

A close-up photograph of a woman with long dark hair, wearing a white lace top, holding a large white flower. The background is softly blurred, suggesting an outdoor setting. The image is partially obscured by a white text box at the bottom.

BIBLE READING PLAN / APRIL 2021

in His grace

The empty tomb

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APRIL THE EMPTY TOMB

1. JOHN 3:16 NIV
2. ISAIAH 53:5 NIV
3. JOHN 19:30 NIV
4. MATTHEW 25:5-6 NIV
5. JOHN 20:8 NIV
6. JOHN 20:15 NIV
7. JOHN 20:16 NIV
8. JOHN 20:18 NIV
9. JOHN 20:20 NIV
10. JOHN 20:21 NIV
11. JOHN 20:22 NIV
12. JOHN 20:25 NIV
13. JOHN 20:27 NIV
14. JOHN 20:29 NIV
15. JOHN 20:31 NIV
16. JOHN 21:4 NIV
17. JOHN 21:7 NIV
18. JOHN 21:9 NIV
19. JOHN 21:14 NIV
20. ACTS 1:3 NIV
21. ACTS 1:5 NIV
22. ACTS 1:8 NIV
23. ACTS 1:9 NIV
24. ACTS 1:11 NIV
25. 1 PETER 3:21-22 NIV
26. ACTS 4:33 NIV
27. ROMANS 4:25 NIV
28. PHILIPPIANS 3:10-12 NIV
29. ROMANS 10:9 NIV
30. 1 PETER 1:3 NIV

Digging deeper

What it means to dig deeper.

Read: Read the Bible verse of the day. Don't forget that when you read a Bible verse, you also need to look at the context surrounding it.

Cross-reference: Reference another text or part of a text, typically given in order to elaborate on a point.

Research: Look further into what the Bible verse means. Is there an overarching theme throughout the Scriptures? Is it a timeless teaching, meaning does it transcend time? Or is it a cultural concession, meaning was it meant specifically for the time it was written. Then identify how you are to apply this to your own life.

Meditate: Filling your mind with God's Word. Thinking about what you just read and learned.

Write: Write out questions or thoughts about what you just read and learned. Any prayer requests or praise reports that you have.

Pray: Speak with God. Communicate with Him, don't just talk to Him. Praying is communication with the Lord. Prayer is not only asking God for things, but praising Him for what He has done, for what He will do, and what He chooses to do. And don't forget to pray the Scriptures.

Listen: Take time to sit and listen to the Lord's response to your prayers.

Love
Michele Arnold



The empty tomb



In order to fully grasp the empty tomb, I feel we need to spend some time looking at the moments Jesus spent in the garden of Gethsemane and the moments He spent with Mary.

I want to pick up with Jesus as He steals away with his closest friends, His inner circle. Jesus prayed this prayer to the Lord in the Garden of Gethsemane, “My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death” Matthew 26:38, In the hours leading up to his arrest He prayed. The account of Luke says that Jesus prayed so hard that His sweat was like drops of blood. He was in anguish over His situation. Jesus teaches us so much in the face of so much pain. As Jesus was in the middle of His prayers, “an angel from heaven appeared to Him and strengthened Him” Luke 24:43 NIV. Within His anguish, the Scriptures say He prayed more earnestly. Jesus was honest in His prayers with the Father, He was honest to Himself about His feelings for what was to come. Jesus wasn’t happy about surrendering Himself to the cross, but He was willing to place Himself in the will of the Father. You will notice the first time that Jesus prays to the Father He says, ‘ My Father, if it is possible, may it may take this cup from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will.’ Matthew 26:39 NIV. He is asking the Father to release Him from the cross, but ends with not as I will, but as you will.

Jesus was overwhelmed with sorrow, Matthew 26:38 NIV, knowing what He was to endure on the cross. As He went away a second time and prayed, He said, “My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done.” Matthew 26:42 NIV. We see Jesus pray almost the exact same prayer, however, there is a slight yet significant difference. First He asks God may this cup be taken from me, and now He says, “if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away.” We see Jesus already knowing His destiny, but coming to terms with the outcome, wanting something different, but willing to place Himself in the Father’s will. To do exactly what was required of Him and asked of Him.

Jesus sat and listened to the Father, knowing His voice and hearing His Words. In both prayers, we see Jesus humble Himself, “if it is possible” Jesus is not demanding His own way, He is not saying that He knows best. He is simply saying I don’t want to do this, if there is any other way Father please let’s do it that way. Not my will, but Yours be done.

Jesus was arrested shortly thereafter, betrayed by one of His disciples with a kiss. To only be denied by Peter 3 times. Put on trial, mocked, stripped of His clothing, spit on, and beaten. Forced to carry His own cross. Placed between two criminals, once again mocked and insulted by those passing by.

About three in the afternoon Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “Eli, Eli,[c] lema sabachthani?” (which means “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”). Matthew 27:46 NIV. At this moment sin entered into Jesus for the first time ever. At this moment, our sins and the sins of others were placed on Jesus, and He was separated from the Father for the very first time. “And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, He gave up his spirit.” Matthew 27:50 NIV.

“At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.” Matthew 27:51a NIV. Signifying how access to the Father changed at that moment. Because Jesus was faithful, because Jesus was willing to do the Father’s will, we now have access to the Father Himself.

The empty tomb



Jesus was then removed from the cross, wrapped in strips of linen, and placed in a borrowed tomb. Where three days later He rose!

We see Mary Magdalene arriving at the tomb only to find it empty. But who exactly was Mary Magdalene? After Jesus cast out 7 demons from Mary, she arguably became the most devoted woman to follow Jesus. She spent time with Him. Listening, learning, and helped in supporting Him. She knew who He was because she spent time with Him. Because of this and her love for Jesus, we find her at the cross where Jesus hung. We find her at the tomb, wanting to take care of Him. In the account of John 20:11-18, we see this story unfold. We see Mary in utter disbelief and grief as she finds the tomb empty. As she stood there crying, she turns around, and a man is standing there. He asked her, "Woman, why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?" Thinking this man was the gardener, her response was one of distress, "Sir if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him." She is desperate to reclaim His body. Not understanding that He had risen from the dead just as He said He would. But look what happens next. Jesus said to her, "Mary". As Jesus speaks her name, I imagine it filled with so much love, peace, and compassion for her. "Mary," He says, as if saying remember Me, remember My promises, remember what I taught you, remember that I love you, remember how I said I would raise from the dead, here I am, here you are. "Mary" Jesus speaks Mary's name and instantly she knew who He was. She recognized His voice because she knew Him, because she spent time with Him. I believe that Jesus had to hide who He was at first to not overwhelm her. He needed to start a conversation with her, to prepare her for what was to come. To see where her heart posture was at. With one word, Jesus changes everything. With one word Mary understood.

So what does this mean for you and me? It means that Jesus gave Himself up for us. "For our sake He made Him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God." 2 Corinthians 5:21 NIV. He died in our place, taking our sin on as His own. Providing a way to the Father. It also means that we learn from Jesus how to act and react in the face of trials that bring us to our knees, that cause an overwhelming sense of sorrow. And within the sacrifice that Jesus made for us, we need to spend time with Him. We need to listen to Him. We need to know Him so we can recognize His voice when He speaks. We need to spread the gospel and prepare for our calling. We need to be ready when God says to move.

But how?

By studying the Word of God, and spending time with Him. Knowing God's Word, and writing His Word on the tablet of our hearts. To recognize when it is God speaking to us. How do we recognize the voice of God? By being in the presence and peace of God.

Love
Michele Arnold

Digging Deeper

FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD THAT HE GAVE HIS ONE AND ONLY
SON, THAT WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM SHALL NOT PERISH BUT HAVE
ETERNAL LIFE.
JOHN 3:16 NIV

Digging Deeper

**BUT HE WAS PIERCED FOR OUR TRANSGRESSIONS,
HE WAS CRUSHED FOR OUR INIQUITIES; THE PUNISHMENT
THAT BROUGHT US PEACE WAS ON HIM, AND BY HIS
WOUNDS WE ARE HEALED
ISAIAH 53:5 NIV**

Digging Deeper

WHEN HE HAD RECEIVED THE DRINK, JESUS SAID, "IT IS FINISHED."
WITH THAT, HE BOWED HIS HEAD AND GAVE UP HIS SPIRIT.

JOHN 19:30 NIV

Digging Deeper

THE ANGEL SAID TO THE WOMEN, "DO NOT BE AFRAID, FOR I KNOW THAT YOU ARE LOOKING FOR JESUS, WHO WAS CRUCIFIED. HE IS NOT HERE; HE HAS RISEN, JUST AS HE SAID. COME AND SEE THE PLACE WHERE HE LAY."
MATTHEW 25:5-6 NIV

Digging Deeper

AND WITH THAT HE BREATHED ON THEM AND SAID,
“RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT.

JOHN 20:22 NIV

Digging Deeper

BUT HE SAID TO THEM, "UNLESS I SEE THE NAIL MARKS IN HIS HANDS AND PUT MY FINGER WHERE THE NAILS WERE, AND PUT MY HAND INTO HIS SIDE, I WILL NOT BELIEVE."

JOHN 20:25 NIV

Digging Deeper

THEN HE SAID TO THOMAS, “PUT YOUR FINGER HERE;
SEE MY HANDS. REACH OUT YOUR HAND AND PUT IT INTO
MY SIDE. STOP DOUBTING AND BELIEVE.”

JOHN 20:27 NIV

Digging Deeper

THEN JESUS TOLD HIM, “BECAUSE YOU HAVE SEEN ME,
YOU HAVE BELIEVED; BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO HAVE
NOT SEEN AND YET HAVE BELIEVED.”

JOHN 20:29 NIV

Digging Deeper

WHEN THEY LANDED, THEY SAW A FIRE OF BURNING COALS THERE
WITH FISH ON IT, AND SOME BREAD.

JOHN 21:9 NIV

Handwriting practice area consisting of 20 horizontal lines. A faint background illustration of a person fishing is visible behind the lines.

Digging Deeper

AFTER HIS SUFFERING, HE PRESENTED HIMSELF TO THEM AND
GAVE MANY CONVINCING PROOFS THAT HE WAS ALIVE.
HE APPEARED TO THEM OVER A PERIOD OF FORTY DAYS
AND SPOKE ABOUT THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

ACTS 1:3 NIV

Digging Deeper

**AFTER HE SAID THIS, HE WAS TAKEN UP BEFORE THEIR VERY EYES,
AND A CLOUD HID HIM FROM THEIR SIGHT.**

ACTS 1:9 NIV

Digging Deeper

AND THIS WATER SYMBOLIZES BAPTISM THAT NOW SAVES YOU ALSO—NOT THE REMOVAL OF DIRT FROM THE BODY BUT THE PLEDGE OF A CLEAR CONSCIENCE TOWARD GOD. IT SAVES YOU BY THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST, WHO HAS GONE INTO HEAVEN AND IS AT GOD'S RIGHT HAND—WITH ANGELS, AUTHORITIES AND POWERS IN SUBMISSION TO HIM.

ACTS 3:21-22 NIV

Digging Deeper

WITH GREAT POWER THE APOSTLES CONTINUED TO TESTIFY TO THE
RESURRECTION OF THE LORD JESUS. AND GOD'S GRACE WAS SO
POWERFULLY AT WORK IN THEM ALL
ACTS 4:33 NIV

Digging Deeper

HE WAS DELIVERED OVER TO DEATH FOR OUR SINS AND WAS RAISED
TO LIFE FOR OUR JUSTIFICATION.
ROMANS 4:25 NIV


Digging Deeper

I WANT TO KNOW CHRIST—YES, TO KNOW THE POWER OF HIS RESURRECTION AND PARTICIPATION IN HIS SUFFERINGS, BECOMING LIKE HIM IN HIS DEATH, AND SO, SOMEHOW, ATTAINING TO THE RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD. NOT THAT I HAVE ALREADY OBTAINED ALL THIS, OR HAVE ALREADY ARRIVED AT MY GOAL, BUT I PRESS ON TO TAKE HOLD OF THAT FOR WHICH CHRIST JESUS TOOK HOLD OF ME.

PHILIPPIANS 3:110-12 NIV

Digging Deeper

PRAISE BE TO THE GOD AND FATHER OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST! IN HIS GREAT MERCY HE HAS GIVEN US NEW BIRTH INTO A LIVING HOPE THROUGH THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST FROM THE DEAD
1 PETER 1:3 NIV



Equipping and
confirming women
about who they are in
Christ



1 minute Wednesdays with Michele

brought to you by
In His Grace Ministries

1 minute Wednesday's is here!! I am so excited about this project. It has been a year in the making. Pretty much thinking about it daily. Thinking about how should we present it. What should be said? How should it be said? What should we discuss? All within a one-minute time span, give or take. Just enough to chew on throughout the day. Help keep Christ the center of your day with 1 minute Wednesdays!

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