

Day One

Jesus: Real, Relevant, Raw and Radical! I Can Believe

I want to start by saying thank you for taking this journey with us! Over the next several weeks we are going to look at the life of Jesus. I am not naive enough to think that we will be able to discover all that there is to know and learn about the greatest “Personality” in the universe over just a few weeks. We will never be able to discover all that there is to know about Jesus. John puts it this way at the end of his gospel:

John 21:24-25(NLT) “This disciple is the one who testifies to these events and has recorded them here. And we know that his account of these things is accurate.”²⁵ Jesus also did many other things. If they were all written down, I suppose the whole world could not contain the books that would be written.”

John reiterates what he wrote in Chapter 20, that Jesus did many more miraculous signs in addition to the ones that were recorded! John, who witnessed all of Jesus’ life, His death, His resurrection and His ascension, said that the world could not contain and record all that Jesus did. The things that are recorded and that were written down, were written down so that we may believe, and continue to believe, that Jesus was not just a good man, but He was and is the Savior we all need and the King we will all give an account to one day. By believing in Him, we have life by the power of His Name!

John 20:30-31(NLT) “The disciples saw Jesus do many other miraculous signs in addition to the ones recorded in this book.”³¹ But these are written so that you may continue to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing in him you will have life by the power of his name.”

The purpose of this Devotional is to:

- Solidify our faith in Christ.
- See Jesus for Who He really is
- Understand and Recognize the power of His Person.
- Realize that we are to show forth His glory.
- Know what it means to be a “Christ Follower”

We have so many ideas and concepts about Jesus; who He was, what he did, etc. What we have done with Him is, we have made Him a kind of a caricature in our minds. We see Him as kind of flying around and doing all kinds of cool stuff; like turning water into wine, talking to the weather, walking on water, increasing a little boy’s lunch and

feeding the whole town, bringing dead people back to life; rescuing others in the nick of time...

Others of us have cloaked Him so deep in religious nomenclature and jargon, that the reality of His person is no longer evident. We have a sanitized Jesus that is meek and mild and only fit to be placed in a stained-glass window! Of all people that have ever lived, no one has been discussed more, debated more, quoted more and cursed more than Jesus. When people cuss they don't say, "Oh Buddha" or "Oh Muhammad." Even in the field of mental health, if patients have grandiose identity disorders, it is Jesus they imagine themselves to be. Do grandiose Buddhists imagine themselves to be Buddha? It is in Jesus' name that desperate people pray, fearful people cry out, lonely people cling to, grateful people worship, and angry people cuss.

More books have been written about Him than any other, and He is the main character of the best-selling Book of all time: the Bible. (*Guinness World Records: the Bible has sold over five billion copies since 1815*) He is the inspiration for more songs than any other, more art; more movies have been made about Jesus...in fact, the most watched film in cinematic history is the 1979 movie simply titled Jesus. This film has been seen by over five billion people in over 200 countries and translated into over 800 languages and dialects.

So, as we take this journey together over the next several weeks, we want to discover who He really is, but the real question is: Who is He to you? I love the way John Ortberg put it: *"Maybe Jesus was just a sympathetic figure that happened to come along when Roman infrastructure was good and Greek philosophy was undermining the gods, when paganism was dying and social systems were collapsing, when stability was down and anxiety was up and gullibility was strong and it was just dumb luck. Maybe Jesus was a kind, simple, innocent soul with a good mom and a knack for catchy sayings who showed up in the right place at the right time. Kind of like a 'Jesus Gump'; maybe his place in history is a remarkable accident, but maybe it is not."*

As we start this Holy Week, this Passion Week, it sure is not business as usual. Throughout the world people are limited in their travel, limited in what they are allowed to do and where they are allowed to go. For many of us, we are at home and the only time we venture outside is doing those things that are deemed essential. The whole world has come to a grinding halt and, sad to say, that is not even a figure of speech or a "hyperbole." We hold our collective breaths as we hear the news of those who have lost their lives and those who are fighting for their lives. And others on the frontline of this pandemic are selflessly, tirelessly and persistently giving of themselves for the benefit of others.

How can we, on this most Holy of weeks, see what we need to see, hear what we need to hear and do what we need to do? When our world is at a standstill, our emotions on edge, and our future seemingly hanging in the balance, who do we look too? You might find the answer too simplistic for your liking, but we need to see Jesus!!!

John 14:1(NLT) ' *Don't let your hearts be troubled. **Trust in God, and trust also in me.***"

John 14:6-7(NLT) *"Jesus told him, ' I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me. ⁷ **If you had really known me, you would know who my Father is.** From now on, you do know him and have seen him!"*

PRAYER FOCUS:

- Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to help you to turn your eyes on Jesus.
- Ask the Lord to help you to not have a troubled heart and to help you put your trust in Him.
- Thank the Lord for what He has done for you. Thank Him for the price He paid for you so that you may know the Father.
- Pray for others: Ask the Lord to show you specific people to pray for this week...