

Student ministry workers in Sweden developed a series of questions to ask when reading a Bible passage. Called the “Swedish Method” because of its origins, these questions can be used when reading the Bible by yourself or with others

The daily readings in this family worship guide have a few questions. However, you are encouraged, as appropriate for your family, to ask the following general questions of the text each day.



Is there something that ‘shines’ from the passage—whatever impacts most, or draws attention?



Is there something you don’t understand, or a question the passage raises in your mind?



Is there a personal application to your life?



Is there something you plan to share with someone else – and who will you share it with?



How do ideas in the passage interrelate? Or with other passages in this book – or in the whole Bible?

Worshipping Together is part of the vision and is a ministry of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Frankston, Victoria, Australia. frankston.rpca.org.au

The concept and layout draws heavily from *Let’s Worship God*, a ministry of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Airdrie, Scotland. airdrierpcs.org

The readings are from Tim Chester’s 3-year weekly reading plan. tiny.cc/WkBbl or tiny.cc/3yrBbl

The quote on the cover is from the article *What Shampoo and Family Worship Have in Common*, Written by Randy Greenwald, (Quoted from *Tabletalk* magazine, Nov 1997.)

Notes this week drawn in part from commentaries on Matthew by John Calvin and William Hendriksen

Worshipping Together



We love God because He first loved us.

And we love to tell God that we love Him.

Joyful and faithful worship together twice each Lord’s Day is the highlight of our week. We are glad that they said, “Let us go to the House of the Lord.” Corporate worship prepares us for the week and prepares us for Heaven.

In addition, we regularly worship God as families and as individuals.

One father put it this way:

The back of my shampoo bottle says, “Lather, rinse, repeat.” Simple enough that even I can do it. Though family worship may be a bit more complicated than shampooing hair, it ought not be rated with “home dentistry” in the scale of difficulty.



If you could buy family worship in the store, it would come in the form of a Bible, and the directions would simply say, “Read, pray, repeat.” Men should gather their families at least once daily. They should read a portion of the Scriptures to them. And they should pray with them. There need be no fireworks or pizzazz to keep the kids interested. There needs to be only a father* with a heart-love for God – who desires to see that love appropriated by his children.*

Read, pray, repeat.

* Fathers leading their family in worship is always the goal. When, in the Lord’s providence, the father is absent or uninterested a godly mother will lead her children

Reading Matthew 27:1-10 Innocent Blood

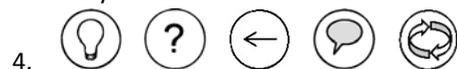
Notes The chief priests and elders had determined to put Jesus to death. It was now time. However, Jesus' death was not due to the determination of Jesus' enemies, but of God the Father Himself. (Acts 2:23) Though the sinless God-Man, Jesus, would die, Matthew makes clear in his account how innocent Jesus is.

Judas had betrayed Jesus for 30 pieces of silver. Now that Jesus was condemned to death, Judas was seized with pangs of guilt and remorse. As we often are, he was sorry afterward. But his was not a godly sorrow leading to repentance.

He tried to ease his conscience by giving the money back. I have betrayed innocent blood, he cries. But the chief priests and elders wanted no further dealings with Judas nor his money.

He next tries throwing the money back into the temple – maybe into the treasury boxes. Finding no relief of guilt he took his own life. The priests, who had likely given the “blood money” out of the same treasury, would have none of this “blood money” now. They have little concern with right and wrong – only with their own hands appearing clean.

- Questions**
1. Who had determined that Jesus would die?
 2. What did Judas try to do to ease his guilt? Did it help?
 3. Why would the Jewish leaders not take Judas's money back



- Praise** Psalm 8b²
- Pray**
1. Thank God in prayer for Jesus' death for sinners like you and your family
 2. Pray for a member of your church
 3. Pray for your family
 4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

¹ You will notice we only have a printed guide for 6 days. We recommend each Lord's Day you review the previous week's readings and/or the previous or current week's sermons and pray together

² Psalm selections are taken from the *Book of Psalms for Worship*. The same selection is sung each day for a week to gain familiarity with the selection

Reading Matthew 27:51-66 Powerful even in death

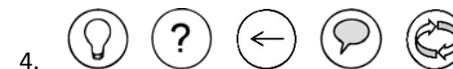
Notes Usually when someone dies any strength they had is gone. With Jesus' death it was not that way.

The temple had a veil that separated even the High priest, except for once a year, from the most holy place which represented God's direct presence with his people. At His death this veil was torn in half. It was torn in half – from the top to the bottom. It wasn't from normal wear and tear. It wasn't from the earthquake that would immediately follow. It was from God, who will tell us in Hebrews 10:19-20, that instead of being blocked from God's presence we are emboldened to come by Jesus Himself into God's presence.

The earth then shuddered and shook. A major earthquake – but much more. Dead people had their graves shaken open and were raised from the dead. After Jesus Himself was raised from the dead, these raised were seen by others in Jerusalem.

Jesus was dead. Some women and men who had followed Him (although, it appears, none of His closest twelve) buried Jesus' body in a new tomb. His enemies were still afraid. Maybe His disciples would steal His body and pretend He had been raised from the dead. So, they sealed the tomb and appointed Roman soldiers to guard it. Now He couldn't get out. He was powerless. He was dead. Right? (you might want to read on...)

- Questions**
1. What happened to the veil in the temple and why?
 2. What accompanied the earthquake?
 3. How did Jesus' enemies ensure He would stay in the grave?



- Praise** Psalm 8b
- Pray**
1. Rejoice with your family in prayer in the power of Jesus even in death
 2. Pray for your family
 3. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member
 4. Pray for the reading and preaching of God's word tomorrow

Reading Matthew 27:45-50 Forsaken by God

Notes My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? Why are You so far from helping Me, And from the words of My groaning? (Psalm 22:1)

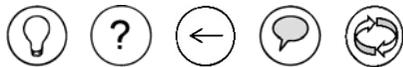
Jesus willingly went to the cross to die. Jesus willingly faced the righteous punishment for sins – not His, but those of all who would be saved. Jesus willingly because a curse. Willingly. But not trivially. He was willing – but it was not easy.

Why!? Why!? May the words of His groaning be burned in our ears and our hearts. As savage as the beatings before the cross were, as excruciating as the pain of death by crucifixion was, the full pain was in the abandonment by God. And, this was not just an ignoring abandonment. No, it was the withdrawal of love and the carrying out of divine wrath upon His sinless Son.

The unnatural darkness of this judgement was reflected in an unnatural darkness of the earth. For three hours – noon to 3pm by our time – the land was dark. The physical world blinked and shuddered at this horrific abandonment. For a limited, yet real and agonising time, God the Father forsook the human nature of God the Son so that the Father might lay on the Son the iniquity of us all.

Then, Jesus, forsaken, died.

- Questions**
1. Why did God forsake Jesus on the cross?
 2. What physical event mirrored the forsaking of Jesus?
 3. Why did Jesus die on the cross?



4.

Praise Psalm 8b

Pray

1. Rejoice in prayer with your family that Jesus was forsaken by His Father so that you might be saved
2. Pray for a member of your church
3. Pray for your family
4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

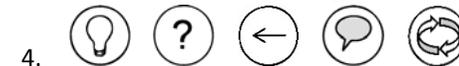
Reading Matthew 27:11-26 A Just Person

Notes Now Jesus stands before the governor to be tried. The Son of God chose to stand bound before an earthly judge, and there to receive a sentence of death, so that we might be delivered from our sentence of death due for our sin. Delivered, we need not fear approaching freely to the heavenly throne of God.

Matthew continues to make clear to us that Jesus is innocent. Even though the governor knows it, he tries to provoke Jesus to answer the charges against Him, but Jesus, led as a sheep to the slaughter, opens not his mouth. The governor had power to release Jesus, but he wants to keep on the good side of the Jews. So, he takes a really bad prisoner and asks the crowd which they want to be released. Likely to Pilate’s surprise, the crowd, stirred up by the leaders, shouted, “Release Barabbas!” and “Crucify Jesus!”

Pilate was convinced Jesus had done no evil. He was convinced He was a just person. Unlike Barabbas, Jesus had done no wrong. But Pilate, ignoring the conscience of both himself and his wife, hands Jesus to the Jews to put Him to death. No amount of hand-washing will remove Pilate’s guilt – nor will it remove ours.

- Questions**
1. Who should condemn who when Jesus is before Pilate?
 2. What does Pilate do with Barabbas? And why?
 3. Does water remove the guilt of sin? If not, then what will?



4.

Praise Psalm 8b

Pray

1. Rejoice in prayer that Jesus took condemnation of sinners like yourselves, upon Himself
2. Pray for a member of your church
3. Pray for your family
4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

Reading Matthew 27:27-37 King of the Jews

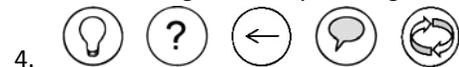
Notes Pilate has already asked Jesus if He was King of the Jews. Now, Matthew confirms that this charge, although applied wrongly by Jesus' enemies, was true.

First, the soldiers make fun Jesus – pretending to give Him kingly honour. They dressed Him in a blood-red robe, give Him a flimsy reed for a kingly staff, put a “crown” of thorns on His head. They bowed mockingly, spat on Him, and hit Him on the head with His “kingly” staff. Finished with mocking the King, they took off His robe, redressed Him in His own clothes, and led Him to be crucified. Jesus would first bear His own cross (John 19:17). Then the soldiers ordered Simon to carry it. But the burden of an unjust, cursed, death, not for His own sins but for the sins of those He would save, would not, could not, be taken from Him.

As unjust as all this was, God was clearly in control. Over and over things which God had spoken through the Old Testament prophets came as foretold. They gave him sour wine to drink and divided his clothes.

Then, at Pilate's command (John 19:19), the title of this King was placed on the cross. JESUS – KING OF THE JEWS. How ironic that this KING of Kings and LORD of Lords was acknowledged, but only slightly, at His unjust death.

- Questions**
1. How did the soldiers make fun of Jesus?
 2. What ways did Old Testament prophecies prove true?
 3. Is Jesus King? Is Jesus your King?



- Praise Pray**
- Psalm 8b
1. Commit yourself and your family in prayer to submit to King Jesus, with God's help.
 2. Pray for a member of your church
 3. Pray for your family
 4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

Reading Matthew 27:38-44,54 The Son of God

Notes All those who see Me ridicule Me; They shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, “He trusted in the LORD, let Him rescue Him; Let Him deliver Him, since He delights in Him!” (Psalm 22)

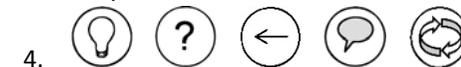
So, the Psalmist, David, would write, hundreds of years before Christ. David must have suffered greatly by the hands and by the scorn of his enemies. His greater Son, and his Lord, though, would really face the full weight of these words. Just as Satan had tempted Jesus at the beginning of His earthly ministry, so the crowds, stirred by Satan, would say, “If you are God's Son, save yourself.”

Though Jesus is indeed God's eternal Son, and had indeed the physical power to save Himself from this unjust death, He could not both save Himself and save His people.

God the Father indeed had the strength to deliver His beloved Son who trusted Him completely. Yet we know from the whole Bible that even before the world was made by God that Father, Son, and Holy Spirit had agreed together that Christ would die for the sins of His people.

Though many mocked Jesus claim to be God's Son, as He died the soldiers watching realised this was no ordinary man. Truly this was (and is) the Son of God.

- Questions**
1. What did the crowds shout at Jesus as He hung on the cross
 2. Could He have saved Himself? If yes, why didn't He?
 3. Why did Jesus die on the cross?



- Praise Pray**
- Psalm 8b
1. Rejoice with your family in prayer that the Son of God died for sins so you could be a child of God
 2. Pray for a member of your church
 3. Pray for your family
 4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member