of his hand!

Lenski is right as he quotes Euthymius, “Now he is frightened, now he frightens. First God’s Son unnerves him, next he thunders as though he were a god and Jesus, God’s Son, a beggar. Extremes meet” (Lenski, John 1263).

To this frightened governor, Jesus pointed out that he had no authority “at all” (*King James Version*) over Him, and for that matter, no human ruler is able to pass on whether God’s Son shall live or die. Jesus alone has the authority to lay it down (Jn. 10:18).

The truth of the matter was, Pilate had already shirked his responsibility in administering justice by asking the Jews to execute Jesus themselves (Jn. 19:6). Therefore whether Jesus would die in the hands of the Romans or directly in the hands of the Jews was a moot point. It is in this sense that Pilate was guilty of a lesser sin than Caiaphas and his people! But lesser or greater sin is not the point here, the fact is all were guilty of His death, either directly or indirectly, and that includes you and me!

Day 62

IV. Scriptural Reflection: John 19:17-24

Read slowly and reflectively the assigned passage twice at least and consider the questions below each day.

- (1) As Pilate capitulated to the pressure of the chief priests and their officials and must bear his part of the sin of the killing of Jesus (see Acts 3:13; 4:27), do you think he was beyond repentance like Judas? Why or why not?
- (2) Jesus carrying “His own cross” (in v. 17) is a loaded statement:
 - a. What kind of condition He was in as He carried His own cross?
 - b. What deeper meaning might this phrase have?
 - c. How does this phrase add to the meaning of His words in Luke 14:27?
- (3) V. 18 simply says that they crucified Jesus and with Him were two others:
 - a. Obviously, it is a fulfillment of Isaiah 53:9, 12; apart from such a fulfillment, what might be the significance of being “numbered with transgression”?
 - b. John mentions that Jesus was hanged in the middle, between the two thieves. In other words, the two sinners were of equal distance to the Lord. What might it symbolize?
 - c. If I say that “No sinner is too far away from Jesus and no repentance is too late”. What do you think?
- (4) Pilate’s inscription about who Jesus was might be his way of ridiculing the Jews. As it turns out, it is a true description of Jesus. What significance might the three languages have in this respect?
- (5) The dividing of Jesus’ garment was the fulfillment of Psalm 22:18. Apart from such a fulfillment, how does it speak to the crime committed against the Son of God?
- (6) What is the main message to you today and how may you apply it to your life?

V. Meditative Reflection: Carrying His Own Cross

**“Carrying His own cross, He went out to the place of the Skull.”
(Jn. 19:17)**

Although Luke tells us that Simon of Cyrene was forced to carry the cross of Jesus by the Roman soldiers (Lk. 23:26), I believe Jesus must have carried it for some distance to the point that He could no longer do so before Simon was forced to take over; otherwise John would not have said that Jesus was “carrying His own cross” (Jn. 19:17).

It was obvious that Simon did so reluctantly as he was just passing through Jerusalem and had yet to believe in Jesus Christ. It was also obvious that the disciples, from hindsight, wished that they could be courageous enough to be there to carry Jesus’ cross

especially at a time when He did not have any strength left to do so. For that matter, it is what many people do these days during the Passion Week, carrying a cross through the Via Dolorosa, expressing the desire to carry the cross of Jesus. And, we would not be any different in that if we were there that day, witnessing the suffering of Christ, we would have rushed to help carry the cross of Jesus — at least that’s what we think we would do, except that in real life when we ourselves face ridicules, misunderstanding, insults and sufferings of all kinds, our tendency is to run away. But this is exactly what Jesus wants us to do, and that is to carry our own cross! (Lk. 14:27).

You see, no one can really carry the cross of Jesus, just as no one can drink the cup of Jesus (Mark 10:38); but if we really wish to carry the cross for Jesus that day, there is no better way to express our desire to do by carrying our own!

Day 63

IV. Scriptural Reflection: John 19:25-30

Read slowly and reflectively the assigned passage twice at least and consider the questions below each day.

- (1) Who were at the side of the cross?
- (2) Why was each one of them there?
- (3) Should anyone else be there? Why weren’t they there?
- (4) Jesus uttered two short statements, the first was to His earthly mother:
 - a. How did Jesus address His earthly mother?
 - b. What did His words entail or achieve?
 - c. Why did He deem it necessary to do so at this hour?
- (5) The 2nd statement was to His disciple:
 - a. What did He say to John?
 - b. Why did He not entrust His mother to His earthly half-brothers?
- (6) How did John call himself? Was there any significance to the context of this incident?
- (7) Jesus said, “I am thirsty”. Apart from being the fulfillment of Psalm 69:21, how does it speak to the sufferings of Jesus as the Son of Man?
- (8) Jesus said, “It is finished”. What has He finished? (The word finished, according to some scholars, was a word that could be used in a commercial dealing to signify that all debts owed are now fully paid off).
- (9) What did it take for Him to “finish”?

- (10) Was it a cry of relief, an admission of failure or victory? Why?
- (11) What is the significance of Jesus giving up His spirit (see Lk. 23:46)?
- (12) What is the main message to you today and how may you apply it to your life?

V. Meditative Reflection: There was No More Terrible Death

“Jesus said, ‘It is finished.’ With that He bowed His head and gave up His spirit.” (Jn. 19:30)

“THERE was no more terrible death than death by crucifixion. Even the Romans themselves regarded it with a shudder of horror. Cicero declared that it was “the most cruel and horrifying death.” Tacitus said that it was a “despicable death.” It was originally a Persian method of execution. It may have been used because, to the Persians, the earth was sacred, and they wished to avoid defiling it with the body of an evil-doer. So they nailed him to a cross and left him to die there, looking to the vultures and the carrion crows to complete the work. The Carthaginians took over crucifixion from the Persians; and the Romans learned it from the Carthaginians.

Crucifixion was never used as a method of execution in the homeland, but only in the provinces, and there only in the case of slaves. It was unthinkable that a Roman citizen should die such a death. Cicero says: “It is a crime for a Roman citizen to be bound; it is a worse crime for him to be beaten; it is well nigh parricide for him to be killed; what am I to say if he be killed on a cross? A nefarious action such as that is incapable of description by any word, for there is none fit to describe it.” It was that death, the most dreaded in the ancient world, the death of slaves and criminals that Jesus died.

The routine of crucifixion was always the same. When the case had been heard and the criminal condemned, the judge uttered the fateful sentence: “*Ibis ad crucem*,” “You will go to the cross.” The verdict was carried out there and then. The condemned man was placed in the centre of a quaternion, a company of four Roman soldiers. His own cross was placed upon his shoulders. Scourging always preceded crucifixion and it is to be remembered how terrible scourging was. Often the criminal had to be lashed and goaded along the road, to keep him on his feet, as he staggered to the place of crucifixion. Before him walked an officer with a placard on which was written the crime for which he was to die and he was led through as many streets as possible on the way to execution.

There was a double reason for that. There was the grim reason that as many as possible should see and take warning from his fate. But there was a merciful reason. The placard was carried before the condemned man and the long route was chosen, so that if anyone could still bear witness in his favor, he might come forward and do so. In such a case, the procession was halted and the case retried.” (William Barclay)

VI. A Time for Silence

You have meditated much with your intellectual faculty today. Now have a moment of silence (the length is up to you, 5 or even 30 minutes), and ask God quietly, “Lord, is there any important message from you today that I might have missed? Show me, your servant is listening?”

VII. Supplication

Use the following chart to cover people and ministries that you want to remember before the Lord, apart from praying for yourself:

	Your family	Other people	Church Ministries	Other Ministries	City & World	Others
Sunday						
Monday						
Tuesday						
Wednesday						
Thursday						
Friday						
Saturday						

VIII. Benediction

“May whatever you do prosper, as you choose not to walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the way of sinners, nor sit in the seat of mockers, but meditate on the word of God day and night with delight. Amen” (Adapted from Ps. 1).