

Lent
2024

COME & SEE WHAT THE LORD HAS DONE

Week 2 - 2024 Devotionals For Lent

Welcome to week 2 of the Lent 2024 devotionals. In keeping with our theme of come and see what the Lord has done, we will focus on scriptures from the New Testament. We will be examining instances in the life of Jesus where those encounters changed the lives of the people whom Jesus encountered. We will also look at how their encounters reflect in our lives today. In week 2, we will focus on the early chapters of the Book of Matthew.

Lent is a time for reflection. During this time, we are given many opportunities to consider our lives and our lives in Christ. The people we encounter, the places we go, and how people see us live our lives can be part and parcel of our walk-in faith. Periodically, we should consider how our lives are going and whether we are on the right path. That right path is being laid out for us by the Lord.

Pam and I hope you are blessed by your time in reflection and study of His word during this season of Lent.

Leaning on Jesus

Forest & Pam Holmes

All scriptural references are from the English Standard Version of the Holy Bible.

Much of the cultural and theological practices of biblical times used in these devotionals come from the Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary.

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A simple washing with a deeper meaning and purpose.

Baptism is a practice that pre-dates the time of Jesus in our world. The Old Testament describes forms of washing for symbolic purification. Archeologists have discovered ceremonial mikveh (immersion pool) in many areas of Israel. By the time of Jesus and John the Baptist, it was a common practice for Gentiles to undergo a one-time baptism before conversion to Judaism.

When we read of the baptism of Jesus, we can find an interesting dichotomy. Jesus, God, and man acknowledge His need to be baptized. John is surprised and baffled by His request to be baptized. We read from Matthew 3:13-17, Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him. John would have prevented him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he consented. And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; and behold, a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."

In this seemingly simple act of washing, we witness Jesus following the will of His Father in Heaven. The human part of Jesus needed baptism and acknowledged that need. The God part of Jesus was not in need, yet was obedient to the will of the Father. Today, we continue that practice of baptism as an act of submitting to the will of God. In His final instructions to His disciples, Jesus shares the importance of continuing the practice of baptism and teaching. We find His words in the Great Commission from Matthew 28:19-20. "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

To fulfill His commission, baptism and instruction in what Jesus teaches are essential to Christians today, just as they were that day following His ascension into heaven. The basis of our faith is found in His words and teachings. These teachings provide a path to walk in our faith life. They give us the answers to the whys of our questions regarding the Christian walk. They are crafted to fundamentally change those who hear His words and respond to His teachings. That, my friends, is how Jesus changes us in baptism and teaching.

Leaning Jesus

Forest & Pamela Holmes