Practice Resurrection

Lenten Reflections
on the Seven Last Words of Jesus

Commend

"God, into your hands I commend my spirit."
~ Luke 23:46

You are invited to light a candle as a sign that Jesus is present with you in Spirit.
You can print off the image on the last page for you or your children to colour.

Feel free to sing along with the songs.
*Please read the **bold print**.*

WELCOME

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ,
the love of God,
the communion of the Holy Spirit,
and the fellowship of the saints be with you all.

GREETING PRAYER ~ *Wisdom & Grace (Psalm 90)*

You've been our home and our dwelling, our place in all generations;
Before the earth and the mountains were formed, You are God.

Teach us to number our days
That we may apply our hearts to your ways.
Oh, teach us to number our days
With wisdom and grace, wisdom and grace,
Wisdom and grace, wisdom and grace.

Now the span of our lives, it is made of sorrow and labour.
As the days pass away like the grass, how soon we are gone.

Let the work of our hands bring You praise; set your favour upon us,
Oh, establish the work of our hands. May your Kingdom come!

—*Sandra McCracken*

Setting the Table

Can you think of a time when you've had to trust someone, or something? What did that feel like?

In today's Bible reading, Jesus on the cross responds with words of incredible trust. These are not random words that Jesus thinks of. This is a direct quote from Psalm 35.

As you hear the story, what do you imagine Jesus felt?

Word of God, Word of Life ~ Luke 23:44-46

It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, for the sun stopped shining. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit." Having said this, he breathed his last.

Pause your playback device and take a few quiet moments to let the Word of God sink in. Let the Spirit draw your attention to certain words, images, thoughts, and feelings.

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

~ COMMEND ~

"God, into your hands I commend my spirit."
(Luke 23:46)

Pause your playback device and try one of the following exercises today.

(You can give others a try in the days to come if you have time and interest.)

1. Take a few moments to reflect on the following questions:
   - Can you tell a story of a time you've been at a loss for words?
   - Can you find a Psalm that communicates the sadness, anger, helplessness, wonder or joy to fit your situation?

   Write your thoughts down, or share them with a friend or members of your family.
2. Earlier we reflected on Jesus saying words from Psalm 22. Today we hear him saying words from Psalm 35. Take a few moments with your family or a friend to discuss this question: "Why do you think Jesus keeps going back to the Psalms—keeps using words that aren't his own from the cross?"
3. Consider these questions:
   - When things around you are hard, or sad, what helps you get through?
   - How might Jesus' words from the cross, difficult as they are, also give us hope?
4. In the past 7 weeks we have considered the Jesus' last words before his death on the cross. Which stands out to you most? Is it the time of thirst? Is it the admitting of being forsaken? Is it the trust of the last words in Luke? Or one of the others?

   How might one of those sayings be God's invitation to become a more fully alive human? Follow through on what the Spirit stirs in your mind and soul.

SONG FOR THE DAY ~ *Let's Do It Again*

If we could roll back the time
And start at the beginning again,
Knowing all we would find,
Would we walk through it over again?

Maybe it's true
That we were out of our minds,
'cause, oh, would you, would I
Have come to this table if we weren't blind
To eat from this bread and to drink from this wine?

Do you think we'd have the courage again?
Knowing what we'd have to spend?
What I'm asking myself,
What I'm asking my friend,
Would we do it again?

By the look on your face,
I know before you can speak
What the answer will be,
Or we wouldn't be here in this place.

Maybe it's true
That we're still out of our minds,
But, oh, would you, would I
Forfeit this love? Could we forfeit this life,
Only to feed on what we've left behind?

Do you think we'd have the courage again?
Knowing what we'll have to spend?
What I'm asking myself,
What I'm asking my friend, is
Could we do it again?
Should we do it again?
Let's do it again.

—Steve Bell

CLOSING PRAYER

O Christ, by praying for those who crucified you,
you lead us to forgive without counting the cost.
O Christ, by opening paradise to the repentant thief, you awaken hope in us.
O Christ, by remaining faithful until death, you show us the road to greater love.
O Christ, by taking the burden of sin upon yourself,
you reveal to us the way of generosity.
O Christ, come and help our weak faith.
O Christ, create a pure heart in us; renew and strengthen our spirit.
O Christ, your Word is near; may it live within us that we might live in you.
Amen.

BLESSING ~ *To Him Who is Able (Jude 24-25)*

To him who is able to keep you from falling
and to present you before his glorious presence
without fault, and with great joy,

To the only God, our Saviour
be glory, majesty, power and authority
through Jesus Christ, our Lord
before all ages, now and forevermore

Amen, Amen. —*Brian Moss*

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