

## 5 Day Devotions, "Holy Week" from Wednesday, April 3, 2024

### Day 1: Humility Unveils Divine Truth

Humility is not merely a virtue; it is the lens through which we must view our relationship with God. The crowd that welcomed Jesus into Jerusalem expected a king who would overthrow their oppressors and restore Israel to glory. Their pride in their own understanding of the Messiah blinded them to the true nature of Jesus' mission. When He did not meet their expectations, their praise quickly turned to scorn. This serves as a stark reminder that pride can distort our perception of God's work in our lives. It is only through a humble heart that we can begin to discern the unexpected ways in which God moves and reveals His truth to us. By setting aside our pride, we open ourselves to the wisdom that comes from a genuine encounter with the divine.

"Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted." - Matthew 23:12 ESV

Reflection: Consider a time when your expectations of God did not align with reality. How did pride shape your reaction, and how can you approach similar situations with humility in the future?

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### Day 2: Embracing God's Unexpected Plans

The disappointment of the crowd during Holy Week reflects a common human tendency to project our desires onto God, expecting Him to act according to our plans. However, God's ways are not our ways. Jesus' entry into Jerusalem on a donkey, His teachings, and His ultimate sacrifice on the cross were all part of a divine plan that transcended human expectations. Accepting God's sovereignty means trusting in His greater purpose, even when it diverges from our own understanding or desires. This acceptance can be challenging, but it is essential for a deep and authentic faith that acknowledges God's authority over all aspects of life.

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord." - Isaiah 55:8 ESV

Reflection: What is one aspect of your life where you struggle to accept God's plan over your own? How can you practice surrendering to His will today?

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### Day 3: Gratitude as an Antidote to Pride

Gratitude is a powerful force that can shift our perspective and combat the pride that often clouds our vision. When we intentionally practice gratitude, we acknowledge the presence and work of God in our lives, even in the smallest of blessings. This practice helps us to recognize that every good thing comes from above and that our achievements and successes are not solely the result of our own efforts. A grateful heart is a humble heart, one that is open to seeing and celebrating God's hand in all circumstances. By fostering gratitude, we can prevent pride from distorting our understanding of God's grace and love.

"Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." - 1 Thessalonians 5:18 ESV

Reflection: Identify three things you are grateful for that you typically take for granted. How can focusing on these blessings today help you cultivate a more grateful and humble spirit?

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#### **Day 4: Worshiping Jesus as the True King**

Recognizing Jesus as king involves accepting Him for who He truly is, not who we want or expect Him to be. This means letting go of our preconceived notions and trusting in His sovereignty. Worshiping Jesus as the unexpected king requires a willingness to be surprised by His methods and to submit to His rule, even when it challenges our own ideas of power and leadership. As we align our hearts with the reality of Jesus' kingship, we find freedom in the truth of His lordship over every aspect of our lives.

"But the Lord sits enthroned forever; he has established his throne for justice." - Psalm 9:7 ESV

Reflection: In what ways have you tried to fit Jesus into your own image of a king? How can you adjust your worship to honor Him as the king He truly is?

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#### **Day 5: Forgiveness and Alignment with God's Will**

Jesus' forgiveness on the cross, even for those who failed to understand His plan, is a profound demonstration of grace. His words, "Father, forgive them," remind us that His love and forgiveness extend to us in our shortcomings. Recognizing our failures to comprehend God's will can be humbling, but it also opens the door to realigning ourselves with His purposes. As we accept Jesus' forgiveness, we are empowered to forgive others and to seek a deeper understanding of His will for our lives.

"Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you." - Colossians 3:13 ESV

Reflection: Who do you need to forgive as an act of aligning with Jesus' example on the cross? How can you take a step towards forgiveness today?