

Day One: Isaiah 65:17-25

1. What will God create (17)? In that space, how will our memory be different (17)? Why should we be glad (18-19)? In what will the Lord delight (18-19)? Who and what do you think “Jerusalem” encompasses? What will life spans be like on the new earth (20, 22)? What will people experience (21-23)? How will God interact with them (24)? Describe the animals of the new earth (25).
2. Meditate on verses 21-23, particularly the words, “my chosen ones will long enjoy the work of their hands.” Visualize this fruitful life; what do you see yourself doing? Compare this to the reality of your current life. What is awry or missing? Invite God into these thoughts. Rest in the hope of Jesus’ resurrection and gift of eternal life: there will be infinite time for your heart’s longings to be fulfilled. How does this promise make you feel?

Day Two: Luke 24:1-12

1. Set the scene of this text (1-3). Who appeared (4)? How did the women respond to them (5)? What did the two men say to the women (5-7)? What memory did this evoke in the women (8)? After leaving the tomb, what did they do (9)? Who were some of the women in the group (10)? How did the apostles respond to the women’s assertions (11)? What about Peter (12)?
2. Try to imagine the Christian faith without this key event in Jesus’ story. What would it be like? Would you still follow Jesus if His resurrection were not a central tenet of Christianity? Why or why not? Now, consider how God orchestrated events so that women, a very marginalized group, were the first to learn of Jesus’ resurrection. What do you think this says about God’s character, and how can you emulate it as you engage in the world today?

Day Three: John 14:1-4

1. What initial word of comfort does Jesus give in this text (1)? How does He want His followers to expand in their belief (1)? How does He describe God’s dwelling place (2)? Once there, what is He going to do for His followers (2)? After this preparation, what will He then do for them (3)? Why (3)? In verse 4, what claim does he make? Why do you think He asserts this?
2. Consider the sacrifices you make in following Jesus. In what ways do you deny yourself, store treasures in heaven, etc.? Why do you do these things? When Christian sacrifice or even doubts and regrets wear on you, what is the antidote? What is one specific way to heed Jesus’ words: “Do not let your hearts be troubled”? Finally, ask God to equip you with endurance for today and a great excitement for the place He is preparing for you tomorrow.

Day Four: 1 Corinthians 15:12-19

1. What is Paul’s challenge to those who claim the dead will not be resurrected (12-13)? If Christ has not been raised from the dead, what is the worth of Christian preaching and Christian faith (14)? What else does that false assertion imply about Christians (15)? How does he sum up the logical error of this claim (16)? What are some other ramifications of Jesus not rising from the dead (17-19)? Which one seems most distressing? Why?
2. What words or phrases describe the role Jesus’ resurrection plays in Christianity? Now, re-read verses 14 and 17. Christ’s resurrection is a confrontational call to no longer be “in your sins.” Is your will submitted to this spiritual identity? Why or why not? Repent of your sin and ask God that this Easter would be a turning point: that you would no longer dwell “in your sins” but in the power of Christ’s resurrection instead.

Day Five: Philippians 3:7-14

1. What does Paul make of his life’s positive accomplishments (7)? In what ways does he justify this assertion (7-9)? What do you think of his use of the term “garbage” in describing his success? In what way does Paul want to know Jesus (10-11)? How does he describe this journey toward perfectly knowing Christ and communing with Him (12-14)?
2. Write down your own list of successes. Evaluate each item. When compared to knowing Jesus, does it really feel like “garbage”? Which accomplishments or dreams do you tightly grip or place above the value of belonging to Christ? How does this impact your spiritual life? As you consider, what is God speaking? What steps does he want you to take toward fully embracing the heart-level freedom his resurrection power offers to you?