



**2024 Passion Week**  
**Devotionals, Meditations,**  
**Prayers**

Remuera Chinese Methodist Church





24/03/2024

# Laziness

## Proverbs 26:16

**“The sluggard is wiser in his own eyes than seven men who can answer sensibly.”**

Very often, we give ourselves excuses to relax, waste time, procrastinate, not do our best, and not put in the effort to do what we should be doing. One of the main reasons for this is our pride. We think we are very capable, very wise, and very reliable. As a result, we do not do our best in the things we should do every day, such as spiritual devotion, church life, service, work, studies, and physical health. We become lazy.

Let us pray that God will give us a humble heart and a vigilant heart, so that we can overcome the temptation of laziness.

## **2 Peter 1:8**

**“For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.”**

Many times, Christians are ineffective or unfruitful because they are complacent. They think they are already good enough, or they think they can no longer change and grow.

In the above passage, Peter encourages Christians that when we believe in Jesus Christ, the promise that God gives us is the ability to escape the corruption of lust. He also lists many spiritual qualities that Christians should strive to cultivate. We should rely on the Lord and diligently pursue maturity and fruitfulness in our lives every day.

## **Passion Week Meditations**

Today is Palm Sunday. Everyone welcomes the Lord Jesus Christ into Jerusalem, which also begins the journey of Jesus Christ to the cross.

The Lord Jesus Christ did not bargain with His Father in heaven and say: "Wait! I want to stay in this world a little longer!"

Please ponder: Do you always have a lot of reasons to convince yourself not to draw near to God, not to love the Lord with all your heart, soul, and mind.

Or, we are complacent and think that our spiritual life is very good and we do not need to continue to pursue spiritual growth.

Confessions and supplications: We ask the Lord to examine us, and we ask the Holy Spirit of guidance, to speak to us and guide us to recognize the uncleanness deep in our hearts. We pray that the Lord will help us to live a holy life.



25/03/2024

# Selfishness

## **Philippians 2:3-4**

"Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others."

To count others more significant than ourselves means to see others as more important than ourselves. Many times, our selfishness is because we believe that our own needs and feelings are more important and urgent than those of others.

In the passage that follows, Paul uses the Lord Jesus Christ as an example. Although He is the Son of God, He became a servant and completely sacrificed Himself to serve us. May God help us, who have received the Lord's service, to also have the Lord's mind and heart.

## **2 Timothy 3:1**

**"But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. For people will be lovers of self..."**

"lovers of self" means "love yourself" in the original text. We should not think that the command to "love your neighbour as yourself" means that we must first love ourselves. In fact, it means that we must sacrifice ourselves to love others.

Yes, it is our responsibility to take care of our own safety, health, rights, and property. However, we must learn to love others as Jesus Christ did, even to the point of sacrificing ourselves.

In the end times, people will become more and more self-loving. May God help His people to live out the love of Jesus Christ.

## **Passion Week Meditations**

Please ponder: The Lord Jesus Christ was willing to sacrifice Himself for us. Who are we that He would humble Himself for us? How can this be?

Prayer: We ask the Lord to give us a heart of mercy, so that we can always be mindful of the needs of others. To be sensitive to the feelings of others, to have a heart of mercy, and to live out the example of the Lord Jesus Christ. Let those around us see that our Lord is the source of love.



26/03/2024

# Envy

## James 3:16

“For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice.”

Envy and selfishness are inseparable partners. In relationships such as marriage, work, serving, and parenting, when we constantly compare ourselves to others, engage in competition, unable to be grateful for and appreciate the strengths of others, hate being corrected, feel inferior, perceive others' success as a threat to our own worth, and feel unfair that others are blessed, wishing it were us instead... All these can destroy our relationships.

Let us seek God's wisdom to recognize the relationship between envy and selfishness and the destruction they bring. Let us earnestly look to God for purity and renewal.

## **Psalm 37:1**

“Fret not yourself because of evildoers; be not envious of wrongdoers!”

These two sentences are parallel sentences. They mean that when we see people who have hurt us, or people who do evil, and they do not receive the punishment or consequences they deserve, we feel indignant. We are in fact envious of them.

However, Psalm 37:8 says that this will lead us to do evil. Either we will be tempted to imitate their evil deeds, or we will want to repay evil with evil and punish them ourselves.

Let us ask God to help us see that we should not envy the wicked, nor do we need to envy the wicked, because God will ultimately judge them. We should instead be able to show them compassion.

## **Passion Week Meditations**

Please ponder: Do we often feel that everything others have is better than what we have, and became envious as a result?

When others do evil, we feel indignant, and think that they should be punished for their evil deeds. Do we often have such thoughts?

Because of envy, our lives often fail to bring glory to God.

Prayer: For ourselves, if we have such thoughts and behaviours that do not glorify God, we ask God to examine us, confess and repent, and ask the Lord to help us overcome our hearts of envy.

May the Lord keep us always seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.





27/03/2024

# Pleasures of the World

**Luke 8:14**

“And as for what fell among the thorns, they are those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of life, and their fruit does not mature.”

Seeking pleasures is not necessarily a sin. God gave us the beautiful world He created, and He also gave us the ability to enjoy the world with our senses and feelings. However, we must avoid putting the priority of seeking pleasures higher than the word of God. The Lord Jesus said that if this is the case, no matter how much the word is heard, it will not bear fruit, because seeking pleasures has become the thorns that choke our spiritual life.

## **1 Corinthians 15:58**

**“Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.”**

In the previous passage of 1 Corinthians 15:32, Paul says, "If the dead are not raised, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die."

Therefore, the purpose of life is to enjoy life and seek pleasure in the moment. This is actually a very sad, empty, and hopeless life.

Christians are people with the hope of resurrection and a new heaven and a new earth. In this short life, our higher goal should be to do more of the Lord's work and lead people to know the Lord Jesus.

Although it is hard work, it entails eternal value and joy.

## **Passion Week Meditations**

Please ponder: If a man gains the whole world and forfeits his soul - is this the state of your life now? Have our lives become so busy that we have forgotten to bear spiritual fruits?

Prayer: Intercede for the state of your own spiritual life. Ask the Lord to examine the thorns in our hearts that prevent us from bearing the fruit of the Spirit, and that our spiritual life cannot grow.



28/03/2024

# Weariness

## 2 Corinthians 6:4

“but as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: by great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities,”

Our physical strength, health, and mental faculties are all finite and weak, and they and they gradually become weaker day by day. Therefore, weariness and toils are challenges and difficulties that we often face. If we labour for vain pursuits, it is indeed not worthwhile. However, even endeavours with eternal significance and value can leave us physically exhausted.

Yet, we must understand that one way we demonstrate our faithfulness as servants of God is by remaining joyful and faithfully obedient to His commission even in our weariness and fatigue.

## **Isaiah 40:31**

**“but they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.”**

Some people think that this passage promises that Christians will not tire, or even that they will have boundless strength. However, throughout the entire Bible, there are only a few rare examples of such instances, such as Samson, or Elijah running ahead of Ahab's chariot, or being able to travel forty days and nights on one meal. Yet even Samson and Elijah experienced physical exhaustion.

Isaiah 40:31 speaks of the strength of spiritual life. Many times, even if we have physical strength and health, our spiritual life may be very weak, unable to live a victorious life or to serve well. Let us pray for God's help to have an intimate relationship with Him so that we may be renewed with strength.

## **Passion Week Meditations**

Tonight, our Lord Jesus Christ will be betrayed, and it will be a long night.

Please ponder: Have we forgotten to "rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances," and forgotten to constantly draw near to God, to seek Him in prayer?

Though our bodies may be weary, like Jesus Christ, let us emulate Him. In this long night, as it grows late, Jesus Christ kneels in the Garden of Gethsemane, earnestly praying to the Lord.

Prayer: Let us pray for ourselves to look to the grace of the Lord. Although life is filled with challenges and frustrations, may the Lord keep us, strengthen us in Him, rely on Him, and depend on Him.



29/03/2024

**Greed**

## **Luke 12:25**

“And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life?”

The parable of the rich fool that Jesus goes on to tell reflects the lives of many people who tirelessly pursue and are never satisfied with acquiring and enjoying more material wealth, yet their spiritual lives remain impoverished.

Let us pray for God's help to be content when it comes to material things, to stay away from all greed, to be generous in giving and sharing, to actively invest our time, money, and energy in matters of greater spiritual value, and to have a fulfilling life.

## **1 Timothy 4:10**

“For to this end we toil and strive,<sup>[a]</sup> because we have our hope set on the living God, who is the Savior of all people, especially of those who believe.”

Jesus has already told us that no one can serve two masters; we cannot serve both God and money. When we prioritize money over God, refusing to believe and obey His word because of wealth, we love money more than we love God. Not listening to God's word can bring various consequences and pains to ourselves and our families.

Pray that God helps us so that we will rather have Jesus, that we would rather obey the Lord's words than disobey Him for the sake of wealth and riches.

## **Passion Week Meditations**

Judas betrayed Jesus Christ for a small amount of money.

Today is Good Friday, and we truly cannot comprehend the path Jesus Christ took to the cross for the sins of humanity. He was abandoned, cursed, and beaten by people. At that time, Judas regretted it; he saw that Jesus suffered because of his greed.

Please ponder: Have we also lost eternal blessings due to a momentary impulse?

Prayer: Thank you, Lord Jesus Christ, for the redemption work you did for us. May the Lord keep us from abandoning the glory of God's eternal kingdom for worldly gain.



30/03/2024

# Abusing Grace

## **Romans 6:1-4**

“What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.”

Christians may think that since they are saved by grace alone, they can do whatever they want, because they may not deeply understand or have forgotten the great purpose of the Lord's salvation, which is to lead us to a new life. Those who believe in Jesus Christ for their sins and resurrection, and are deeply grateful, how could they

continue to sin? Let us pray for God's help to come to the cross often and be filled with the love of the Lord.

### **Galatians 5:13**

**“For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.”**

People often think that freedom means doing whatever they want, but that is not freedom; it is indulgence, being bound by one's desires. God tells us that true freedom is being able to obey God's commandments, being free from sin. The Apostle Paul tells us in Galatians 5:16 that when we submit to the guidance of the truth and the Holy Spirit in our lives, we can live out the freedom that God has given us, without satisfying the desires of the flesh.

### **Passion Week Meditations**

Yesterday was Good Friday, and together we once again experienced the profound impact of Jesus Christ sacrificing Himself, shedding His blood, and being nailed to the cross for us! How did you feel when you heard the sound of those nails being driven in? This free redemption grace, freely given to you and me, shall we continue to leave it aside?

Please ponder: Do we think that once we accept the Lord, from then on, we can still live the life we like, do what we want, continue to sin, without growing, always remaining as spiritual babies?

Prayer: Confess our sins to the Lord, and ask the Lord to examine our thoughts and intentions. Pray for ourselves to always remember the love and grace on the cross.





31/03/2024

# Physical Gathering

## **Psalm 42:4**

“These things I remember, as I pour out my soul: how I would go with the throng and lead them in procession to the house of God with glad shouts and songs of praise, a multitude keeping festival.”

Although the psalmist can come before God's presence at any time during prayer, experiencing His presence and help, he feels saddened and grieved because he cannot gather with the saints to worship God, longing earnestly to join the congregation of the saints.

Sometimes, due to various physical ailments or other reasons, we are unable to attend church worship and gatherings. Let us pray that God will grant us deep sorrow and longing, earnestly looking to God for a way and grace, so that we may quickly return to physical gatherings of the church.

## **Hebrews 10:24-25**

“And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, <sup>25</sup> not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.”

Christians should not only focus on their own spiritual lives; God wants us to care for one another and love one another. One important aspect of caring for one another is to be concerned about whether your brothers and sisters have physical gatherings every week. If physical gatherings stop, it's easy to get used to it and feel like it's not so important. We should encourage one another to continue attending physical gatherings and to return to physical gatherings if we have stopped. In the end times, there are more reasons why Christians might stop physical gatherings, so we need to encourage one another even more.

## **Passion Week Meditations**

Today is the day of the Lord's resurrection! Jesus Christ has overcome the power of death for you and me because of our sins!

Many who claim to be Christians will return to church today for their one and only worship service for the year. Do we also approach church gatherings with this mindset? Coming if we feel like it, skipping if we don't.

Please ponder: What is the state of your fellowship life? Is it consistent? Has it been taken over by other things?

Prayer: May the Lord increase our faith, set us apart for holiness to attend various church gatherings, live a church life, look after one another, and build up the body of Christ.



