

JOURNEY TO

# EASTER

WITH **WAYSIDE**CHAPEL

READING PLAN, REFLECTION QUESTIONS, AND MORE!



WE BELIEVE  
EASTER CHANGES  
EVERYTHING!



WAYSIDECHAPEL

*"For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."*

**Romans 5:6-8 ESV**

Easter is all about the gospel proclaimed to us through the message of Jesus Christ. In the rhythms and routines of life, it can be easy for us to miss out on its true meaning and its true cost. Let's prepare for the great joy of Easter Sunday by first examining the sorrow, pain, and suffering our Savior endured on our behalf. Join us over these next three weeks as we explore the themes of betrayal, forsakenness, and punishment. In so doing, we will seek to gain a deeper understanding of the immense cost Jesus Christ paid for our sins. May this reading guide lead us to turn from our sin and to more deeply appreciate the atoning work of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Each week also includes additional resources (a video on the topic and additional scriptures). Be sure to sign up for a free [RightNow Media](#) account on our website before accessing the videos.

# Week One

## DAY ONE

MATTHEW 17:22-23

## DAY TWO

MATTHEW 20:17-19

## DAY THREE

MATTHEW 26:1-5

## DAY FOUR

MATTHEW 26:6-16

## DAY FIVE

MATTHEW 26:46-50

## DAY SIX

REFLECTION

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

# Betrayed

## παραδίδομι

To give into the hands of another;  
To deliver up treacherously

**Webster's Dictionary:**  
To deliver to an enemy by treachery;  
To fail or desert especially in time of need

In this first week, we delve into the theme of betrayal, tracing the moments leading up to Judas Iscariot's betrayal of Jesus. As we reflect on each day's reading, we are invited to contemplate the weight of disloyalty and its role in Jesus' unfolding journey to the cross. May we grasp the unwavering nature of his love and the magnitude of his sacrifice for us.



## MATTHEW 17:22-23

*<sup>22</sup> As they were gathering in Galilee, Jesus said to them, "The Son of Man is about to be delivered into the hands of men, <sup>23</sup> and they will kill him, and he will be raised on the third day." And they were greatly distressed.*

The disciples were greatly distressed by the words Jesus was speaking.

- Is there a certain situation in your life (past or present) where you also feel distressed? How can meditating and deeply understanding Christ's resurrection give you hope in the midst of distress?

Jesus' betrayal was orchestrated by a man that had been chosen to be His disciple.

- How can Jesus' betrayal minister to us when we feel betrayed by those closest to us?
- Have you had a great betrayal in your life? How does knowing that Jesus experienced the same and it ended with His resurrection give you hope?



### MATTHEW 20:17-19

*<sup>17</sup> And as Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, he took the twelve disciples aside, and on the way he said to them, <sup>18</sup> "See, we are going up to Jerusalem. And the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn him to death <sup>19</sup> and deliver him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified, and he will be raised on the third day."*

The nations and His own people rejected him, His friends abandoned Him - one of them even betrayed Him. The reasons for the world's rejection of the Messiah vary from person to person. But they all boil down to the sins of pride and autonomy. The point is this: We have all betrayed Jesus rather than surrender to him.

- In what ways are you tempted to betray Jesus by clinging to autonomy?
- Why is the betrayal of Jesus so treacherous and unjust?

## MATTHEW 26:1-5



*When Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said to his disciples, <sup>2</sup> "You know that after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of Man will be delivered up to be crucified." <sup>3</sup> Then the chief priests and the elders of the people gathered in the palace of the high priest, whose name was Caiaphas, <sup>4</sup> and plotted together in order to arrest Jesus by stealth and kill him. <sup>5</sup> But they said, "Not during the feast, lest there be an uproar among the people."*

God had entrusted the religious leaders with the great responsibility of shepherding His people and upholding righteousness and justice, and yet these are the exact people who betrayed Jesus because He challenged their power and traditions.

- Are there any places in your life where you cling to power or tradition over following Jesus? In what ways do you need to repent and surrender the desire for control?





## MATTHEW 26:6-16

*<sup>6</sup> Now when Jesus was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, <sup>7</sup> a woman came up to him with an alabaster flask of very expensive ointment, and she poured it on his head as he reclined at table. <sup>8</sup> And when the disciples saw it, they were indignant, saying, "Why this waste? <sup>9</sup> For this could have been sold for a large sum and given to the poor." <sup>10</sup> But Jesus, aware of this, said to them, "Why do you trouble the woman? For she has done a beautiful thing to me. <sup>11</sup> For you always have the poor with you, but you will not always have me. <sup>12</sup> In pouring this ointment on my body, she has done it to prepare me for burial. <sup>13</sup> Truly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will also be told in memory of her." <sup>14</sup> Then one of the twelve, whose name was Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests <sup>15</sup> and said, "What will you give me if I deliver him over to you?" And they paid him thirty pieces of silver. <sup>16</sup> And from that moment he sought an opportunity to betray him.*

Consider the contrast between the woman who worshiped Jesus and Judas who betrayed Him. Which action do you think better reflects how your life responds to the King?



**MATTHEW 26:46-50**

*<sup>46</sup> Rise, let us be going; see, my betrayer is at hand."*

*<sup>47</sup> While he was still speaking, Judas came, one of the twelve, and with him a great crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the elders of the people. <sup>48</sup> Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, "The one I will kiss is the man; seize him." <sup>49</sup> And he came up to Jesus at once and said, "Greetings, Rabbi!" And he kissed him. <sup>50</sup> Jesus said to him, "Friend, do what you came to do." Then they came up and laid hands on Jesus and seized him.*

Jesus called Judas "friend" in the midst of this final act of betrayal. What do you imagine Jesus must have felt as his friend and disciple treacherously betrayed him with a kiss?

Though we are not Judas, certainly we betray Jesus in those moments when we call him Lord, yet willingly choose sin. What are those moments for you? Confess those to the Lord and commit to turning away from them this Easter season.

## DAY 6 | MARCH 16

We invite you to take time today to reflect on what God has shown you this week as we considered the heaviness of what it means to be betrayed.

Jesus endured broken trust, utter disappointment, and treachery on our behalf. How did this week's focus on betrayal deepen your understanding of God's unwavering love for you?

"...but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

**Romans 5:6-8 ESV**

# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The supplemental scripture below provides additional places where we see the word betrayal being used as we consider the depth of what it meant for Christ to face betrayal as He journeyed to the cross.

**Mark 14:10-11 // Luke 22:4-6**

**Luke 2:47-48 // John 6:71**

**John 13:1-26**

We also have a link to a short video on RightNow Media, that dives deeper into the theme of betrayal as we look at Christ's journey to the cross. You can access this video at [waysidechapel.org/easter](https://waysidechapel.org/easter). If you don't have a free RightNow Media account, be sure to set that up before accessing the video. The link for creating an account is also available on our website.



# Week Two

## DAY ONE

MATTHEW 26:55-56

## DAY TWO

MATTHEW 27:45-50

## DAY THREE

PSALM 22:1-5

## DAY FOUR

PSALM 69:20-21

## DAY FIVE

MATTHEW 26:38-39, 42 & 44

## DAY SIX

REFLECTION

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

# Forsaken

ἐγκαταλείπω

To abandon or desert;  
To leave in straits; To leave helpless

**Webster's Dictionary:**  
To renounce or turn away from entirely

During this second week, we focus on Jesus' experience of being forsaken, first by his closest friends and then more painfully forsaken by his Father. Through scripture's depiction of Jesus' abandonment and agonizing loneliness on the cross, we are confronted with the depths of his suffering on our behalf. May we grasp the unending and enduring nature of God's love for us.



## MATTHEW 26:55-56

*<sup>55</sup> At that hour Jesus said to the crowds, "Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs to capture me? Day after day I sat in the temple teaching, and you did not seize me. <sup>56</sup> But all this has taken place that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled." Then all the disciples left him and fled.*

Jesus was with the people and in the temple daily where His actions could easily be seen; however, those that sought to arrest Jesus sought the cover of darkness. Their show of force and choice of timing spoke more to their fear of His challenge to their "authority" and their need to control the situation than to Jesus being dangerous. And the disciples let their fear keep them from remaining loyal to Jesus when they fled.

- Where have you acted from a place of fear rather than trust in God's plan in your life? How have your fear responses impacted those around you?
- Have you experienced the pain from those you thought were on your side leaving you? How does the fact that Jesus has also faced this pain help?





## MATTHEW 27:45-50

*<sup>45</sup> Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour. <sup>46</sup> And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" <sup>47</sup> And some of the bystanders, hearing it, said, "This man is calling Elijah." <sup>48</sup> And one of them at once ran and took a sponge, filled it with sour wine, and put it on a reed and gave it to him to drink. <sup>49</sup> But the others said, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him." <sup>50</sup> And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice and yielded up his spirit.*

Jesus quotes Psalm 22 saying "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" What does this show us about how Jesus is feeling? Why do you think He says these words aloud? Why do you think the Holy Spirit made sure they were recorded for us in the gospels?

Psalm 22 begins with a lament of forsakenness. Thus, as we've seen, Jesus quotes it to show the emotional agony of feeling abandoned by the Father. Yet, it is important to note that Psalm 22 ends with the author's confidence in God's coming deliverance. How does that hope of deliverance give new meaning to this moment on the cross?



## PSALM 22:1-5

*My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?*

*Why are you so far from saving me, from the words of my groaning?*

*<sup>2</sup> O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer, and by night, but I find no rest.*

*<sup>3</sup> Yet you are holy, enthroned on the praises of Israel.*

*<sup>4</sup> In you our fathers trusted; they trusted, and you delivered them.*

*<sup>5</sup> To you they cried and were rescued; in you they trusted and were not put to shame.*

In His last cries on the cross, Jesus quotes Psalm 22:1 which details a picture of despair that leads to great praise and faith in the Father.

- Is there a certain situation in life right now where you feel alone, abandoned, and helpless? How can calling out the character of God in praise strengthen your faith in this situation?
- Have you ever felt abandoned by God in certain situations in your life? How can understanding and meditating on God's promises help you anticipate His deliverance in a situation of despair and feeling abandoned?



**PSALM 69:20-21**

*<sup>20</sup> Reproaches have broken my heart,  
so that I am in despair.*

*I looked for pity, but there was none,  
and for comforters, but I found none.*

*<sup>21</sup> They gave me poison for food,  
and for my thirst they gave me sour wine to drink.*

- Jesus' pain was far more than physical. Do we feel the shame and loneliness that sin causes?
- Does that shame give us a bitter taste that would lead us to seek right relationship with Christ?



### MATTHEW 26:38-39, 42, 44

*<sup>38</sup> Then he said to them, "My soul is very sorrowful, even to death; remain here, and watch with me." <sup>39</sup> And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, saying, "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will."*

*<sup>42</sup> Again, for the second time, he went away and prayed, "My Father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it, your will be done." <sup>44</sup> So, leaving them again, he went away and prayed for the third time, saying the same words again.*

Commentators suggest that silence from God the Father began at the Garden of Gethsemane, which in part led Jesus to repeatedly ask for deliverance. Entering into His darkest moments, He sought comfort from His Father.

- How does the nature of Jesus' prayer in these verses reveal the degree to which He felt helpless and cut off from God?
- In what ways can you relate to the sense of helplessness, desperation, and isolation Jesus experienced in Gethsemane?

## DAY 6 | MARCH 23

We invite you to take time today to reflect on what God has shown you this week as we considered the heaviness of what it means to be forsaken.

Jesus withstood complete helplessness, agonizing loneliness, and separation from his Father on our behalf. How did this week's look into forsakenness deepen your understanding of God's unending love for you?

"...but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

**Romans 5:6-8 ESV**

# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The supplemental scripture below provides additional places where we see the word forsaken being used as we consider the depth of what it meant for Christ to face being forsaken by all as He journeyed to the cross.

**Luke 22:41-44 // Mark 15:33-41**

**Hebrews 13:5 // Deuteronomy 31:6**

**John 16:32**

We also have a link to a short video on RightNow Media, that dives deeper into the theme of being forsaken as we look at Christ's journey to the cross. You can access this video at [waysidechapel.org/easter](https://waysidechapel.org/easter). If you don't have a free RightNow Media account, be sure to set that up before accessing the video. The link for creating an account is also available on our website.



# Week Three

## DAY ONE

ISAIAH 53:1-12

## DAY TWO

MATTHEW 27:26-31

## DAY THREE

MARK 15:27-32

## DAY FOUR

1 PETER 2:22-24

## DAY FIVE

HEBREWS 9:26-28

## DAY SIX

REFLECTION

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



# Punished



To strike; To plague; To wound

## **Webster's Dictionary:**

To impose a penalty on for a fault,  
offense, or violation

In our final week, we center on the punishment Jesus bore in His body to atone for our sins by exploring the brutal realities of Jesus' final days on earth leading up to his crucifixion. May our contemplation of the punishment Jesus bore lead us to a profound gratitude for His redemptive work and a renewed commitment to live in light of His sacrifice.



## ISAIAH 53:1-12

*Who has believed what he has heard from us?*

*And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?*

<sup>2</sup> *For he grew up before him like a young plant,  
and like a root out of dry ground;*

*he had no form or majesty that we should look at him,  
and no beauty that we should desire him.*

<sup>3</sup> *He was despised and rejected by men,  
a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief;  
and as one from whom men hide their faces  
he was despised, and we esteemed him not.*

<sup>4</sup> *Surely he has borne our griefs  
and carried our sorrows;  
yet we esteemed him stricken,  
smitten by God, and afflicted.*

<sup>5</sup> *But he was pierced for our transgressions;  
he was crushed for our iniquities;  
upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace,  
and with his wounds we are healed.*

<sup>6</sup> *All we like sheep have gone astray;  
we have turned—every one—to his own way;  
and the Lord has laid on him  
the iniquity of us all.*



*<sup>7</sup> He was oppressed, and he was afflicted,  
yet he opened not his mouth;  
like a lamb that is led to the slaughter,  
and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent,  
so he opened not his mouth.*

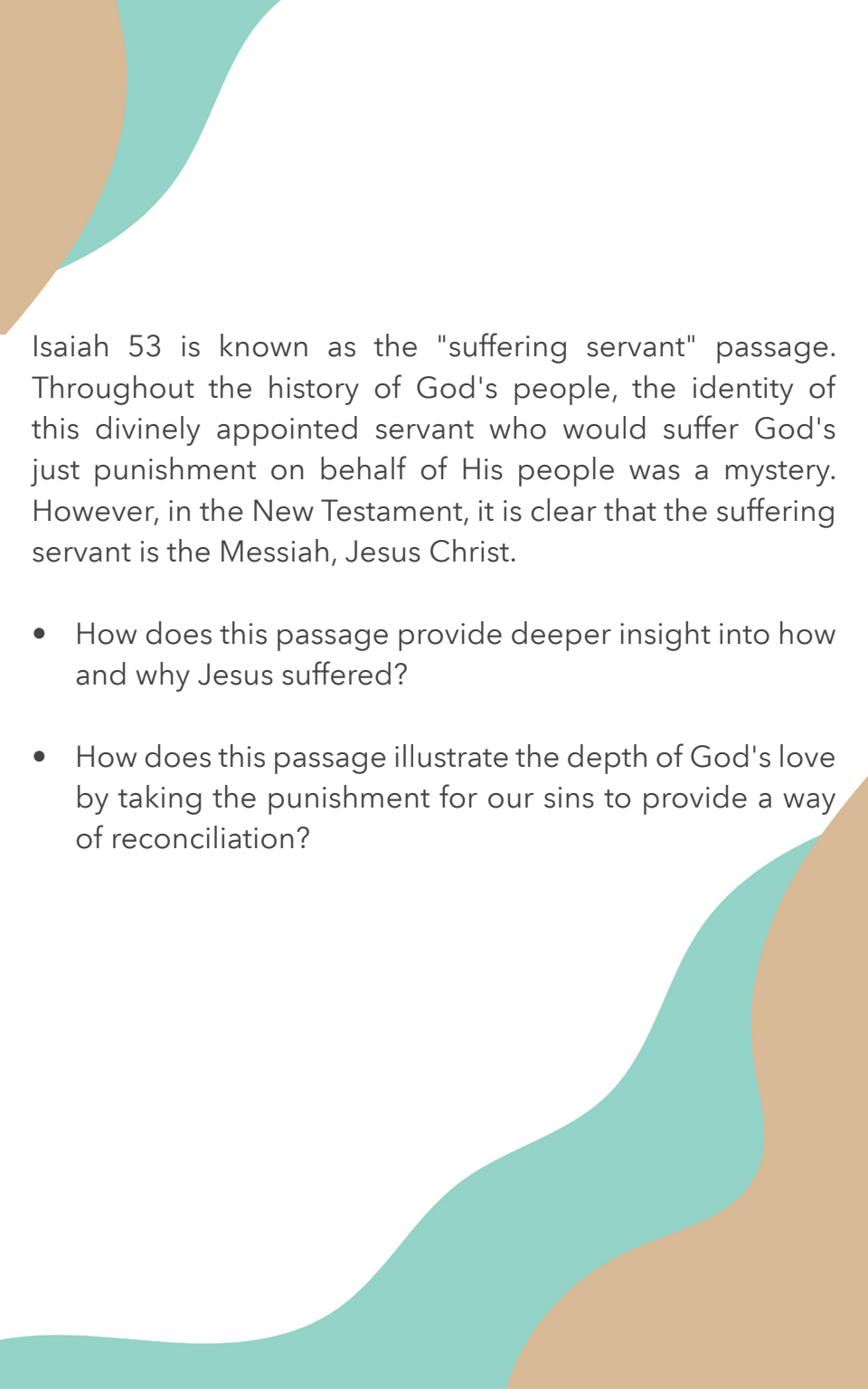
*<sup>8</sup> By oppression and judgment he was taken away;  
and as for his generation, who considered  
that he was cut off out of the land of the living,  
stricken for the transgression of my people?*

*<sup>9</sup> And they made his grave with the wicked  
and with a rich man in his death,  
although he had done no violence,  
and there was no deceit in his mouth.*

*<sup>10</sup> Yet it was the will of the Lord to crush him;  
he has put him to grief;  
when his soul makes an offering for guilt,  
he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days;  
the will of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.*

*<sup>11</sup> Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied;  
by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant,  
make many to be accounted righteous,  
and he shall bear their iniquities.*

*<sup>12</sup> Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many,  
and he shall divide the spoil with the strong,  
because he poured out his soul to death  
and was numbered with the transgressors;  
yet he bore the sin of many,  
and makes intercession for the transgressors. Then all the  
disciples left him and fled.*



Isaiah 53 is known as the "suffering servant" passage. Throughout the history of God's people, the identity of this divinely appointed servant who would suffer God's just punishment on behalf of His people was a mystery. However, in the New Testament, it is clear that the suffering servant is the Messiah, Jesus Christ.

- How does this passage provide deeper insight into how and why Jesus suffered?
- How does this passage illustrate the depth of God's love by taking the punishment for our sins to provide a way of reconciliation?



### MATTHEW 27:26-31

*<sup>26</sup> Then he released for them Barabbas, and having scourged Jesus, delivered him to be crucified.*

*<sup>27</sup> Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters, and they gathered the whole battalion before him. <sup>28</sup> And they stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, <sup>29</sup> and twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on his head and put a reed in his right hand. And kneeling before him, they mocked him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" <sup>30</sup> And they spit on him and took the reed and struck him on the head. <sup>31</sup> And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him and led him away to crucify him.*

- Why is it important to stop and meditate on this moment as we consider what Jesus endured on our behalf? What are practical ways you can stop and meditate on the penalty Jesus endured for you this Easter?
- How should remembrance of the several ways Jesus was punished in our place change our daily perspective in life? In what situations in your life can you be encouraged to know the punishment Jesus took on your behalf?



## MARK 15:27-32

*<sup>27</sup> And with him they crucified two robbers, one on his right and one on his left. <sup>29</sup> And those who passed by derided him, wagging their heads and saying, "Aha! You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, <sup>30</sup> save yourself, and come down from the cross!" <sup>31</sup> So also the chief priests with the scribes mocked him to one another, saying, "He saved others; he cannot save himself. <sup>32</sup> Let the Christ, the King of Israel, come down now from the cross that we may see and believe." Those who were crucified with him also reviled him.*

As Jesus faced the excruciating pain of torture and crucifixion, He also faced the pain of public ridicule and shaming. Some who participated in this had probably been in the crowds when He performed miracles, and some even had perhaps laid down their coats as He rode into Jerusalem. But as soon as the tides turned, so did their trust and belief in who He is.

- What are areas in your life where you want God to "prove Himself" rather than accepting what He's given you?
- How can Jesus' example of surrender to God's will help you navigate life when it gets hard?



**1 PETER 2:22-24**

*<sup>22</sup> He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. <sup>23</sup> When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly.*

*<sup>24</sup> He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.*

- What thoughts do you have knowing that Jesus willingly took our punishment?
- How can Jesus' willing sacrifice be an example for how we should live?



## HEBREWS 9:26-28

*<sup>26</sup> for then he would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world. But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. <sup>27</sup> And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment, <sup>28</sup> so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.*

- Jesus has taken away sin once for all on the cross. In what ways can this truth motivate you to live with a sense of freedom and gratitude each day?
- How does the sobering truth of sin's consequences challenge you to confront areas of sin in your life that you may have been ignoring or minimizing?

Prayerfully reflect on this final question, confess and turn away from whatever sin God may bring to light. And, be sure to join us at 7 pm for our Good Friday service as we sit in the heaviness of Christ's final words on the cross.



## DAY 6 | MARCH 30

Jesus suffered tremendous physical and emotional pain throughout his final days in life, culminating in his sacrificial death on the cross. How did this week's focus on the punishment Christ received deepen your appreciation for his sacrifice and widen your understanding of his enduring love for you?

"...but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

**Romans 5:6-8 ESV**

# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The supplemental scripture below provides additional places where we see the word/theme of punishment being used as we consider the depth of what it meant for Christ to face punishment as He took our sins and paid the penalty for what wasn't His.

**Hebrews 12:2-3 // John 19:16-30**

**Luke 23:33-46 // 2 Corinthians 5:21**

**Hebrews 2:9**

We also have a link to a short video on RightNow Media, that dives deeper into the theme of being punished as we look at Christ's journey to the cross. You can access this video at [waysidechapel.org/easter](https://waysidechapel.org/easter). If you don't have a free RightNow Media account, be sure to set that up before accessing the video. The link for creating an account is also available on our website.

*"The Lord your God is with you, the Mighty Warrior who saves. He will take great delight in you; in his love, he will no longer rebuke you, but will rejoice over you with singing."*

**Zephaniah 3:17**



We hope this reading plan and questions have helped you take time to fully consider the weight of Christ's sacrifice and the gift of salvation given to each of us.

We invite you to join us for our Easter Sunday services at 9:15 & 11 am as we celebrate Christ's victory over sin and death and the hope we have because of His resurrection!

