

WEEK FIVE

—Sunday—

Will we learn anything from history? We can! You want us to — I am seeing more and more that all history is “His story” i.e. the record of yourself. I bow before this record!



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“We have sinned, even as our fathers did; we have done wrong and acted wickedly. When our fathers were in Egypt, they gave no thought to your miracles; they did not remember your many kindnesses, and they rebelled by the sea, the Red Sea. Yet he saved them for his name’s sake, to make his mighty power known. He rebuked the Red Sea, and it dried up; he led them through the depths as though a desert. He saved them from the hand of the foe; from the hand of the enemy he redeemed them. The waters covered their adversaries; not one of them survived. Then they believed his promises and sang his praise” (Psa. 106:6-12). Out of this passage I want to lift the expression of your love and power and praise you for them: (1) “They gave no thought to *your miracles.*” (2) “They did not remember *your many kindnesses.*” (3) “Yet *he saved them for his name’s sake.* . . .” (4) “. . . to make his mighty power known.” (5) “He led them through the depths. . . .” (6) “He saved them from the land of the foe.” (7) “From the hand of the enemy he redeemed them.” (8) “Then they believed his promises and sang his praise.” In these eight areas I want to lift my heart in praise.

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

I want to give as deep thought to your miracles as is possible for this servant. (1) The most obvious message I get is that you care enough about us to adjust your laws to get our attention. May we hear your voice! (2) How easy it is to forget if we but poorly understand to begin with. Can I list ten of your kindnesses to me? Indeed I can. But will I remember them? (3) If it were not for your own essential character of love none of us would be saved. *You so loved* — only because you loved are we saved. Praise your name! (4) You are making your power known to me — more and more day by day — praise your name!

CONFESSION OF SIN

In all the eight areas above I have sinned against you; and then there are my current sins — dear Lord I do want to open my heart and conscience before you and ask forgiveness. You have surely led me through the depths. I have found out just how deep some depths can be — and just how wonderfully faithful you are in your leading — praise your name! You did not necessarily lead me into the depths — but you surely have delivered me *through* them. But I have not been as sensitive to your presence or your leading — forgive me. There have been foes on my path, that I did not even see — but you did! Forgive me for not remembering that you had anticipated such opposition. How easy it is to forget the terrible price you paid for my redemption — forgive me!

What personal sins do you want to confess?

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

“Whosoever heareth,” shout, shout the sound!
Spread the blessed tidings all the world around;
Tell the joyful news wherever man is found,
“Whosoever will may come.”
“Whosoever will, whosoever will!”
Send the proclamation over vale and hill;
’Tis a loving Father calls the wanderer home:
“Whosoever will may come.”

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

⁵⁹About an hour later another asserted, “Certainly this fellow was with him, for he is a Galilean.”
⁶⁰Peter replied, “Man, I don’t know what you’re talking about!” Just as he was speaking, the rooster crowed. ⁶¹The Lord turned and looked straight at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word the Lord had spoken to him: “Before the rooster crows today, you will disown me three times.” ⁶²And he went outside and wept bitterly. —Luke 22:59-62, NIV; read also Matt. 26:73-75; Mark 14:70b-72; John 18:26,27.

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

Shall I ever gain the deepest lesson in this denial of our Lord? I think not — but I shall surely try. The reasons for identity with Jesus are interesting: (1) “He is a Galilean.” (2) “Your accent gives you away.” (3) “You were with him in the olive grove.” To be a Galilean was tantamount to saying, “you are one of those hillbillies or hicks.” The intelligencia or sophisticates of Judea held such an opinion of those from Galilee (Acts 5:13). Am I ready to be so classified by some people? Scholarship and learning have been associated with the strangest things. A person’s accent is one of these strange things.

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

Am I ready to be examined as closely as Peter for my relationship with you? National identity is real important in our world. If someone identified us as “an American” in places this would not be a compliment. We in our country are just as prejudiced in regard to East, Midwest, South, North or West. Dear Lord, deliver us from such stupidity. When will we begin to “look on the heart” and judge the man — not where he was born? The above also applies to the accent. Most of all we are terribly afraid of being classified as “religious” — or “a holy fanatic.” We do not want to be associated with the olive grove of devotion. Dear Lord, open our eyes!

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for the time element — once more the story becomes credible. (2) Thank you we need not wait till someone challenges our faith before we speak up for our Lord. (3) Thank you for the foreknowledge of our Lord so perfectly matched by fulfillment. (4) Thank you for “the look” of Jesus which broke the heart of Peter. (5) Thank you for your wonderful preacher — “a rooster.” (6) Thank you for the tender heart of Peter — what an example for me!

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

“And he went outside and wept bitterly.” Just how bitterly we will never know until he tells us when we meet in the Father’s house. Shall we attempt to identify with this very human disciple and see if we too do not need to shed a few tears of repentance. We need to say that there were two men who wept — Peter and Judas. One in repentance, the other in remorse. The basic distinction is *selfishness*. Peter wanted to please Jesus, Judas wanted to please himself. What did Peter say in his prayer? (1) “He knew all the time what would happen — why didn’t I trust him?” (2) “I am such a weak fool — dear Lord forgive me.”

(3) Will he ever receive me back — I surely do not deserve it.”

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

There is room in this text for our own requests: (1) In “about an hour later” so many things can happen that we could never imagine — guard my heart against these temptations. (2) I want the humility and courage to declare gladly that I “was with him” — indeed, I am with him now! (3) Forgive me when I have been unwilling to acknowledge your name. (4) In the little things of life — like a rooster — there are lessons for me to learn — teach me! (5) Bring to my memory some words from the lips of your Son — speak them into my conscience.

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

I have reasons enough to weep — keep my conscience tender: (1) “Refusal to identify with me hurts me.” (2) “Denying me hurts you very deeply — repent immediately.” (3) “Self-pity is not repentance.”

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Iran — Point for prayer: *Unreached peoples*. There are only about 500 Protestants outside the tiny Armenian and Assyrian communities. Forty-five or more peoples have never heard the gospel, in seven there are a few individual believers, but no churches. a) *There are 66,438 villages in Iran*. Only about half-a-dozen have a resident Christian witness. b) *There are 178 towns and cities*, but only approx. 30 organized Protestant churches. c) *Major segments of the population are hardly touched with the gospel* — the strongly Islamized universities, children, women, the densely populated Caspian coastal plain, the seven million semi-nomadic and nomadic tribes, etc. d) *The Kurds, Luri, Bakhtiari* have no more than a few dozen known believers among 7.2 million people. e) *The Turkic peoples* total 9.3 million with very few believers; many of the groups have never been evangelized. f) *The Baha’i followers*. There are no known believers to have come from this religious group that has suffered so much. Little has been done to specifically evangelize the world’s 4.5 million Baha’i. Pray that God may raise up such an outreach. g) *The refugees*. Over 500,000 Afghans in the east. h) *The Baluch and Brahui* of the southeast.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Search me, O God, and know my heart today;
Try me, O Savior, know my thoughts, I pray.

See if there be some wicked way in me;
Cleanse me from every sin, and set me free.

WEEK FIVE

—Monday—

You have not stopped working with your children. I do want to be more responsive than Israel. I can begin by worshipping you right now!



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

In all the negative qualities of Israel there are qualities of yourself reflected: (1) *“They soon forgot what he had done and did not wait for his counsel.”* But you are One who offers counsel when we are willing to receive it. (2) *“So he gave them what they asked for, but sent a wasting disease upon them.”* But you were and are always aware of the requests of your children. (3) *“The earth opened up and swallowed Dathan; it buried the company of Abiram.”* Your wrath and punishment are just as real as your love and mercy. (4) *They forgot the God who saved them. . . .* But you are a savior! (5) *Then they despised the pleasant land. They did not believe his promise.* But you did have the beautiful land of Canaan prepared for them and kept your promise. (Psalm 106:13-24)

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

These words were written long ago that they might speak to me today — as indeed they do! (1) I do want your counsel — I have lived long enough to know by sad experience that any other counsel is a lie! (2) I know that I say nothing or think nothing that is not totally known to you. How I do want my desires to be yours — if not I could be devastated by the very thing for which we ask. (3) Somehow I want to be sensitive to your wrath — I need this balance lest I imagine that I can continue in sin that grace might abound. (4) Save me from myself — from my friends — from my routine — save me just for yourself! (5) I do believe your promise of heaven — break my heart that I might enjoy the present pleasant land in which we live.

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out.

CONFESSION OF SIN

All the negatives or sins in this text are mine — and

even more. (1) I live so much by the present that I forget all your wonders and blessings — forgive me. (2) Forgive me for preferring my own “cravings” to your desires for my life — which are always better. (3) Awaken me to the reality of hell and everlasting punishment — forgive my hard heart. (4) May my salvation today be as real as it was on the first day of my salvation. In ways but known to yourself make this true. (5) I could be despising some of your goodness and not even know it — open my heart!

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Savior, more than life to me,
I am clinging, clinging close to Thee;
Let Thy precious blood applied
Keep me ever, ever near Thy side.
Every day, every hour,
Let me feel Thy cleansing power;
May Thy tender love to me
Bind me closer, closer, Lord, to Thee.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

⁶⁶At daybreak the council of the elders of the people, both the chief priests and teachers of the law, met together, and Jesus was led before them. ⁶⁷“If you are the Christ,” they said, “tell us.”

Jesus answered, “If I tell you, you will not believe me, ⁶⁸and if I asked you, you would not answer. ⁶⁹But from now on, the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the mighty God.”

⁷⁰They all asked, “Are you then the Son of God?”

He replied, “You are right in saying I am.”

⁷¹Then they said, “Why do we need any more testimony? We have heard it from his own lips.”

—Luke 22:66-71, NIV; read also Matt. 27:1; Mark 15:1.

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

Just so I might appreciate this trial from my Lord's perspective I want to list seven "blatant illegalities in the arrest and trial" (these are adapted from Paul Butler's book on Luke). (1) He was arrested without a warrant, by a mob, on a feast day. (2) He was taken before Annas who had no official standing — questioned, abused, and not released when he himself called for evidence of his arrest. (3) Tried at night having never been officially accused, with no witnesses. (4) Witnesses were bribed to bear false testimony. (5) These witnesses did not agree. (6) He was adjured to testify against himself. (7) No evidence was introduced in his favor. (8) He was arrested for one charge and tried and condemned for another. How very poor he did become that we might be rich!

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

I shall never, never be able to appreciate what happened here. I can only put forward a feeble effort and try. He had had no rest and now the night is past and the whole ordeal of Friday is before him. The one question he wanted answered in the hearts of all men was now put before him: "If you are the Christ," they said, "tell us." Jesus knew he stood before disbelievers — not unbelievers, but those who refused to believe. He did want them to know just who was on trial. He looked beyond the cross and the grave to his ascension and coronation. What a remarkable answer! In their condemnation of him they condemned themselves.

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for the unquestionable evidence of his Messiahship. (2) Thank you I can acknowledge him even now as my Lord and the Son of God! (3) Thank you for Immanuel — "God in human flesh." (4) Thank you for the multiplied evidence of his Messiahship as found in his ministry. (5) Thank you for the great self-existent One — the "I am that I am." (6) Thank you for the One who appears as the victim but is actually the victor!

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"We have heard it from his own lips." Such a statement is the ultimate test. By a man's words he shall be justified and by his words will he be condemned. If anyone wants to know our Lord and his claims the very least they can do is to read his words. Out of the abundance of his heart he spoke — and we shall see him through his utterances. There are three things we can do with the words of Jesus: (1) We can do what most men do — ignore them. The men of his own generation came to be healed or fed — not taught. (2)

We can sift them through the sieve of our own prejudice and only keep what agrees with us. (3) We can receive them with a good and honest heart.

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

I am really on trial — therefore I want to pause in prayer before you: (1) May every daybreak find me in worship before you. (2) Give me the humility before you that I need not fear the face of man. (3) May the world hear from my lips a testimony of your deity. (4) May my frame of mind always be such that I can and will believe. (5) When men ask me concerning my faith give me the wisdom to answer. (6) I am glad to acknowledge that I accept Jesus' Lordship and intercession for me at your right hand — how I do need it! (7) Give me a fresh insight to your deity today.

Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

Throughout eternity all those who tried him that day will remember what happened — speak to me: (1) "I stand at every sunrise to be accepted or rejected." (2) "I can only rule one life at a time — I want to be your king." (3) "I can bring every thought into my captivity."

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Iraq — Points for prayer: (1) The deep woes through which Iraqis have passed are decisively changing the nation. Praise that it is God in control of this situation. Pray that there might be opportunity for the gospel to be freely preached. The land is completely closed for any form of open evangelism. The few foreign missionaries were expelled in 1969. (2) Islam has almost complete ascendancy, and it is virtually impossible for a Muslim to openly confess Christ and live. Pray that the centuries of prejudice and hatred may be broken down, and that Muslims may come to the Lord. Pray that the long agony of the Gulf War may help to bring a new day for the gospel in Iraq.

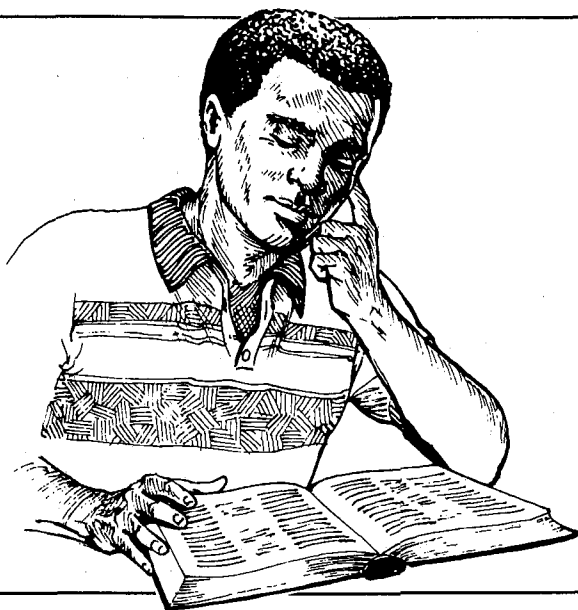
SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Dear Lord and Father of mankind,
 Forgive our foolish ways!
 Reclothe us in our rightful mind;
 In purer lives Thy service find,
 In deeper reverence, praise.
 Breath through the heat of our desire
 Thy coolness and Thy balm;
 Let sense be dumb, let flesh retire;
 Speak through the earthquake, wind, and fire,
 O still, small voice of calm.

WEEK FIVE

—Tuesday—

Why, oh why are we so tied down to the physical? Speak to me through the examples before me. Exchange praise for grumbling!



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

Once again I select examples of your interest in your people in spite of their sin: (1) *“They grumbled in their tents and did not obey the Lord.”* (2) *“He swore to them with uplifted hand. . . .”* (3) *“By the waters of Meribah they angered the Lord. . . .”* (4) *“They rebelled against the Spirit of God.”* (5) *“He handed them over to the nations, and their foes ruled over them.”* (Psalm 106:25-41) In each of these incidents we see an attribute of yourself. (1) You have given us something to obey. It is your word! We can grumble or obey — but in either case you are alive and responsive to us. (2) You enforce with your own character what you have said. Obedience to you is no light matter.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

(3) There *is* an end to your patience. We would like to think that as long as we are alive on this earth you will be patient with us — at some point in time we will repent and we will die and go to heaven. Such was NOT the case with Moses — or Joshua — or David or many more whose lives fill the pages of your book. I am glad it is not up to me to decide when your patience is exhausted — but neither do I want to presume on your goodness. (4) How I thank you for the present work of the Holy Spirit. May I be tenderly responsive to his word as I read it before me. I want no rebellion in my heart. (5) I know the option of your rule — I do not want it!

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

We do indeed repeat the sins of our fathers and great-grandfathers. I want to look again at these five points and see myself! (1) What grumbling often comes from the tent in which I live! Please forgive! I *know* action and not reaction is what you want. (2) May I take very seriously your word, backed as it is with your

oath — it shall never fail, but surely come to pass — this is both encouraging and sobering. (3) I know that there is an end to your letting me continue in my own willful way. Before I reach the “waters of Meribah” I want to repent. (4) Dear Spirit of my living Lord I do not want to grieve or quench or resist you at all. Forgive me dear Lord. (5) I want my life in your hands not my foes.

What personal sins do you want to confess? There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Have Thine own way, Lord!
Have Thine own way!
Thou art the Potter;
I am the clay.
Mould me and make me
After Thy will,
While I am waiting,
Yielded and still.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

³When Judas, who had betrayed him, saw that Jesus was condemned, he was seized with remorse and returned the thirty silver coins to the chief priests and the elders. *“I have sinned,”* he said, *“for I have betrayed innocent blood.”*

“What is that to us?” they replied. *“That’s your responsibility.”*

⁵So Judas threw the money into the temple and left. Then he went away and hanged himself.

⁶The chief priests picked up the coins and said, *“It is against the law to put this into the treasury, since it is blood money.”* ⁷So they decided to use the money to buy the potter’s field as a burial place for foreigners.

⁸That is why it has been called the Field of Blood to this day. ⁹Then what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled: *“They took the thirty silver coins,*

the price set on him by the people of Israel, ¹⁰and they used them to buy the potter's field, as the Lord commanded me." —*Matthew 27:3-10, NIV*; read also Acts 1:18,19.

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

There are good qualities in the character of this tragic man, Judas. When it came time to define the character of our Lord, Judas said Jesus was innocent or "pure." He did want to freely admit his sin, "I have betrayed innocent blood." He wanted to make restitution. He brought the money back. However even in these three points we see his failure. The purity of Jesus did not change the character of Judas. It did not keep him from robbing the treasury. He admitted his sin to the wrong people. It should have been before yourself. He restored the money but not his heart.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

There is so much I can learn from this unfortunate man. The *one* overpowering sin of Judas was avarice or greed. It took the form of money and what it could do. I can learn also that it is possible to so hide our feelings that others will not know it. But I need to remember the power of conscience to inflict merited punishment. Judas, like Peter, wanted to take the situation in his hands and manipulate it to his own desires — but Judas, unlike Peter, had himself at the center of his plans. Peter wanted the Master's good, not his own, and therefore repented toward yourself not himself. Dear Lord may I let you cleanse my heart and make me whole!

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for the very sobering truth that all who are taught do not learn. (2) Thank you that I can be the deciding factor as to whether I am Judas or Peter. (3) Thank you for your heavenly umpire the human conscience — may I give him the right rules. (4) Thank you for the example of the utter failure of money to satisfy. (5) Thank you for the innocence and purity which was plain even to Judas. (6) Thank you for the tragic example of what can happen even today to one who will not yield to your Lordship. (7) Thank you that I can even now choose to be like this man.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"Then he went away and hanged himself." We are immediately repulsed at this thought and say within ourselves: "How could he do such a thing?" And yet, what else was there for him to do? He had played all his cards on himself. He had lost all — this was but the payment of failure. Three years in the company of Jesus put incredible pressure on Judas. He fought against the truth with all the power Satan could give

him. How sad to remember that Judas never knew of the resurrection — (or did he?) When there is no point or purpose in living and escape is all there is, and it cannot be found in this life, there is only one alternative. This was the tragic circumstance of this one-time apostle of our Lord.

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

Surely there is cause in this text for prayer requests: (1) Deliver me from remorse — lead me into repentance. (2) Keep me always aware that there are many people who do not care — how I need you my Lord. (3) I too have sinned — I have betrayed him in many ways — but I want to change to repent — not to escape. (4) I do want to make restitution with the thought of forgiveness and change. (5) What a disappointment are some religious leaders! There is no disappointment in Jesus. (6) Even when the chief priests knew they had a part in the death of two men they had no repentance — keep me aware of just how calloused the conscience can become.

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

Tragedy always gets our attention. Speak to me through this record: (1) "Nothing you have done in secret will fail to be known." (2) "I know your heart — let me have it to cleanse and change." (3) "Death is a door — not oblivion."

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Ireland — Points for prayer: (1) *The Catholic Church* has a remarkable position in the country. Practising Catholics are numerous though declining in percentage as young people question the traditional conservatism of the past. Widespread availability and use of the Bible is generating a spiritual hunger for reality. (2) *A spiritual awakening is taking place.* Its origins are in the dissemination of the Scriptures, widespread evangelistic activities, and the charismatic renewal within the Catholic Church. The latter is in decline, but from it have emerged hundreds of Christians in Bible study and prayer groups, the nucleus of an indigenous Irish church.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Come, ye sinners, poor and needy,
Bruised and broken by the fall;
Jesus ready stands to save you,
Full of pardoning love for all.
He is able, He is able,
He is willing, doubt no more;
He is able, He is able,
He is willing, doubt no more.

WEEK FIVE

—Wednesday—

For the right use of our minds and bodies we are deeply grateful. Lead me into expressions of thanksgiving.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

*“Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say this — those he redeemed from the hand of the foe, those he gathered from the lands, from the east and west, from the north and south” (Psa. 107:1-3). “It is all we can give him, and the least we can give him; therefore let us diligently render to him our thanksgiving” (Spurgeon, *ibid.*, p. 114). Something of the joy and exaltation we showed and can feel comes through in these words. “Compared with him there is none good, no not one: but he is essentially, perpetually, superlatively, infinitely good. We are the perpetual partakers of his goodness, and therefore ought above all his creatures to magnify his name” (*Ibid.*). Surely your goodness can lead us again and again to alter our thinking to match with reality.*

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

Whatever others may think or say I have overwhelming reasons for declaring the goodness of your very Person. The Redeemer is so glorious, the ransom price so immense, and the redemption so complete, that I am under a sevenfold obligation to give you thanks, and to exhort others to do so. I do not only want to *feel* such praise, but *say* it. I want to sing and encourage all others who are redeemed to do likewise. Considering our oppressor and the superior power who snatched us from his hand how can we do less than adore our Liberator. You, and you alone have emancipated these slaves — oh, praise your name. (Adapted from C.H. Spurgeon.)

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

How silent some of us have been in the light of our wonderful deliverance. It does seem totally incongruous that such goodness and mercy could be poured out upon us and we would not respond — indeed we

have been damaged almost beyond repair. And yet, your mercy endures forever. Please forgive me for forgetting that my rejoicing is not complete until it is shared with all others who have been called out of all the nations of the world. Together we make up one flock who will praise you throughout eternity.

What personal sins do you want to confess?

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Tell me the story of Jesus,
Write on my heart every word;
Tell me the story most precious,
Sweetest that ever was heard.
Tell how the angels, in chorus,
Sang as they welcomed His birth,
“Glory to God in the highest!
Peace and good tidings to earth.”
Tell me the story of Jesus,
Write on my heart every word;
Tell me the story most precious,
Sweetest that ever was heard.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

²⁸Then the Jews led Jesus from Caiaphas to the palace of the Roman governor. By now it was early morning, and to avoid ceremonial uncleanness the Jews did not enter the palace; they wanted to eat the Passover. ²⁹So Pilate came out to them and asked, “What charges are you bringing against this man?”

³⁰“If he were not a criminal,” they replied, “we would not have handed him over to you.”

³¹Pilate said, “Take him yourselves and judge him by your own law.”

“But we have no right to execute anyone,” the Jews objected. ³²This happened so that the words Jesus had spoken indicating the kind of death he was going to die would be fulfilled.

—John 18:28-32, NIV; read also Matt. 27:2; Mark 15:1; Luke 23:1,2.

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

It will be important to read Luke 23:1,2 to know of the accusations that prompted Pilate to examine our Lord. Just where was the palace of the governor? We know no more about its location than the palace of Caiaphas from which he was led. We prefer to think it was a part of the Roman garrison headquarters in the tower of Antonia. In this palace Pilate had rooms for the purpose of trials. The sanctimonious members of the Sanhedrin would not enter because of defilement. They could not eat the passover if they followed Jesus inside. They were so busy arresting and condemning Jesus they hadn't even time to eat the passover!

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

In answer to Pilate's question, the Jews said: "We have found this man subverting our nation. He opposes payment of taxes to Caesar and claims to be Christ, a king" (Luke 23:2b). The sarcastic addition of the Jews indicates just how terribly prejudiced they were. Pilate knew of the squabbles of the Jews over the fine points of Jewish tradition. He was irritated that they had awakened him and called him at this early hour. "Take him yourselves and judge him according to your own law." The Jews were there for blood. "But we have no right to execute anyone." Dear Lord, what abuse and prejudice! How I want to share your suffering!

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for the humility of my Lord as he who knew no sin associated with such monstrous sinners. (2) Thank you for the physical and moral courage of my Lord as he endured such gainsaying of these men. (3) Thank you that there never has been a charge against him. (4) Deliver me from the hypocrisy of form without power. (5) Thank you for the wonderful foreknowledge of my Lord. (6) Thank you for the meaning of his death for me and the whole world.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"This happened so that the words Jesus had spoken indicating the kind of death he was going to die would be fulfilled." There are multiplied examples of the fulfillment of the words of our Lord. These words concerning his death were fulfilled to the letter. Do we then expect all other promises of Jesus to be kept? What about his promise right in these verses that he will be the judge of all men? Are we prepared to stand before him? What of his promise in John 5:24-30 that we can believe in him and have eternal life? We will not be condemned but have already crossed over from death to life? What of the astounding promise of our Lord to empty all the graves?

Some will be raised to eternal condemnation. As he promised his resurrection he has also promised the resurrection of *all* who are in the grave.

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

As I read again these precious words I do have reasons for prayer: (1) In a certain sense all of us lead Jesus to one place or another — I want to lead him to a take over of the throne of my heart. (2) I want to meet my Lord in the early hours of every morning. (3) Give me wisdom to look past the form to the substance in worship. (4) The charge that he is a king is true — make it true in my relationships for this day. (5) Each of us do what Pilate asked of the Jews — "judge him for yourselves." Dear Lord I find no fault in you — you do all things well.

Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

Speak to me again and again in this judgment scene: (1) "Consider how you worship — how much is form and how much is reality." (2) "You are judging me all over again — how do I stand with you?" (3) "The price is paid — freedom is available!"

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Ireland — Points for prayer: (1) *Protestants in Southern Ireland* have been in decline for 60 years through emigration and nominalism. They have become almost irrelevant to the evangelization of the Catholic majority. A few small evangelical groups are holding their own numerically. Pray for revival, ability to adapt culturally, a return to a high view of Scripture and a vision for outreach. (2) *Evangelicals are a very small community* and have made little impact on politics (only one Protestant in Parliament), education, the armed forces and public life because of their lack of influence in universities. (3) *Young people* have been responsive.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Jesus is standing in Pilate's hall—
 Friendless, forsaken, betrayed by all:
 Harken! what meaneth the sudden call!
 What will you do with Jesus?
 What will you do with Jesus?
 Neutral you cannot be;
 Some day your heart will be asking,
 "What will He do with me?"

WEEK FIVE

—Thursday—

The description you have given me in Psalm 104:4-7 has truly, truly touched my heart and led me into your presence. I bow before you!



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“Some wandered in desert wastelands, finding no way to a city where they could settle. They were hungry and thirsty, and their lives ebbed away. Then they cried out to the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them from their distress. He led them by a straight way to a city where they could settle” (Psa. 107:4-7). How these words do describe to perfection our lives! This world has often become a “desert wasteland.” Our life has been torn from its moorings and we have drifted and wandered in a desert. We have become exceeding hungry and thirsty and no man gave to us.

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

I have felt so often that the last tide is about to go out. All of us (or at least many of us) have stood on the shore of the ocean and watched the ebb and flow of the tide — the imagery here is being on the bosom of the sea and being brought in to the shore by the tide and then carried further and further out to sea by the tide; then there is that time when the tide takes us out and we do not make it back. “They cried out to the Lord in their distress.” Dear Lord, it is my voice raised in a call for help before I drift beyond the pull of the tide. It is my call in the parched dry desert for a way to the city foursquare.

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out. It is so important that you establish your own devotional journal.

CONFESSION OF SIN

How is it we are so willing to wander? Satan has shown us a mirage and we have bought it. The mirage is thoughtfully prepared to our personal tastes. We see in it all we thought we needed and wanted. Such is available — and it is no fantasy — but it is prepared by Another. When once we leave the abiding place of

our Lord, Satan dissolves the mirage and we are left with reality — a desert wasteland! No security — no satisfaction. Dear Lord this is the scenario of many days of my life — forgive me. Give me your straight way to your city where I can settle down and live in your presence.

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Dying with Jesus, by death reckoned mine;
Living with Jesus, a new life divine;
Looking to Jesus till glory doth shine,
Moment by moment, O Lord, I am Thine.
Moment by moment I’m kept in His love;
Moment by moment I’ve life from above;
Looking to Jesus till glory doth shine;
Moment by moment, O Lord, I am Thine.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

³³Pilate then went back inside the palace, summoned Jesus and asked him, “Are you the king of the Jews?”

³⁴“Is that your own idea,” Jesus asked, “or did others talk to you about me?”

³⁵“Do you think I am a Jew?” Pilate replied. “It was your people and your chief priests who handed you over to me. What is it that you have done?”

³⁶Jesus said, “My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place.”

³⁷“You are a king, then!” said Pilate.

Jesus answered, “You are right in saying I am a king. In fact, for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me.”

38“What is truth?” Pilate asked. With this he went out again to the Jews and said, “I find no basis for a charge against him.” — *John 18:33-38, NIV*; read also Matt. 27:11-14; Mark 15:2-5; Luke 23:3-5.

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

It wasn't long before Pilate began to wonder just who was on trial. Jesus *did* put Pilate on trial. He wanted to know how the governor personally related to Jesus. When Pilate asked concerning his Messiahship Jesus wanted to know if this was a personal question or one posed by the Jews and placed in the mouth of the governor. Jesus could not give Pilate a straight “yes” or “no” to the question “are you the king of the Jews” because a “yes” would seem to say that he was a king as the Jews interpreted it — i.e. politically. A “no” would seem to say that in no sense was he a king. Jesus wanted to know just how this question was asked.

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

How do I ask and answer this all-important question? Of course it is easy to glibly say “You are my King” — but too often this means the king is in his palace a long way from me and only visits infrequently to see if he really rules in my life. The fact of the matter is that my body is his palace and my heart his throne. Anything less than this is a denial of his Lordship. Your rule comes from my hearing and heeding your word — the truth. Jesus really impressed Pilate as being innocent — how does he impress me? Surely more than he did Pilate.

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you for my Lord's constant concern for all men — even Pilate. (2) Thank you that Jesus always looked beneath the surface when answering a question. (3) Thank you that Jesus is a king and does have a kingdom — I am glad to be a citizen. (4) Thank you that there is “another place” — I look forward to going there. (5) Thank you for the truth Jesus came to teach and live.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

“Everyone on the side of truth listens to me.” Pilate was just not on the side of truth because he would not listen to Jesus. In answer to Pilate's question, “what is truth?” we can answer: truth is that which equals reality. If we say “the sun rises in the west” we would not be speaking the truth. All know the truth about such a subject because we experience the reality with the rising of the sun in the east every morning. In any area of life we can find the teaching of our Lord a perfect match for reality. Jesus gave us a test for

truth: he said, “if anyone wills to do my will he shall know” (John 7:17). He is saying, “try me and see.”

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

In the trial before Pilate there are many reasons for requests: (1) Open my heart that I might know fresh new ways of allowing your rule in my life, (2) I do want to ask and answer for myself the subject of your Lordship. (3) May there be new conquests for King Jesus in my home and family, (4) Open my ears to your word. (5) Since your word is truth I want to digest every word of it and assimilate its truth into my character.

Please, please remember these are prayers — speak them — reword them!

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

As you probed the conscience of Pilate search my heart today: (1) “My kingdom is not of this world.” (2) “Physical violence never has accomplished my will in this world.” (3) “Living truth is available for all in the record of my life.”

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Israel — Points for prayer: (1) *Israeli Jews are sometimes harder to evangelize than those of the Dispersion.* Most have returned to their ancient land in unbelief. Pray for this hardness to be removed (Rom. 11:25), and for the promised harvest (Rom. 11:31). (2) *The idealistic dreams of Zionism have been shattered by the realities of life in modern Israel.* Social and economic stresses, religious and political divisions and the constant state of war-readiness have disturbed the nation. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem and Israel, and that Jews might find in their Messiah the peace that the world cannot take away. (3) *The social status of Messianic believers can be difficult.* Pray for the government, and for a relaxation of attitudes that discriminate against Christians.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

When my love to Christ grows weak,
When for deeper faith I seek,
Then in thought I go to thee,
Garden of Gethsemane!
When my love for man grows weak,
When for stronger faith I seek,
Hill of Calvary! I go
To thy scenes of fear and woe.

WEEK FIVE

—Friday—

Your goodness has surely followed me every day of my life. Am I genuinely grateful? Lead me into a deeper period of thanksgiving.



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“Let them give thanks to the Lord for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for men, for he satisfies the thirsty and fills the hungry with good things” (Psa. 107:8,9). Dear Lord, I do indeed lift up my heart in adoration and thanksgiving. I can testify with the psalmist you do satisfy the thirsty and fill the hungry with your manna from heaven.

As I review the record of your unfailing love in my experience I do want to thank you. There have been so many days — weeks — months — years — and you have been in every one. Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: all things in every human experience of every child of yours is working together for our good and your glory.

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

What I have said for myself I say on behalf of your children. Your unfailing love and wonderful deeds (if we have eyes to see and ears to hear and a heart to understand) satisfy the thirst and fill every desire with good things. Glory to your name! Dear Lord, I do want to enter more fully into the specifics of your love and actions in the hearts of your children. If there is no appetite there can be no satisfaction — I want a much larger appetite for your will in my life — as found in your word and your Son.

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out.

CONFESSION OF SIN

Deliver me from a mere idealizing of your will in my life. Break me out of the mold of words into the reality of specifics. In just what particular areas of daily life do I see and identify your unfailing love? (1) In being alive in this world — you decide when we will die and live. (2) My daily bread — i.e. all my sustenance is from your unfailing love. Most especially

when there are so many who have so little food. (3) For the opportunity to serve in a particular area of your kingdom. I have not thought of these (and other) expressions of your love — forgive me! Why, oh, why do I go to the broken cisterns of this world to find satisfaction for my thirst? Forgive me!

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

Joy to the world! the Lord is come;
Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare Him room,
And Heaven and nature sing,
And Heaven and nature sing,
And Heaven, and Heaven and nature sing.

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

⁶On hearing this, Pilate asked if the man was a Galilean. ⁷When he learned that Jesus was under Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod, who was also in Jerusalem at that time.

⁸When Herod saw Jesus, he was greatly pleased, because for a long time he had been wanting to see him. From what he had heard about him, he hoped to see him perform some miracle. ⁹He plied him with many questions, but Jesus gave him no answer. ¹⁰The chief priests and the teachers of the law were standing there, vehemently accusing him. ¹¹Then Herod and his soldiers ridiculed and mocked him. Dressing him in an elegant robe, they sent him back to Pilate. ¹²That day Herod and Pilate became friends — before this they had been enemies. —*Luke 23:6-12, NIV*

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

Pilate was embarrassed with the problem of having one before him who was obviously innocent and yet

was the focus of the hatred of the Jews. Someone mentioned the influence of our Lord in Galilee. This gave Pilate an idea. He would send Jesus to Herod — and Herod was right here in Jerusalem at this time (probably to observe the passover). This is the Herod who beheaded John the Baptist — his conscience bothered him ever since. He wanted the answers to several questions that only Jesus could give: (1) Was he John risen from the dead? (2) Was he a political threat? (3) Would he put on a performance of magic for him?

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

Herod is the only person to whom our Lord would not speak. Even though Herod asked him many questions he answered him not at all. It must have been a chaos of confusion what with the loud accusations of the chief priests and the questions of Herod. Why did Jesus refuse to answer this chief of sinners? Was this an example of pearls before swine? Did Jesus believe John the Baptist's message was adequate? Do we find in Herod one upon whom the Lord had given up, i.e. as in Romans 1:24-32? We believe we have in this man such a reprobate. I must not forget that the pure heart of Jesus was hurt perhaps more by the mocking and ridicule than the nails of Calvary.

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you that my Lord could be presented to the highest in the government of Palestine. (2) Thank you for the wisdom of our Lord in remaining silent. (3) Thank you for the attractiveness of Jesus — people could not ignore him. (4) Thank you for the humble endurance of our Lord as he was mocked and misunderstood by these men. (5) Thank you for the obvious evidence that there was no guilt to be found in him.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

“That day Herod and Pilate became friends — before they had been enemies.” This was political jealousy based on ignorance and misinformation. It is indeed strange that these men were brought together by their mutual interest in Jesus. I wonder what they said of our Lord when they met each other. There were 30 years of background to discuss. The whole Herod family had been involved in one way or another in the life and times of Jesus. Pilate could surely offer the Roman point of view. Perhaps these two friends will have all eternity to discuss the horrible mistake they made long ago in Jerusalem.

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

Even in this incident there are reasons for prayer: (1) How easy it is to be devious in answering problems — I want to be as honest and straightforward as my Lord. (2) Deliver me from the influence of powerful wicked men. (3) I am so glad my interest in my Lord goes beyond curiosity — deepen my interest to true worship. (4) Jesus refused to put on a performance — give me the same attitude. (5) Help me with the wisdom to know those I should not answer.

Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

Even if Jesus did not answer Herod there is much he can say to me out of this record: (1) “Look for ways to please me — not yourself.” (2) “Face into your responsibilities — do not shift them to someone else.” (3) “Some evil men grow worse through contact with me.”

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Israel — Points for prayer: (1) The dislike of Christianity is a barrier to be overcome in Jewish minds. “Christian” nations are seen to be destroyers of the Jewish nation whether by persecution (as in the Holocaust) or by proselytization. Pray that the gospel may be understood as a fulfillment of their Jewish heritage and that a widespread turning to Christ might come. (2) Protestants are more numerous among the Palestinian Arabs. The largest groups are Anglican, Baptist and Brethren, and most originate from the traditional Christian minority. There is an unprecedented openness among Palestinian Muslims and freedom to share Christ with them, but there are, as yet, only three groups of believers of Muslim origin.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

(Were you there?)

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

(Were you there?)

Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble,
tremble, tremble.

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

WEEK FIVE

—Saturday—

I believe you are even now delivering me. There are so many areas of distress I have not experienced because of your love. Gladly I worship you!



PRAISE GOD FOR WHO HE IS

“Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble, and he saved them from their distress. He brought them out of darkness and deepest gloom and broke away their chains” (Psa. 107:13,14). Here is a lovely text full of encouragement: (1) Your ear is open to my cry for help. You are a conscious intelligent Being who through your omniscience and omnipresence knows every need. (2) You can either deliver me *through* the distress or deliver me *out of it* — either way you are my Deliverer. (3) How much needed is this quality: “He brought them out of darkness. . . .” We so often find ourselves in darkness — of one kind or another. Gloom and doom seem always about to envelope us. Praise your name — we need not share such an attitude.

Express yourself in adoration for this quality of God. Speak it audibly or write out your praise in your own devotional journal.

PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT HE MEANS TO ME

I know from *much* experience that trouble, distress, darkness, gloom, etc. are much more subjective than objective. Our whole attitude toward life is a large source for such conditions. Just to know Someone who is light and life — peace and hope and eternal purpose — is enough to give us deliverance. The completeness and personal suitability of your salvation is a wonderful blessing to me. You have saved me so many times from trouble. I could list one example after another — and many many that I have forgotten. I am so glad to acknowledge you as my Savior! I do not believe there is one chain in Satan’s store that can hold the child of God — praise and adoration to your name!

How do you personally relate to this quality of God? Speak it out or write it out.

CONFESSION OF SIN

This Psalm is a poetic history of the nation of Israel — the troubles and distress spoken of here can be

read as history in Exodus and Numbers. These people repeated time after time the cycle of: (1) sin; (2) sorrow; (3) salvation. God wants to bend this cycle into a straight line of victory and service. Surely such a record was written for our instruction that we should not fall after the same example of disobedience. It took many years to develop such a syndrome and it will take time to break the cycle down into a straight line. But through your help it can be done!

What personal sins do you want to confess? We must speak them to remove them. Do it! Now. There is no one else you have sinned against more than God. Tell him so!

SING A PRAYER TO GOD

My faith looks up to Thee,
Thou Lamb of Calvary,
Savior divine!
Now hear me while I pray,
Take all my guilt away,
O let me from this day
Be wholly Thine!

Open your hymn book and sing the rest of the verses — or even sing another prayer song.

HIS WORD

⁶Now it was the custom of the Feast to release a prisoner whom the people requested. ⁷A man called Barabbas was in prison with the insurrectionists who had committed murder in the uprising. ⁸The crowd came up and asked Pilate to do for them what he usually did.

⁹“Do you want me to release to you the king of the Jews?” asked Pilate, ¹⁰knowing it was out of envy that the chief priests had handed Jesus over to him. —Mark 15:6-10, NIV; read also Matt. 27:15-18; Luke 23:13-19.

READ HIS WORD TO HIM

Our Lord stands a second time before Pilate, It would be very helpful to review all the events of my Lord’s

trial before Pilate: (1) Second session of the Sanhedrin (Matt. 27:1; Mark 15:1) (2) First application to Pilate (John 18:28-32) (3) Formal accusation before Pilate (Matt. 27:11; Mark 15:1,2) (4) First conversation between Christ and Pilate (John 18:33-38; Mark 15:2) (5) Acquittal; further charges; Christ's silence (Matt. 27:12-14; Mark 15:3-5; Luke 23:4,5) (6) Case sent to Herod (Luke 23:6-12) (7) Before Pilate again; formal acquittal (Luke 23:13-16) (8) Jesus or Barabbas (Matt. 27:15-18; Mark 15:6-10). I want to "be there" in every word of these inspired biographies. Open my heart!

Please express your response to this beautiful text. Put your expression in your own prayer diary.

READ HIS WORD FOR YOURSELF

What a travesty of justice! Here is a man who had already been proven guilty of the very charges of which our Lord is only falsely accused: *treason and murder!* All men knew of the crimes this man Barabbas had committed and yet they preferred him to Jesus! Surely this must be the height of the sordid results of envy and hatred. What strange news this request must have been to the ears of Barabbas. In a real sense he represented all men in the purpose of the death of our Lord. "He took my place" is the story of redemption. But just now I want to say this is the record of *my* forgiveness — *my* salvation — wonder of wonders he died for *me!*

Pause in his presence and either audibly or in written form tell him all his word means to you.

READ HIS WORD IN THANKSGIVING

(1) Thank you that long before this world began you planned this incident. (2) Thank you that what seemed all so normal and natural was in reality your eternal purposes working out on the stage of time. (3) Thank you for the startling sordid picture of just how far hatred and malice will go — it becomes a real warning to me. (4) Thank you for this example of political pressure (peer pressure) — it stands as a tragic example to all of us. (5) Thank you for the wonderful composure of our Lord through all the abuse.

Give yourself to your own expression of gratitude — write it or speak it!

READ HIS WORD IN MEDITATION

"Wanting to satisfy the crowd, Pilate released Barabbas to them." How many sad decisions have been made for this reason: "to satisfy the crowd." Even when such capitulation is given neither the crowd nor the one who chose is satisfied. Many, many in the crowd ask themselves shortly after the incident just why they made such a choice. Tradition has it that Pilate was soon recalled by Rome and died a disillusioned man in exile. Or that he committed suicide. Satan really has an opportunity in the mob spirit — indeed such a spirit is the essence of the evil one's presence.

Pause — wait — think — then express yourself in thoughtful praise or thanks.

READ HIS WORD FOR PETITIONS

Read this text again and see if there is not reason for prayer: (1) "What then shall I do unto Jesus who is called the Christ" — these words of Pilate ring in my conscience — may I not evade him as Pilate tried. (2) May I not misunderstand him as did the religious leaders of his day. (3) May I not be influenced by others to reject him as did the crowds. (4) May I not crucify him afresh with my willful sin. (5) May I love him and worship him and serve him as he so richly deserves.

Right here add your personal requests — and his answers.

READ HIS WORD AND WAIT — LISTEN — GOD SPEAKS

In this unique action you can speak to my heart: (1) "There is always something to be done with Jesus — he is never a neutral factor." (2) "My Son is crucified afresh every day in someone's life." (3) "Envy is one of the largest powers of the evil one — *you* are not immune."

INTERCESSION FOR THE LOST WORLD

Italy — Points for prayer: (1) *Persecution of Protestants continued for nearly 800 years.* Today's freedom to preach the gospel is a new experience, but the response has been meager, and indifference to spiritual truths widespread. Pray for decisive breakthroughs for the gospel. (2) *The long-powerful Roman Catholic Church* has lost over nine million members in this generation. The decline in the number of priests and of influence has been dramatic. Pope John Paul and his charisma has returned the Church to a more traditional stance, which is slowing the decline. Although many Italians despise and ignore the Church, its traditions and mind-set still permeate every aspect of national life, and church attendance remains one of the highest in Europe. In their disillusionment many have sought ideological refuge in Marxism and cults, or reverted to witchcraft and spiritism. The bonds of Satan must be broken by prevailing prayer.

SING PRAISES TO OUR LORD

Beneath the cross of Jesus
I fain would take my stand,
The shadow of a mighty rock
Within a weary land,
A home within the wilderness,
A rest upon the way,
From the burning of the noon-tide heat
And the burden of the day.