

**Devotional The Dangerous Memory of the Suffering of Jesus February 21, 2021**

**Monday**

Read Mark 15:33–40

Let's start the week by thinking and praying deeply on what we finished the sermon with on Sunday:

How do you need to look at people differently given if you are going to look at others through the suffering and death of Jesus instead of "just world" theory?

How will you look at people who are immigrants differently?

People who share experiences of suffering from discrimination – racism, sexism, and otherwise?

People who are experiencing homelessness?

People who request help with food from our food pantry or help with rent or utilities?

People who are experiencing unemployment?

And how will you look at people with great wealth differently?

People who do not suffer from discrimination?

People who have lots of power?

People who live in luxury?

How will you look at people through the cross of Jesus? Not through your partisan political commitments and not through "just world" theory, but see them with the knowledge that we live by the grace of a crucified God?

**Tuesday**

See below before you read Isaiah 52:13–53:12

This scripture is linguistically rich and provocative. Before you read it, spend a few minutes in silence allowing yourself to be quiet in front of God. Now read the passage before you continue reading the devotional... What words or phrases stuck out to you as you read? Hold them in mind or write them down. Read the passage again... Now spend some time in prayer with those words or phrases and ask God to illuminate your heart and spirit with what he wants to show you for your life today. Bless you.

**Wednesday**

Read Mark 16:1-13

Think back to our little example on Sunday of moving to Phoenix. Because of hindsight bias and memory creep we are prone to look back at decisions and think of them and everything surrounding them as all good or all bad, depending on the outcome.

What is risky about seeing the life of Jesus through hindsight bias and memory creep?

When we read Mark 16 we see that all is good, but in reading it we can be prone to forget that what happened in Mark 15 wasn't all that great – it had great benefit for us but that doesn't mean that Jesus didn't really suffer or die. Every day is a day to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus! But we must hold in tension the terror of the suffering and execution of Jesus. If Jesus didn't really die then he isn't really resurrected.

Take some time in prayer to reflect on the death of Jesus and what it meant to Jesus (we do pretty well with what it meant for us). Open yourself to the Spirit transforming you by more deeply understanding the death of Jesus?

**Thursday**

Read Mark 8:1-10

A common question regarding the Apostles' Creed (and most creeds and confessions of faith) is why they don't talk about Jesus' earthly ministry – his teachings, healings, and miracles. Before I give you the short and sweet answer, take a second to consider why we jump straight from the birth of Jesus to the suffering and death of Jesus in the Apostles' Creed.

Have you come up with a theory? The short and sweet answer is that Jesus' teachings, healings, miracles, etc., aren't mentioned in the Creed because they weren't controversial. Most creeds and confessions are triggered by controversy. The nature of Jesus' birth was and is controversial. The nature of Jesus' death/resurrection was and is controversial. When the Apostles' Creed was written there wasn't really any controversy about Jesus' ministry. So, the AC contains core beliefs about important things especially as these brief statements counter heretical beliefs.

**Friday** – please read and reflect upon Psalm 88 and Mark 15:33-16:8.

