

## Partners in Prayer

### 1 Corinthians 1 v 18

**“The message of the cross.....is the power of God”**



Here are some steps that you may want to use to help you move into a place of prayer and intercession.

1. **Come with a clean heart:** Psalm 66:18 if I regard iniquity in my heart, The Lord will not hear.
2. **Die to our own thoughts:** 2 Cor. 10:5 casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ
3. **Silence the Enemy:** Romans 16:20 And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.
4. **Invite the Holy Spirit to reveal the heart and Mind of God :** Jude 1:20 But you, dear friends, must continue to build your lives on the foundation of your holy faith. And continue to pray as you are directed by the Holy Spirit.
5. **Wait, to hear what God Says:** John 10:4 And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.
6. Then pray and intercede for what he has spoken to you about

## Day One

### The message of the cross.....is the power of God

**Corinthians 1 v 18**

**“The message of the cross.....is the power of God”**

**Colossians 1 v 20**

**“God reconciled to himself all things by making peace through [Jesus] blood on the cross”**

Jesus died on the cross two thousand years ago. Yet the cross is the power of God today. It is “breaking news”, because the whole of creation is waiting to see how we, God’s children will use the message of the cross to transform the world.

Jesus taught us to pray – “let your Kingdom come, let your will be done on earth as in heaven” – this is only possible if we live our lives from the power and message of the cross

Spend some time meditating on the cross.

Thank God for what he has done for you through dying on the cross – forgiveness of sin, freedom from guilt, eternal life and an open door into his presence.

Ask him to give you a better understanding of the power and message of the cross. Spend some time quietly receiving from him, trusting him to show you more about what he has done for us through his death on the cross.

## Day Two

### Today you will be with me in paradise

Leviticus 4 v 27 - 29

**If a member of the community sins...he must bring as his offering for the sin he has committed a female goat without defect. He is to lay his hand on the sin offering and slaughter it.....**

Luke 23 v 40 - 43

**But the other criminal rebuked him "Don't you fear God," he said "as you are under the same sentence? We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong"**

**Then he said "Jesus remember me when you come into your kingdom"**

**Jesus answered him "I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise"**

When an Israelite sinned, a sacrifice of a bull or goat was needed to make atonement for the sin he or she committed in order to be forgiven.

But this was no easy, clean sacrifice. The sinner had to put his hand on the animal's head and slaughter it. It would have been a bloody, messy process, and the sinner would have identified themselves closely with the sacrifice by the time it had been finished

In the same way we need to identify closely with Jesus' sacrifice on the cross for us.

Spend some time meditating on the bible passage from Luke 23 (above), as follows;

Imagine you were the criminal being sacrificed next to Jesus, as described in the passage above. You had been a violent man, a robber, wanting to exploit other's weakness to your advantage. You had been caught in the act of robbery, and dragged before a court, which had decided to sentence you to death for your crimes.

Here you are, hanging on the cross, lonely, without friends or any hope, destined to die in agony. Then you look at the man hanging beside you. You listened to him once, in a crowd, when he had spoken about his father's kingdom. You didn't pay any attention at the time, but now you remember some of what he said.....and you wonder whether it was the truth.

Through your pain and fear, you gradually become aware of this man's goodness, his love for you even as he hangs there dying. You hear the criminal on the other side of him mock him, and something rises up in you, a last hope, and you speak out **"Don't you fear God, as you are under the same sentence? We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong ..... Jesus remember me when you come into your kingdom"** and you are astonished when you hear him reply **"I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise"** Hope grows inside you. You don't deserve anything apart from death, but this man has invited you into paradise – and he spoke with such sincerity.....

...gradually you sense the world around you slipping away. As your sight grows dim, a light starts to shine, and you sense a great love drawing you in, welcoming you into paradise.....

# Day Three

## A living sacrifice

### Leviticus 14 v 3 - 7

**If the person has been healed of leprosy, the priest shall order that two live birds ...be brought... then...one of the birds shall be killed over fresh water in a clay pot...he shall then take the live bird and dip it...into the blood of the bird that was killed...then he is to release the live bird in the open fields.**

### Romans 12 v 1

**Therefore I urge you brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer yourselves as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God – this is your spiritual act of worship**

The bird used for the cleansing of leprosy in Leviticus is an example of a living sacrifice. The bird only lived because the other bird was chosen to be killed – which earned the living bird its freedom.

In the same way, we enjoy eternal life, life in all its fullness, only because Jesus chose to die for us. As living sacrifices, we can live our lives in knowledge and thankfulness that Jesus paid the ultimate penalty for our sin

What does it mean to be a living sacrifice?

How can we offer ourselves as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God?

Pray that as a church we gain a greater understanding of sacrificial living in all that we do.