

40 Days Week 6

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MH=Marissa Henley

HS: Hi and welcome friends! If you are studying with us live, then you know First 5 and Online Bible Studies are doing this study together! If you're doing this at a later date, whether it's an archived OBS study or in the First 5 app, we're so excited you are here. Each weekend, we have an audio teaching to connect the chapters we studied this past week. This is where we will be able to dig deeper into the Scripture and content we studied together. So, we just finished Week 6 of our study, *The Answers to Your Deepest Longings: 40 Days through the Bible*. My name is Hannah Schindler, and I get to serve on the First 5 team here at Proverbs 31 Ministries. Today we have joining us one of our First 5 writers, Marissa Henley. How are you today, Marissa?

MH: I am doing well. I'm so glad that you're here and that we get an exciting week of Jesus through these five days. Let me read our Major Moments before you jump in.

- John 12: Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey as a king in what is known as "The Triumphal Entry."
- John 13: Jesus ate His last supper before being betrayed by Judas.
- Luke 23: Jesus was crucified on the cross.
- Luke 24: Jesus walked and ate with His disciples.
- Acts 2: The Holy Spirit came as promised, to dwell inside all believers in Christ.

Wow! Melissa, I love all these Major Moments. I have loved this week of teaching and studying, so I would love for you to share your title as you jump in today.

MH: Sure, Hannah. The teaching today is titled "Our Greatest Need." I want to start with a true story from 10 years ago. I walked into a doctor's office feeling fine and walked out with that doctor's plan for months of extremely toxic medication. The drugs he gave me made my hair fall out and wiped out my white blood cells. I needed blood transfusions at least once a month and they checked my heart regularly to make sure I wasn't suffering permanent heart damage. The medication he gave me caused my platelets to get so low that I was at risk for spontaneous internal bleeding. This doctor signed me up for injections of an experimental drug so I could continue to follow his plan. I felt fine the first time I walked into this doctor's office, and every time I saw him that year, I felt worse and worse. If you weren't familiar with cancer and chemotherapy and I told you that story, you'd be wondering how the lawsuit turned out when I sued this monster for malpractice. Right?

HS: Mmhmm.

MH: But if I explain that I walked into Dr. Ravi's office at MD Anderson Cancer Center with an aggressive tumor in my body and a 70% chance of dying within the next five years, you'd

understand why I thank the Lord for using that physician to heal my body of cancer, even though it was really long and difficult. Dr. Ravi understood that my greatest need wasn't to enjoy the next nine months of my life – my greatest need was to rid my body of cancer and the threat of physical death that came with it. So in a similar way, when I think about the stories that we studied this week from God's Word, if we didn't know anything about Jesus, and if we didn't know who He was and what He came to do, these stories would sound strange. Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey while people waved palm branches and yelled at Him. Then He had this dinner with his friends where He washed their feet, and they talked about His body being broken for them and His blood being poured out for them. Then, even though He was an innocent man, He died the death of a criminal on a Roman cross with a sign above His head that said, "King of the Jews." A few days later, His friends went to care for His dead body in His tomb and found it wasn't there. He had risen from the dead. Fast forward to a little bit later, and we find people with little flames of fire over their heads, and they're speaking in strange languages. What in the world is going on here?

HS: Right.

MH: These stories don't make a lot of sense unless we understand who Jesus was and how His life, death, and resurrection fulfills our most critical need. We need to be rescued from the pervasive disease we all suffer from – our sin – and the spiritual death it brings. Today we are going to walk through these events from the Triumphal Entry to the giving of the Holy Spirit; we'll see how Jesus fulfilled our greatest need and gives us a glorious hope for the future. So, let's dive in. We'll start with the Triumphal Entry. We see here that Jesus fulfills our need for a righteous king. In the Old Testament, God's people wanted a king like the nations around them. God gave them kings; some of them were good, but for the most part, they were a mess. Even the great King David committed adultery, and then had the woman's husband killed on the battlefield. But God promised to send a righteous king to sit David's throne forever. We see that in a verse that's quoted in the passage we studied this week in John 12. It quotes Zechariah 9:9. It says "*Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is he.*" In His Triumphal Entry, Jesus reveals Himself as this righteous king, the Messiah sent from God. He let the people praise Him using the words of the Psalms. He let them refer to Him as the King of Israel. The people might have wanted a king who would establish Israel as a world power and bring back the years of military might that David enjoyed. But God knew the people didn't need political rescue—they needed spiritual rescue. They needed a Savior who would lay down His life for His sheep. Jesus knew that in the coming days, He would conquer their most threatening enemies—sin, guilt, and death. So, in this Triumphal Entry, we see that Jesus is fulfilling our need for that righteous king who would defeat our enemies.

MH: Then we see in the Last Supper that Jesus fulfills our needs for a perfect atoning sacrifice. During the Old Testament times—the times up to the point of Jesus—animal sacrifices were made to atone for the people's sin. But the people kept sinning, and so the priests had to keep having to make more sacrifices. The priests also had to atone for their own sin because they weren't sinless either. When I think about this system of making these animal sacrifices to atone for sin—it sounds like an endless chore. It just went on and on. It kind of reminds me of in my

own life the chore of laundry. The laundry is never done. Even if I gather up all the dirty clothes in our house, and I wash it, dry it, and maybe I'm even an overachiever, and I put it all away.

[laughing]

MH: My least favorite part. The people in my house, while I'm doing that, are wearing clothes and getting them dirty. I will still have laundry at the end of the day. There is still more laundry to do the next day. It's never done. These priests are in the temple, and these sacrifices are happening, and while the priests are making the atoning sacrifices, the people are outside the temple sinning. It's never-ending until we come to Jesus. Jesus is that spotless Lamb of God. All the Passover celebrations, through all the centuries, all pointed to this. He is the perfect Lamb of God who gave Himself to be the perfect atoning sacrifice that we needed, once for all. In Luke 22:19-20, Jesus told His disciples that His body and blood would be given for them. He said this is the new covenant in My blood. It was no longer the blood of animals shed over and over again for the forgiveness of sins. Now atonement would be made by the blood of Jesus. Our sins are forgiven because of His once-for-all sacrifice. So, in the Last Supper, we see that Jesus fulfills our needs for a perfect atoning sacrifice. He did that by going to the cross.

MH: In the crucifixion, we see that Jesus fulfills our need to be reconciled to God. In Isaiah, God promised to send a suffering Messiah who would take our sin on Himself so that we can be counted righteous. In Isaiah 53:5-6, I'm paraphrasing here, but it talks about how He was pierced for our transgressions and crushed for our iniquities. By His wounds we are healed because we, like sheep, have gone astray. The Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. We stand guilty before a Holy God because of our sin. We have no chance of achieving the righteousness that God requires on our own. But on the cross, Jesus took the punishment that we deserve and gave us His perfect record of obedience. Now we stand justified — counted as righteous — before God because our iniquity has been laid on Jesus. In Romans 5, we read about how Jesus has reconciled us to God through His death. Now we have peace with God. We have access to His grace. We were once His enemies, and now we are His children. So, on the cross, Jesus fulfills our need to be reconciled to God.

MH: Then we come to the Resurrection, and this is my favorite one. We see that Jesus fulfills our need to be rescued from death and given new life. When Adam and Eve sinned and death entered the world, God promised that one day the seed of the woman would bruise the head of the serpent. Satan receives a crushing blow when the tomb is empty. We read in Romans 6:9, "*death no longer has dominion over him.*" In Ephesians 2:1-3, Paul describes how we were dead in our trespasses and sins. Dead people can't do anything to change their condition.

HS: Hmmm.

MH: They are completely helpless and hopeless. Their only hope is an outside intervention with someone who has the power to make dead people alive. And in Christ's resurrection, that's exactly what we have. We keep reading in Ephesians 2:4-5, "*But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved*" So we see in the

Resurrection that even though we were spiritually dead in our sin, Jesus fulfills our need to be rescued from that death and given new life.

MH: Then Pentecost, the giving of the Holy Spirit fulfills our need for God's presence in every moment of every day. One of the defining characteristics of God's people throughout the Old Testament is His presence with them. In the Old Testament, in places like Ezekiel 36, God promised to send His Spirit to live inside His people. Jesus also promised His disciples that God would send the Holy Spirit after Jesus departed. At Pentecost, the believers received this gift of the Holy Spirit. This gift becomes even more meaningful when we realize how much we need God's presence. I know I often think there are so many things that I can't live without. One of those things is coffee. But I don't have coffee with me every moment of every day, wherever I go. I really wish I did.

[laughing]

MH: Sign me up if that's an option. But I must go to this one place in my house, to this spot on my kitchen counter where my coffee maker sits. I pour myself one cup of coffee. I take with me, maybe I'm sitting at my laptop or I'm sitting and reading. Maybe I'm taking care of my kids; at some point, I'm going to pick up that cup and take a sip, and it's going to be empty. When that happens, I usually make a little sad face because I don't want the cup to be empty. But if I want more, I must go back to that one spot on my kitchen counter and pour another cup of coffee. But God's spirit never runs out. He's not available in just one place or at a specific time. We don't have to go to the temple to meet with God. We don't have to worry that our need for Him will exceed His availability to us. We read in Psalms 16:11 *"in your presence there is fullness of joy."* When Jesus ascended to the Father, He did not leave us alone. He sent the Holy Spirit to indwell us so we will never be without His presence.

MH: So, Pentecost, we see the giving of the Holy Spirit fulfills our need for God's presence in every moment of every day. As we look at these events that we studied this past week, we see that Jesus is the one who fulfills the promises that God made to His people and fulfills our greatest need. Jesus hasn't just met that most critical need in the past or in the present: He gives us this glorious hope for the future. When Dr. Ravi treated my cancer 10 years ago, he couldn't give me any guarantees for the future. We still don't know whether my healing was temporary or a permanent cure. Doctors can't give future guarantees with 100% certainty. But Jesus can, and He does. Each one of the events that we are looking at today gives us a certain hope for the future. In the Triumphal Entry, we see that Jesus Christ is the eternal King of kings. He is reigning now at the right hand of the Father, and one day He will return victorious and reign over the new heavens and new earth. Last supper, we see that Jesus' body was broken for us, and His blood poured out for the forgiveness of our sins. Because of that truth, we will one day feast with Him at the wedding supper of the Lamb. At the cross, we see that our debt is canceled permanently because of Christ's death for us. In Colossians 2:13-14, Paul talks about the record of our debt being nailed to the cross. It is gone. We don't need to continually atone for our sin or earn our way back into God's favor — Christ has done that for us. In the Resurrection, we see those who are in Christ will be raised just as He was raised. Because of the empty tomb, we know that Jesus' words are true when He says in John 11:24-26, *"I am the*

resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die.” The Holy Spirit given at Pentecost, it’s not just God’s presence with us every moment of every day; He is also the guarantee of the glorious inheritance that God has promised to us. The Spirit reminds us that we are God’s children forever.

MH: So, as the events from that week unfolded from the Triumphal Entry to the Resurrection and later to Pentecost, there are times when the disciples didn’t understand what was happening. Like them, we may sometimes feel confused or discouraged as we look at what is happening around us, and we’re waiting for that day when our faith becomes sight. But we can have confidence in this: Jesus accomplished everything the Father sent Him to do. He finished all the work His Father sent Him to do during His time on earth. If Jesus would have had a to-do list for those 33 years, everything on that list got checked off. We don’t have to wonder if more needs to be done or whether Christ’s sacrifice was enough. Jesus is everything we need to approach God’s throne of grace with confidence. God used Dr. Ravi to heal me of cancer in 2011. But that isn’t the healing I most need. I need the spiritual healing that only Christ can give. So do you, friends. Here’s the good news about Jesus: Because of what He has done, we have a righteous king who defeats our enemies. A perfect atoning sacrifice, reconciliation with God, new life given to those who are spiritually dead. God’s presence with us, every minute of every day, and the certain hope of a glorious future. In Jesus, we have everything we need. I don’t know about you, Hannah, but that causes me to want to just praise and adore my Savior.

HS: Yeah, I’m writing that down. Jesus is everything we need.

[laughing]

HS: I hope that everybody took some great notes because Marissa’s teaching was so wonderful. I love how you broke down every single day that we studied this past week. I love how you shared your personal story and how you worded at the beginning — how if you would have heard it, you would have thought, “Oh this person will be sued.” The conclusion of how this doesn’t make sense. But I love how Jesus isn’t someone who tried to make sense to the world because He was on a mission from His Father in heaven. I just want to say thank you so much. I love how at the beginning, you said Jesus’ life, death and resurrection fulfills our most critical need. Friends, I hope that you remember that this week as anything in your life is thrown your way, that no matter what, He is right there, and He fulfills those needs and how, again, Marissa said, “God’s spirit never runs out.” It’s not just in one place. It’s not just the coffee pot in the corner of the kitchen. Marissa, thank you so much for this teaching. It was so wonderful.

MH: I’m so glad I could be here today.

HS: Absolutely. Let me go ahead and close us in prayer. Father God, we just thank You so much for Your Word. We thank You for sending Your Son, Jesus, to live on earth, to die on the cross, to be raised from the dead, all so that we can be free from our sin and have eternity with You. Lord, we thank You so much. We thank You, Jesus, for being the example of doing the things that didn’t make sense here on earth but so glorifying Your Father in Heaven. Lord, I pray

that we do that this week. We seek to be more and more Christlike in all that we do and all that we say. Lord, we love You, we thank You, and we praise You for all that You have done in our lives, all that You are doing and all that You will do. In Jesus' name, amen.

[music]