



Welcome

Welcome to the Kaleo Academy Lent Devotional. This devotional's contributors include our KA students, KA mentors, KA peer leaders (college students), KA, staff and KA teachers.

This devotional is three-fold:

1. To prepare our hearts for the celebration of Easter. Some people may be wondering why we are observing Lent since we aren't from a liturgical tradition. In my opinion, that's not what Lent is about. From the beginning of Lent (130-200 A.D.) the purpose has been for self-examination with repentance through the element of self-denial in preparation for Easter. Whew! Too many BIG words in that last sentence. In other words, sometimes self-denial gives us the space we need for removing obstacles to allow the Holy Spirit to look into our hearts and move us towards celebrating our Risen Lord! This is the space we are inviting you into through the 40-day devotional.

2. To draw the Friends Movement together. This devotional is being sent out to at least 5 national evangelical Friends regions, and 2 international regions which represent our participating students & churches from the 2017-2018 KA cohort. From the examples written in Acts chapters 2 & 4, we learn when God's people gather together as one, God's spirit is present. My desire in creating the KA devotional is in the 40 days of lent, many of those connected to the Friends Movement could be "on the same page" – LITERALLY – for 40 days.

3. Kaleo Academy is beyond a one-week Theology Camp experience. In our church world we are used to "one and done" events. We attend one week camps, three day conferences, and all day seminars. Our hope at KA is our faith will live in action beyond our one-week Theology Camp. This devotional is a way to have our KA students, mentors, peer leaders, teachers & staff live beyond one week together and to hear how the Spirit of God is currently moving in their lives. Thank you for accepting an invitation to be on this journey. I am excited to see how we all arrive on April 1st as we exclaim, **"He is risen! He is risen Indeed!"**

May the peace of Christ be with you,
Brockie Follette, Kaleo Academy Program Director



Written by the Kaleo Academy Students, Mentors, Peer Leaders, and Staff
Edited and compiled by Katy Moran, Kaleo Academy Project Manager



February 14th

David Williams—Kaleo Academy Teacher

Title: Dust in the Wind

Text: Psalm 103:8-14

“A long time ago, in a galaxy far, far away,” I was once a high school student. In fact, I was actually there in the theatre when these very words from the opening scene of the very first Star Wars movie scrolled across the big screen for the very first time. Yes, I am that old.

During my teenage years, I was a regular attender at Northridge Friends Church in Wichita, Kansas (a little kid named Brockie attended this same church at the time as well, by the way). However, if the Kaleo Academy would have been around back then, I’m sorry to say that I probably would not have been very interested. I wasn’t much into academic pursuits at that point in life. What I was into was music.

One of my favorite bands back in the day was a group called Kansas. I loved their unique brand of innovative and progressive rock music, but I was also deeply fascinated by their faintly spiritual song lyrics. I later discovered that the band’s founder and main songwriter, Kerry Livgren, had grown up in the church but had drifted away from the faith during adolescence and had begun seeking “truth” in earnest from every imaginable source.

Kansas did not have a ton of big hits, but in the summer of 1977 Kerry wrote a song called “Dust in the Wind” that he reluctantly agreed to include on the album, *Point of Know Return*. According to Kerry, the song was a very personal reflection of his own spiritual journey at the time. “The lyrics almost spewed out,” he later wrote, “a reflection of my inner despair and longing for something that would not pass away, something eternal.”



The prodigal son eventually found his way back home to the Father’s house in 1980, but it was “psalms” like this one that helped Kerry to translate the deepest cries of his heart into a personal prayer language. Thanks to its beautiful, yet haunting melody and thought-provoking lyrics, the song has remained surprisingly popular over the years.

What Kerry could not have known when he wrote “Dust in the Wind” in the summer of 1977 is that I was at a very similar place in life at the time as well. I, too, was wrestling with “inner despair” and “longing for something that would not pass away.” Thanks to the mysterious and relentless grace of God, Kerry’s honest and transparent songwriting was one of the key influences that also led me to return to the Father in, you guessed it, the summer of 1977.

As we enter together into this season of Lent, a special time set aside on the church calendar for each of us to return to the Father through personal reflection, repentance and restoration, we do so with complete confidence that our good and beautiful God will be with us at each and every step along the journey, including those times when we may find ourselves in places of “inner despair and longing.” And on this Ash Wednesday, in particular, when many of us will receive the sign of the cross on our foreheads as an outward symbol of our inner desire to “repent in dust and ashes,” may we do so with this unshakable assurance set before us:

“As a father has compassion on his children, so the Lord has compassion on those who fear him; for he knows how we are formed, he remembers that we are dust” (Psalm 103:13-14).



February 15th

Ty Cook—Kaleo Academy Student

Text: Psalm 1

It's always hard to be a Christian- to put faith into something you can't see. It's hard to live a counter-cultural life that goes against the grain, to live a life void of some of the most prominent aspects of society. It's hard! In fact, it's impossible- that's why we need Jesus!

Psalm 1 says:

“Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers. The wicked are not so, but are like chaff that the wind drives away. Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgement, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous; for the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.”

Going to a public university with over 36,000 students has changed my perspective on how broken the world is. Alcohol, drugs and sex addictions are rampant. The world is broken. The world is hurting. The world needs a savior. If you're reading this, you probably already know these truths. The question is then how do we share with the world what we know to be true? The first sentence of this Psalm 1 passage explains that we need to delight in the Lord and meditate on His Law day and night. We need to dig in the Scriptures. We need to find out what God's asking us to do, and we need to do what He says! When we meditate on God's



teachings, this passage says that we will be a tree by streams of water, that we will yield fruit in season. Trees are strong, unshakable and long-standing, especially when they have access to water. We're compared to trees here, and not only do we have access to water, we have access to a Living Water in Jesus. We can be constantly replenished and re-filled, re-fueled. All we must do is let our roots dig down and soak up the Living Water.

This passage also says that as trees, we will yield fruit, that we will produce. What does producing mean? What is our job? In Matthew 28:18-20, Jesus says, “All authority in Heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” We're called to produce fruit by making disciples, bringing them into the new covenant with God that Jesus created, and teaching them about Him. We're called to boldly share our faith with the people around us and do the work that God has set up for us.

Going back to Psalm 1, the passage says that as trees with roots in the Living Water, our leaves will never wither. In all that we do, we will prosper. I can confidently walk around campus, sharing my faith with others, because I know God has a plan for my life. I know that in everything I do for the Lord, I will prosper! I can't fail! My roots won't wither! I have nothing to fear. My God, the God of Living Water is with me.



February 16th

Text: Psalm 51:1-10

For the director of music. A psalm of David.
When the prophet Nathan came to him after
David had committed adultery with Bathsheba.

- ¹ Have mercy on me, O God,
according to your unfailing love;
according to your great compassion
blot out my transgressions.
- ² Wash away all my iniquity
and cleanse me from my sin.
- ³ For I know my transgressions,
and my sin is always before me.
- ⁴ Against you, you only, have I sinned
and done what is evil in your sight;
so you are right in your verdict
and justified when you judge.
- ⁵ Surely I was sinful at birth,
sinful from the time my mother conceived me.
- ⁶ Yet you desired faithfulness even in the womb;
you taught me wisdom in that secret place.
- ⁷ Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean;
wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.
- ⁸ Let me hear joy and gladness;
let the bones you have crushed rejoice.
- ⁹ Hide your face from my sins
and blot out all my iniquity.
- ¹⁰ Create in me a pure heart, O God,
and renew a steadfast spirit within me.

Personal Reflection



February 17th

Kodi Dailey—Kaleo Academy Student

Text: Psalm 86:1-11

If you're like me, you have to reread almost every scripture and passage in Bible multiple times. I'll be honest in saying I read this scripture close to six times (I've got a lot of free time on my hands). Looking at this Psalm, I noticed it wasn't very original. I felt like I had heard it all before and that it seemed to be just a bunch of verses and phrases pieced together from the other scriptures, including other Psalms. This got me thinking. Why couldn't David use his own thoughts? Was it really THAT hard to come up with a prayer? That's where I stopped myself. This was a lesson on prayer that I needed to learn myself. I realized it's not the originality of our prayer that we need, it's originality with God. God isn't as concerned about what comes from your mouth when you pray, as much as He is concerned about what comes from your heart.

When we pray, we need to pray like we mean it because right in that moment, there is nothing we need more. We pray in times of small need and great need. We pray earnestly, in humility, and in praise, giving our undivided attention to the one who does the same and more for us. When we pray without these things, no matter the words being spoken, it desensitizes the prayer and how much we need our Father.

During this season of Lent, we need to pray with emotion and pray from the heart.

February 18th

First Sunday of Lent



February 19th

Derek Brown—Kaleo Academy Staff

Text: Isa. 53:1-7

This passage is fascinating for several reasons. One, it predicts the suffering of Christ hundreds of years before it happened – a prophecy meant to help prove that Jesus was the Christ. Second, the Messiah described in this passage is not what you would expect of a Messiah – not a warrior, but a suffering servant. Third, that even though the Pharisees had this prophecy, they failed to see that Jesus was the Messiah – they were expecting a Messiah that would lead an army to defeat the Romans and conquer the world – not a peasant carpenter who called for people to love their enemies and pray for those who persecute them. Jesus wasn't who they expected, and they missed their chance to follow the Son of God. Fourth, that Jesus would willingly endure suffering for our sake, so that "by his wounds we are healed." Finally, that it was through his suffering and death that Jesus earned the ultimate victory for mankind: the forgiveness of sins, the chance for eternal life, and victory over Satan. What should have been a crushing defeat became a world-changing victory – all because God so loved the world that he gave his only Son for us.

We can learn from Jesus' example regarding suffering. There are times where we undergo times of suffering, whether it be emotional, physical, or spiritual. It is easy during these times to feel helpless and hopeless, to feel like the world is against you and, for some, that life may not be worth living. However, when one looks at Jesus, one sees that the time of his greatest suffering was soon followed by his greatest victory. He suffered on Friday, but Sunday was coming. In the same way, perhaps our times of suffering are merely the prelude to something greater as a follower of Christ. Thus, whenever we go through a Friday, we must remember that, because we are in Christ, Sunday is coming. This is Good News (Gospel)!



RETURN
to the
LORD
YOUR
GOD



February 20th

Sarah Harvey — Kaleo Academy Mentor

Text: Exodus 12:12-14



February 21st

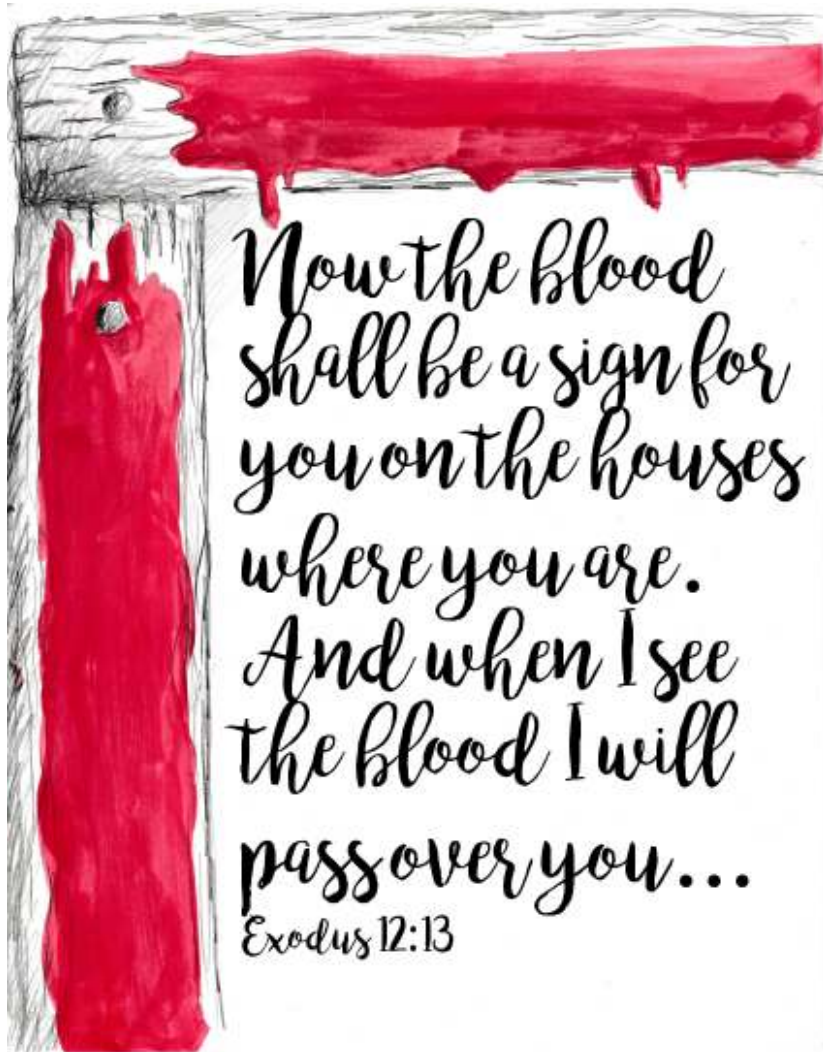
Text: Isaiah 25:6-8

⁶ On this mountain the LORD Almighty will prepare
a feast of rich food for all peoples,
a banquet of aged wine—
the best of meats and the finest of wines.

⁷ On this mountain he will destroy
the shroud that enfolds all peoples,
the sheet that covers all nations;

⁸ he will swallow up death forever.
The Sovereign LORD will wipe away the tears
from all faces;
he will remove his people's disgrace
from all the earth.
The LORD has spoken.

Personal Reflection





February 22nd

Vivian Titus—Kaleo Academy Student

Text: Ezekiel 37:1-14

Israel had been cut off from God. They had forsaken him and followed their own desires and the ways of the surrounding nations. In 588 BC., Babylon took over Jerusalem and two years later the entire city of Jerusalem was plundered, burned, and in ruins. The people of Israel were scattered and desolate. When all their hope seemed lost, Ezekiel told the people about the Lord's message of restoration for both their land and hearts.

Ezekiel had previously prophesied about the judgement God had placed upon Israel and how the other nations were going to overtake them. God's Spirit took Ezekiel to a valley of dry bones, a valley used for sacrifices to idols in 2 Kings 23:10 and was prophesied to become a valley of slaughter, a place where the bones of the people of Judah would lie (Jeremiah 7:30-34, 8:1-3, 19:6). This same place used to fulfill the punishment of Israel was also used to bring about the promise of restoration. In Ezekiel 37:1-14 instead of judgement, God showed Ezekiel that he planned to restore Israel from a life that was empty and dead to a life with breath, a life in Him. Verse five states, "This is what the Sovereign Lord says to these bones: I will make breath enter you, and you will come to life (NIV)." Similar to the creation of man in Genesis 2:7, the Almighty God called up the bones, gave them muscles, breath, and life. He took broken and hopeless people and gave them a new life, a fresh start.

God promised to bring Israel back to him and gave Ezekiel a vision of His plan. The land of Israel was so lost and dead that it was compared to dry bones that could never be brought back to life. Thankfully our God's ways are much higher than our ways and He can do the impossible. If the all-powerful God can do this for a graveyard, why do we doubt that He can restore and renew our lives? Today, may you feel the breath of God on you as he restores and renews your dry bones. Call out to him and allow His Spirit to come on you. May your heart come alive as you hear His voice.



February 23rd

Anik Adhikari—Kaleo Academy Student

Text: Job 19:23-27

I am not alone, I am not alone.
You will go before me; you will never leave me.....
- Kari Jobe

This is one of my most favorite Christian songs. Mostly I listen to this song. This song makes me more strong and fearless. It makes me believe more strongly that God is always there for me. When I was giving the most difficult exam in my life before going to college, I was feeling that I was all alone. No one is here to help me to pass the most difficult exam of my life. But as usual when I was listening to the song, I feel very bold and confident of my study, and I did great.

The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. (Romans 16: 20)

Loneliness comes from Satan. Satan brings loneliness, fear, disbelief, and so on. So that we could easily separate away from God. But God promises us to be with us all the time and He will crush Satan under our feet. With the help of God, we all shall defeat and crush Satan under our feet. And we have the power to do that. For we are the children of God. Jesus said that, I am your father and you are my sons. As we are the sons of the mighty and powerful God the King of the whole world and heaven, why should we tremble? There is a wonderful movie. It is, **I Am Not Ashamed**. Here the girl first thought that she was all alone. But soon she became very happy to learn that God is always beside our side. He is the song of our life. And at the last of the movie, the girl gave her life for God. And that's the biggest gift from her to God. As God gave His life for her and everyone in this world. God was always with her. For that reason, she has the courage to give her life for proclaiming God's peace. There is another wonderful song for this:

*Lord I offer my Life to You, Everything I've been through
Use it for your Glory*

*Lord I offer my days to you, Lifting my praise to You
As a pleasing sacrifice, I offer you my life*

We are not alone. God is always beside our side. No matter what happens, He will never leave our sights. All we need to do is believe in Him and have faith in Him.



February 24th

Manny Garcia—Kaleo Academy Teacher

Text: Zechariah 12:10

Arguably, Zechariah's most significant impact was reminding Jerusalem that God accomplishes the things he promises, "not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, says the Lord" (Zech 4:6). He told them, "whoever despised the day of small things shall rejoice" (Zech 4:10). The foundation of the temple had been laid, and although the momentum stopped abruptly following this accomplishment (it remained untouched for nearly 20 years) the completion of the temple would be only the beginning of what God would do in their midst. God didn't plan to stop at restoring the temple, He planned to restore his people as well. As the passage above points out, God's plan for redemption was people was still unfolding.

Through Zechariah, God invited his people to celebrate their future hope rather than mourning their past struggles. God was calling his people to be faithful in the daily things, in the small things. Something as small and seemingly insignificant as the foundation of the temple should be celebrated, not just for what it is, but for what it will become. The same is true in our lives.

Richard Foster notes, "Frankly the battle is won or lost precisely in the trifling areas of life ... it is the small fidelities that are the most helpful in training the heart toward God. These thousands upon thousands of little actions of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit slowly but surely change our heart ... the small corners of life reveal who we truly are. The large virtues most often occur in a public forum ... it is in the unguarded moment, however, when no one is watching that what is really in our heart comes to surface" (Spiritual Classics).



As we meditate on the life, death, and resurrection of our Lord this Lenten season, may we focus on the seemingly insignificant things in our lives that, when given the proper focus, lay the foundation for God to do more than we can ever ask or imagine. May your ordinary rhythms become a liturgy of worship as you find God's promises in the small things of life. The foundation is being laid, stone by stone, day by day, moment by moment. As our Lord, Jesus reminds us, "Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much" (Luke 16:10). May we be found faithful with in the small things, may we celebrate the little wins that lead us closer to Christ.

For reflection: How much attention do you typically pay to the "small things" (i.e., conversations, thoughts, habits, etc.)? Take some time to consider the "small things" in your life. Are they foundational stones for God's formational in your life or are they stumbling blocks hindering his promises?

February 25th

Second Sunday of Lent



February 26th

Katy Moran—Kaleo Academy Staff

Text: 1 Peter 4

One of the things we talked about a lot as a theatre major in college was the importance of conflict and suffering in a good story. Can you think about a recent captivating story that you heard that did not involve some sort of conflict? Probably not. In order for the listener to feel satisfied at the end of a story there needs to be a struggle that is resolved, or a challenge that is completed.

Somewhere along the line, a false narrative has begun to play out in the Church that Christians do not have to suffer. Once Jesus is in your life, your life will be filled with roses and puppy dogs. This couldn't be farther from reality and from the truth we find in God's Word. In this passage Peter is instructing the early Church to lean into the suffering they are experiencing and will continue to experience. We as followers of Jesus can only experience Jesus' sufferings because He experienced our humanity and our sufferings. He became a man and suffered so that our suffering wouldn't be meaningless. We understand goodness and grace because we first understand pain and suffering. The light shines brightest in the darkness. Our stories are richer because of God's grace and love in the midst of the conflict and struggle of our lives.

As we prepare to walk the path to Golgotha with Jesus, may we reflect on our own struggles and praise God that he has invited us to be a part of the work He is doing.

Friends, when life gets really difficult, don't jump to the conclusion that God isn't on the job. Instead, be glad that you are in the very thick of what Christ experienced. This is a spiritual refining process, with glory just around the corner.

1 Peter 4:12-13 (MSG)



February 27th

Garry Norton—Kaleo Academy Peer Leader

Text: Luke 2:41-52

Dearest Jesus,
How could your parents have known who you were then? We don't even know now, at least, not in the way that you divinely exist or how you'll return. You in the Temple must've been quite the sight, nothing short of amazing. Please be patient with our own ignorance and lack of understanding as you were with your earthly parents. Help us to see you for who you are a bit more each day. I pray for everyone that reads this devotional, asking that each person would see you in it and meet with the God of the Universe through it. We live for you, Christ. We love you, so very much. Amen.

As a Quaker, I'm totally dropping a query for y'all. Take your time and ask yourself this: Do I really know Jesus? Where's our relationship at? Is he just like some guy at the grocery store to me that I pass by? Is he like a fellow student in class that I listen to, but don't pay attention to? Is he my friend? If he's my friend, how much do I shrug him off? If I said that Jesus was my best friend, would that be the truth?

Application: Ask yourself what you can do to be continuing your relationship with Jesus. Bible reading is great, but I personally connect the best through prayer. For me, the best prayers never really end. I like to think of that as realizing that Christ is always with you and keeping my ears open. Sometimes, it helps for me to picture Jesus to be in the room with me. I like to invite him into the room and ask him to sit down, especially during the hard times. So, be creative and find what's best for you personally.



February 28th

Text: Hebrews 10:16-25

¹⁶ “This is the covenant I will make with them after that time, says the Lord. I will put my laws in their hearts, and I will write them on their minds.” ¹⁷ Then he adds: “Their sins and lawless acts I will remember no more.” ¹⁸ And where these have been forgiven, sacrifice for sin is no longer necessary. ¹⁹ Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, ²⁰ by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, ²¹ and since we have a great priest over the house of God, ²² let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. ²³ Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. ²⁴ And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, ²⁵ not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

Personal Reflection



March 1st

Ethan Chance—Kaleo Academy Peer Leader

Text: Matthew 20:17-19

In Matthew 20:17-19 we see that the death of Jesus isn't far behind. In these two verses, we see that there are many emotions that the Twelve are feeling. In the opening verse, we see that on the way to Jerusalem, that Jesus pulls the Twelve off to the side and Jesus tells them that they are on their way to Jerusalem and that He will be handed over to the chief priests and teachers of the law to be condemned to death. However, this is not the first and only time that we see Jesus predicts his death, but it happens two other times in chapters sixteen and seventeen.

Prior to the first time, we see that Peter declares that Jesus is the Messiah, in chapter 16:21. Jesus tells them that he must suffer many things at the hands of the religious leaders in Jerusalem and that he must be killed but he will raise to life on the third day. We see Peter pulls Jesus to the side and rebukes him and Jesus responds with "get behind me Satan!" Then Jesus calls Peter a stumbling block. The second time, we see that the disciples are filled with grief and the third time may have been no different.

In almost every way, we are much like the disciples. We fear that we will lose our Teacher and possibly never see Him again. Like Peter, we may respond harshly to the death of our Lord, even respond with grief. When I was a little younger in my faith, I remember watching a video in youth group that spoke about Jesus' death and resurrection, and much like the disciples, I wanted a different outcome from the story. I wanted the people to realize that Jesus was innocent and that they would bring him down from the cross. The one thing that we may have in common with the disciples early on, is that we focused on the sting of death, not the giving of life. In the last verse, we see that on the third day, Jesus will be raised to life and effectively removing the sting that death believes it has! Jesus beat death and the scorecard wasn't even close. As I conclude, on this season, let us not focus solely on Jesus' death, we can mourn it for a short while, but let us fix our eyes on the resurrection of Christ and the hope that comes with it!



March 2nd

Text: 1 Peter 5:6-9

Reflect on this image:



www.pinterest.co.uk/explore/cast-all-your-cares/?lp=true
Artist Unknown



March 3rd

Evelyn & Amy Portillo—Kaleo Academy Mentor & Student

Text: Phil. 3:10-11

Just yesterday as I was at work with an ongoing list of things to do. I playfully told my coworker, “I need Mighty Mouse to save my day!” Instantly my heart and my mind reflected back to this passage where Paul reminds us that it is through knowing Christ and knowing his power, is the way we can be more than conquerors on this Earth. As talented, gifted and intelligent human beings that we are, we tend to rely so much on what we can do. This concept may be a parallel to what Paul could of boast about. Paul could have easily boast from where he came from, his education, his stability, life and even of his Godly heritage. Interesting enough our strengths can also be the same things that build a barrier between Christ's righteousness and our human sinful nature. Ensuring Christ suffering in this passage refers to submitting our own lives and attributes, our own well-being, our own way of thinking of how our situations and life should be run. Christ suffering is the very essence of us surrendering our dreams and our hopes to Christ. It is the point when we allow Christ's dreams for us be our dreams. It is in surrendering to Christ wholly that were able to trust that one day we will not just be resurrected in his coming glory but, that we will also be resurrected here on earth in the way we think, in the way we live, in the way we love, and in the way we serve Christ and the world.

To think about: Have you ever relied in your own strength or Mighty Mouse's strength to run your life? Do you struggle surrendering your dreams and goals to Christ? How do you need to be resurrected in Christ today?



March 4th

Third Sunday of Lent



RETURN
to the
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March 5th

Keith White—Kaleo Academy Staff

Text: Psalm 42:1-7

**As the deer pants for streams of water,
so my soul pants for you, my God. - Psalm 42:1**

Both my mom and dad were hard workers. They taught me at an early age that resting when there is work to be done... was unacceptable. McDonalds teaches their young workers "If you have time to lean, you have time to clean." Sometimes lessons are learned too well. Now even years later, I find myself working until I am spent. But God calls me to rest.

The Psalmist wrote about a deer panting because he had obviously been running. Perhaps searching for water in the hot and dry climate where the Psalms were written. I live in such an environment, but it is not due to the weather, rather the culture. Our culture is always telling us that whatever it is that we've accomplished, it's never enough. And so, when I listen to this lie, I ignore God's unique ability to quench my soul's thirst, that deep need for affirmation, and I try and fail to meet that need through more accomplishments. Silly, I know, but it is all too common, especially among Americans.

The Psalmist also had to deal with a godless culture: "My tears have been my food day and night, while people say to me all day long, "Where is your God?" (Psalm 42:3) Life wasn't going well for the Psalmist and he lived in a culture that believed if your God was powerful, then he would give you the good life. So along with the personal sorrows he was experiencing, he also had to bear up under the taunting by unbelievers. Together, that would be enough to suck anyone's soul dry.

Then remembering refreshing sweet fellowship with God in times of worship, the Psalmist encourages himself to "Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God." (Psalm 42:5) Notice the repeated theme of water. (Like the deer who pants for streams of water/ My tears have been my food day and night/ in the roar of your waterfalls; all your waves and breakers have swept over me.) Jesus said, "Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them." (John 7:38) Rest in Jesus today and let him refresh you with his living water of life.



March 6th

Marcus Collick—Kaleo Academy Staff

Text: Psalm 25:3-10

In this life, we want things to go the way that we plan. We want the next best things so that way we are in line with the person we are competing with. We say that we love God and trust Him with our lives, yet we continuously make plans that are contrary to the things He has for us. When those plans do not go our way, we tend to get upset and get mad with God. We put the blame on God because He did not allow our plans to go like we wanted them to.

Did we really trust God?

Did we really believe that His plan for us was greater than any plan we could have for ourselves?

How many times have we blocked the plans of God because of the lack of trust on our part?

How many times have we reject plans that God had for us because they were "too hard" or "not what we had in mind"?

Once we start to truly believe and pray "God, guide me in your truth" then the plans that God has for us will come. We cannot be on the fence when it comes to believing God, but yet we have to be all in.

God is a big God and the plans that He has for us are bigger than we can ever imagine.

I pray that beginning today, we can fully believe God for the plans that He has for us and that He will lead us in His glorious truth.



March 7th

Text: Psalm 78:1-6

- ¹ My people, hear my teaching;
listen to the words of my mouth.
- ² I will open my mouth with a parable;
I will utter hidden things, things from of old—
- ³ things we have heard and known,
things our ancestors have told us.
- ⁴ We will not hide them from their descendants;
we will tell the next generation
the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD,
his power, and the wonders he has done.
- ⁵ He decreed statutes for Jacob
and established the law in Israel,
which he commanded our ancestors
to teach their children,
- ⁶ so the next generation would know them,
even the children yet to be born,
and they in turn would tell their children.

Personal Reflection



March 8th

Rachel Harvey—Kaleo Academy Student

Title: The Shepherd and the Wilderness

Text: Psalm 95:6-11

Poetry is something that speaks to me, so the psalms have always spoken my language. King David authored most of them, and wrote about what he knew; sheep and shepherds. (It was his first job after all, other than slaying giants.) He used the two to illustrate our relationship with God. The section of the psalm that I was given has something I like to call, "The opposites effect." We start out with worship and being led by God, or the shepherd, in the meadows, and end up being compared to the Israelites wandering in the wilderness. Now, I have to say that if you've never wondered about what the Sinai wilderness looks like I suggest you research it. Not exactly a place where I would want to hang out for an hour, (let alone forty years), and I especially wouldn't want to be lost there. The reason David used such stark opposites was to make a point. There's a turning point in this poem. David asked the people to repent - to come back to God before they end up wandering around in the wilderness again. Just like their ancestors. I used to have a friend who had a sheep dog and she explained something to me. Sheep like to wander off a lot, because they can't navigate well, and they often get so far away from the pasture that it's nearly impossible to find them. David described us as sheep because we're a lot like them, prone to wander off so far from God and so deep in the wilderness that it would take an expert shepherd to bring us back.

Now you might be wondering, "Rachel, what does this have to do with Jesus or lent?" Lent is a time for a change of heart, turning back to God by giving up something that's important or harmful to us and using that space to focus on Jesus. Sort of like the re-



repentance that David was talking about in those verses, we turn back to the meadow and to God. I found out recently that repentance actually means a revolutionary change in mindset. In the case of the Bible, it's often readjusting our focus back onto God. Remember how I said it would take an expert shepherd to bring us back to the meadow? God sent us the best one he could find, his own son. I think that's why Jesus liked to compare himself to shepherds; He was one. We're prone to wander, but he loves to look for the lost sheep. Did you know that a sheep can recognize their shepherd's voice? No matter how far away they get and how long it's been they know the sound of their shepherd calling. Sometimes we get so caught up in the wilderness that we forget or ignore Jesus calling us back home. But he's willing to go out and find us. In Luke there's the "Lost and Found" parables. The parable of the lost coin, the parable of the lost son, and the parable of the lost sheep. Most of the attention goes to the middle of the three but the one about the lost sheep always spoke to me the most. Especially the part where it says that he left the ninety-nine other sheep to find the lost one. He was willing to risk and lose everything to save one lamb. Little did we know Jesus was setting us up for a story we didn't know the half of.

Jesus came to Earth to save us, and He was willing to risk and even lose everything to do it, and He did. But it was worth it to Him to bring back that one lost sheep. At Lent and at Easter, we have this extraordinary chance at Repentance and Redemption. We can refocus on Jesus and listen to his calling. Sometimes we feel like we're too lost to even respond to Him when He calls. But I have to tell you, a lamb is still a lamb even when it's lost in the wilderness. Even if you



feel stuck, He'll pull you out. Adjust the way you think, call out to Jesus and He will find you. The parable doesn't end with the shepherd finding the lamb, it ends with him bringing the lamb back to the meadow from the wilderness. The story really begins with worship and ends with redemption. No one knew redemption better than David. He was probably one of the most flawed Bible heroes, and yet he was a man after God's own heart. Maybe he saw the end of the story, or maybe he knew what had happened at the end of his. After all, in the end, there's always love and redemption. Jesus is calling.



March 9th

Alisyn Davis—Kaleo Academy Student

Text: Psalm 81:8-14 (Parallel texts: Exodus 20:3 & Psalm 50:7)

Observations:

Negative: Stubborn hearts, foreign gods, Israelites not listening, Israelites did not want God around, stubborn desires.

Positive: God is a jealous God, God will rescue the Israelites from the land of Egypt if they will open their mouths and he will fill it with good things, God talks about how he would destroy Israel's enemies if they would follow him and walk in his path.

Meditation:

My phone is a big part of my life because I use it to stay connected with my friends. Because of this, I spend A LOT of time on my phone and on social media. In the scripture, it talks about how the Israelites hear God but they ignore him because they are too stubborn in their ways and they care more about their foreign gods than about the one true God. I sometimes catch myself getting caught up in worldly possessions that take place as a foreign god. I realize that I spend too much time with a worldly god than with the God that can do so much more for me.

Application:

Something I read on:

<http://www.radicallychristian.com/how-to-recognize-and-get-rid-of-the-idols-in-your-life>

said that a person doesn't necessarily need to give up and stop loving their idols or foreign gods but that one needs to love God more. Another piece that stuck out to me was that, "We must allow ourselves to be "filled with all the fullness of God" (Ephesians 3:19) so our love for Him shoves everything else aside, out of His presence, out of the "God" place in our hearts. We must allow God's magnificence, beauty, and glory to fill our hearts and minds." (radically Christian) Some ways to focus your love on God more is to pray, fast, praise, and reading the bible.

Prayer:

Now enter into a time of prayer and ask God to identify your idols or foreign gods in your life. Ask God to give you the strength to put more focus and energy into loving him.



March 10th

Ashley Weinacht—Kaleo Academy Peer Leader

Title: From Brokenness to Doxology

Text: Psalm 51:15-20

These are the last four verses of Psalm 51, David's powerful psalm of confession after his affair with Bathsheba and his murder of her husband. David begins the Psalm with pure contrition for his sin and then moves to doxology in response to God's forgiveness. Part of this doxology is declaring God's praise, but the other part is offering God the kind of offering that he desires – a broken and contrite heart. Speaking God's praise and being broken are both forms of worship. David knew that he could offer as many external sacrifices as he wanted, but without the inner conviction, they would be counted worthless. The same is for us. Through God's conviction and our own confession of sin, we learn the depths of God's love for us and how great his forgiveness is, but that does not come without understanding our brokenness and sin. Out of that, though, we are better able to proclaim God's praises.

As I have thought about this passage, I am acutely reminded of my own recent battle with willful sin and the pain that comes of not confessing. Remaining with unconfessed sin makes speaking God's praises nearly impossible, not because God has changed, but because of the inherent hypocrisy of trying to live both in sin and in God. However, as a friend of mine told me in one particular instance, the moment we desire to return to God through confession is when God has us right where he wants us. Out of the bentness and brokenness of sin, through confession, comes the ability to better proclaim God's praises because we know and have felt God's forgiveness. This is worship: God made manifest in our lives and our response to that. This Lenten season, let us not only confess with contrite hearts, but rejoice in God's astounding forgiveness.

March 11th

Fourth Sunday of Lent



March 12th

Derek Brown—Kaleo Academy Staff

Text: Isaiah 9:2-7

I think a case can be made that one of the most common fears in childhood was being afraid of the dark. Many, if not all, of us can remember times where a dark room brought out fear in us. As we grow, darkness is not something to be feared, but it is a hindrance nonetheless. If any of you has experienced a power outage at night, then you know that the sudden lack of light makes even a familiar room a mystery, forcing you to inch forward, hands out, and worried about running into something. We are dependent on light and are created to seek it out (for example, the human eye can see a single candle in the dark from a distance of up to 30 miles away!).

Darkness has also been used to describe bad times in a person's life. Darkness is equated with sadness and mourning, and the message communicated is that the absence of light is the absence of life (it is no surprise that a common illustration of depression is a single storm cloud above a person – something which blocks the sun and puts the person in darkness). Darkness has also been used to describe tragedy, which is how the prophet Isaiah is using it in this passage. Israel was under threat of attack from several nations, and tragedy looked inevitable – the people were in “darkness.” However, Isaiah offers them hope – that the people of Israel and Judah, though living in darkness, are going to experience a great light – a Messiah (savior) which would save them.

From where we stand, we know now that this prophecy was not just for that time, but also pointed to the future – the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Like the people of Israel, the world was in great darkness until Jesus came: “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life” (John 8:12). Because Christ lives, we can have faith that, whatever the darkness we may go through in our lives, the light of Christ is greater than that darkness, and he will always be there to light our path.



March 13th

Sierra Lingafelter—Kaleo Academy Student

Text: Malachi 3:1-4

In the beginning of these verses it says “I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me.” The purpose of Malachi was to prepare the way ahead of the Lord’s coming. The people had time to figure out where they stood with God and make improvements on their relationship with Him. Soon that time would end. Which is the same way for us as we prepare for Christ’s second coming. Are you prepared? Is there an earthly thing holding you back?

“Then the Lord will have men who will bring offerings in righteousness, and offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be acceptable to the Lord, as in days gone by, as in former years.” For the people during this time, there was a lack of commitment between them and God. Something needed to change. Instead of being angry with God because of his chastisement, his people were humbled. They repented. They even showed remorse.

This part of the passage just completely captivates me. The love of God is just so amazing! We will stand before God completely guilty of everything we have done without any defense or excuses. We deserve every punishment, but yet, God chooses not to punish us at all!! He just simply forgives us.

In order to fully receive this type of love, we must have a true relationship with God. Not a “lukewarm” relationship. What is holding you back from reaching that true relationship with God?



March 14th

Text: 2 Samuel 7:12-16

¹²When your days are over and you rest with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, your own flesh and blood, and I will establish his kingdom. ¹³He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. ¹⁴I will be his father, and he will be my son. When he does wrong, I will punish him with a rod wielded by men, with floggings inflicted by human hands. ¹⁵But my love will never be taken away from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you. ¹⁶Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever.”

Personal Reflection



March 15th

Tim Hadley—Kaleo Academy Mentor

Text: Isaiah 58:5-12

I thirst
I break
I crumble
I wear
I bruise
I fall

You fill
You mend
You rebuild
You strengthen
You heal
You rise.....in me like a new day, every morning.

written by Tim Hadley



March 16th

Text: Joel 2:12-14

Reflect on this image:



“The Return” by Jacques Tissot (circa 1882). Oil on canvas;
National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC



March 17th

Evelyn & Amy Portillo—Kaleo Academy Mentor & Student

Text: Jeremiah 11:18-20

Talk about a bad day at work. Jeremiah's couldn't get any worse, he was being persecuted by the enemies who did not want to hear the message from the Lord. Jeremiah was a prophet who was chosen by God to try to bring conviction and repentance to God's chosen people. They however continuously rejected God's message and hardened their hearts and continued to build idols not just in their hearts but also physical idols that were common and popular during this time.

Jeremiah is known to have used the phrase, "the Lord says" more than 149 times in his messages. The Gentiles and God's chosen people of this days were frustrated with Jeremiah's message and began to plot his own death. Jeremiah turns and cries out to the Lord and shares with Him his most intimate fears and despair and calls upon Him letting him know what is going on surrounding his own life. How frustrating and painful it must have been for Jeremiah to know that all the fruit of his labor was not appreciated and would be destroyed. In the midst of Jeremiah's trial he knows that it is He, the Lord, the one who is righteous, the one who will set a table before his enemies. It is the Lord that will Deliver Us from the traps of our enemy. Facing those difficult challenges and relying completely on God's promises is not simple. But it is encouraging to trust in the Lord's word where it says "The Lord will fight for you; you need only to be still" (Exodus 14:14).

The passage sounds so easy right? But how many times have we also hit that point of despair like Jeremiah where we see that our enemies, or difficult situations, or even our feelings are just overwhelming us with the load that we need to carry each day.

To Think About: Are we like God's chosen people in those days that instead of worshiping the Lord we build altars of idols to worship in our hearts? What kind of idols can we place in our hearts today? Can it be that what is right be may seen as wrong or what is wrong we may see as right? Can we continue to trust in the midst of difficult times, that He will fight for us?

March 18th

Fifth Sunday of Lent



RETURN
to the
LORD
YOUR
GOD



March 19th

Brockie Follette—Kaleo Academy Staff

Text: Hebrews 9:11-15

Do you ever read portions of scripture and you aren't sure what to make of them? Me too. I am often perplexed as I am reading instructions from the Old Testament on how the Levitical priests were to make sacrifices. If we were to take the rituals of the priests and make a movie of their lives, we might find ourselves in the middle of a gruesome Hollywood movie.

Here are some of the unusual details of the Levitical priestly duties, just to name a few:

- Gathering 2 unblemished male goats for offerings (one for the sin of himself & his household, and the other for the WHOLE nation of Israel.
- Cleansing himself completely before putting on the sacred undergarments and priestly robes.
- Burning incense to conceal the atonement covers above the tablets of the covenant of the law.
- Taking blood from the animal with his finger and sprinkling it on the front of the atonement cover and then sprinkling the blood 7 times before the atonement cover.
- Securing a rope to himself in case he dies (because of his sin) and has to be dragged out by someone else on the other side of the Holy of Holies.
- Making sure the hides, flesh and intestines of the sacrificed animal are taken outside the camp and burned up.
- Cleansing himself completely again after making sacrifices.



As I am reading the details which involve blood, my mind tends to wonder. Blood does not have a pleasant odor, it stains, it is messy. Is the priest cleaning up the blood as he goes along, or does it stay where it is sprinkled forever?

And then my mind wonders again (it does that). God, why did you set up this system to take care of the Israelites sin? This seems cruel to animals. Why so much blood? Couldn't you make another way? Hmmmmm.....

My oldest brother just recently died from his battle with Primary Plasma Cell Leukemia. Leukemia is a cancer of the blood. Initially my brother started receiving blood transfusions every once in a while, then they moved to weekly, and at the end of his journey, every other day. The imperfections in his blood were so strong that even every other day transfusions of healthy blood were not enough to keep his blood uninfected.

And so with us. On our own and with the help of mortal others, we cannot atone – redeem, absolve, appease, correct, pay, propitiate, reconcile, amend - our infected blood of sin. God sent Jesus, the unblemished perfect scapegoat, to be sprinkled out for the multitude of our sins. My favorite phrase in this Hebrews 9 passage is “He entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood.” Once for all. Let that phrase sink in. (Pause). That's all the sins past, present and future. That's my sins, my husband's sins, my children's sins, and those in my spheres of influence who have yet to accept Christ – their sins too!!!

How will you let this reading sink in today? How may we join the author of Hebrews in responding to this good news, “that we may serve the living God!” ???



March 20th

Ben Pfeiffer—Kaleo Academy Peer Leader

Title: Earning

Text: 1 Corinthians 1:18-31

As I mulled over this passage, I'll be honest, I was upset. This passage has been used to tell countless Christians to slack off in academic studies. Why study if the Gospel is foolishness? I've been told by people in the church that learning is not necessary and in some cases, shouldn't be pursued. "That's worldly knowledge." or "The Bible is the only book for me." They are entitled to their opinion. I just want you to know that this passage isn't saying that at all.

What Paul is saying here is that the Gospel is for all people. We contribute nothing to our redemption. It is totally a work of God. We didn't earn his grace. We didn't become his church because we could preach well, speak intelligently, play an instrument, bench 300lbs, sing like an angel or anything else. We are Christians because a man named Jesus Christ decided to take our place. This goes contrary to everything we have been taught as Americans. We are told to fight our way to the top. We are told to be independent and self-sufficient. Our whole lives revolve around earning. In order to be liked, we must earn it by being funny or popular. If we want to be rich, we have to go to school and get a job. If we get something it is often because we earned it. This is why grace is foolishness to the world. We didn't earn it. It was freely given.

There is such freedom in knowing that we do not have to earn our salvation. God has paid the debt. God doesn't expect us to be the best at everything. He has simply called us to do what he has created us to do; that is to love him and others. This takes on different forms in each person. We all have unique gifts that help us love one another in different ways. We are simply invited to trust God and walk with him. He loves us for who we are and not what we do. Our worth is not in what we do or own, but in who we are. We are image bearers of the God of the universe. Let that sink in.

So today I have a few questions for you to ponder. Do you feel like you have to earn God's grace? What expectations are keeping you from experiencing the unconditional love of the Father? Are you putting any of these expectations on others? How can you begin to experience the freedom in laying down your need to earn?



March 21st

Text: John 13:21-32

²¹ After he had said this, Jesus was troubled in spirit and testified, "Very truly I tell you, one of you is going to betray me." ²² His disciples stared at one another, at a loss to know which of them he meant. ²³ One of them, the disciple whom Jesus loved, was reclining next to him. ²⁴ Simon Peter motioned to this disciple and said, "Ask him which one he means." ²⁵ Leaning back against Jesus, he asked him, "Lord, who is it?" ²⁶ Jesus answered, "It is the one to whom I will give this piece of bread when I have dipped it in the dish." Then, dipping the piece of bread, he gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot. ²⁷ As soon as Judas took the bread, Satan entered into him. So Jesus told him, "What you are about to do, do quickly." ²⁸ But no one at the meal understood why Jesus said this to him. ²⁹ Since Judas had charge of the money, some thought Jesus was telling him to buy what was needed for the festival, or to give something to the poor. ³⁰ As soon as Judas had taken the bread, he went out. And it was night. ³¹ When he was gone, Jesus said, "Now the Son of Man is glorified and God is glorified in him. ³² If God is glorified in him, God will glorify the Son in himself, and will glorify him at once.

Personal Reflection



March 22nd

Lois Kendall—Kaleo Academy Mentor

Text: Phil. 2:5-11

As we consider the meaningfulness of Easter, included are these verses from Philippians 2:5-11, “In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross! Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

Let’s look first at the cross. We have come to see the cross as a symbol of our faith. And even as it symbolizes our faith, many of us wear crosses in the form of necklaces and bracelets. This may simply be a fondness for jewelry, or it may be an opportunity to share our faith. Jesus’ death on the cross was very different from a symbol. The Life Application Bible tells us that, “death on a cross was the form of capital punishment that Romans used for notorious criminals. It was excruciatingly painful and humiliating. Prisoners were nailed or tied to a cross and left to die. Death might not come for several days, and it usually came by suffocation when the weight of the weakened body made breathing more and more difficult. Jesus died as one who was cursed (Galatians 3:13). How amazing that the perfect man should die this most shameful death so that we would not have to face eternal punishment.” Think about that for a minute. One



cannot reflect on that without being filled with gratitude and awe.

Now that we’ve considered what Jesus did, let’s look at the mindset that would prompt Jesus to do such a thing. Verse 7 tells us he “made himself nothing”, and verse 8 says “he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death”.

Why was Jesus able to submit himself in humility to a horrible death on our behalf? Because he knew who he was (verse 6) His identity was in his Father, therefore he had no need to prove himself. He didn’t need to be concerned about what others thought of him, nor did he need to demand or cling to his rights as God. He was God. His identity was secure. Verse 5 reminds us that our mindset should be the same as Jesus’. When our identity is in the Father, we can humbly submit ourselves to obedience, not being concerned about what others might think, nor demanding our rights. We often try to find our identity in things – things we own, things we do, our friends, our family – but even they come up lacking. When our identity is in the Father, in Jesus, we are secure! As in Jesus’ example, humility and obedience become our mindset.

As we approach Easter, let us find our identity secure in the One who died for us.



March 23rd

Carlos Moran—Kaleo Academy Mentor

Titulo: Nuestra Actitud Ante Jesus

Texto: Juan 12:1-8

En su ultima viaje a Jerusalem Jesus visita la aldea de Betania donde le ofrecen una cena. Juan nos dice que Marta era la que servia y segun Lucas 10:38-42 en otra ocasion Marta sirve pero se enoja y aun le reclama a Jesus, porque Maria su hermana no le ayuda. Pero ahora en este pasaje vemos a Marta sirviendo con gozo, sin quejarse. Marta a aprendido lo valioso que es tener el privilegio de servir a nuestro Senor.

Qual es mi actitud en el servicio a Jesus?

Juan describe a Lazaro sentado a la mesa con Jesus, disfrutando de la communion con su Senor quien le habia resucitado de los muertos. El Apostol Pablo nos dice que Jesus nos dio vida, porque estabamos muertos en nuestros pecados (Efesios 2:5,6). Es nuestra mayor bendicion usar esta nueva vida que el Senor nos a dado para tener comunion con El.

Es esa mi experiencia?

La actitud de Maria es estar a los pies de Jesus.

En Lucas 10:38-42 vemos a Maria a los pies de Jesus para aprender de su Maestro. Por su parte Jesus la alaba diciendo que ella a escogido la mejor posicion. Pero en Juan 11:28-37 la vemos a los pies de Jesus llorando y muy triste por la muerte de su hermano Lazaro. Cuando perdemos a nuestros seres queridos, en nuestro sufrimientos, soledad y dolor, Maria nos ensena que el consuelo y Fortaleza lo encontramos al postrarnos a los pies de Jesus en total adoracion. Y ahora en Juan 12:1-8 la encontramos derramando sin reservas un perfume muy valioso a los pies de Jesus, Maria nos ensena que Jesus merece lo mejor y lo mas valioso que tengamos en la vida. Por ultimo enconrtamos la actitud de uno de los discipulos criticando la ofrenda de Maria, senalandola de desperdicio.

Pero Jesus aprueba la ofrenda de Maria.

Es muy triste ver que la actitud de Judas aun prevalece en muchas de nuestras comunidades Cristianas. Pero cual de todas es mi actitud ante Jesus?

Senor gracias por darme la vida. Ayudame a encontrar el verdaero deleite de la comunion contigo, y ayudame a servir en silencio y con gozo aun cuando otros no lo aprecien, por favor dame el valor de entregarte lo mejor de mi vida, aunque otros me critiquen y librame del espiritu de Judas. Amen.



Title: Our attitude toward Jesus

Text: John 12:1-8

On his last journey to Jerusalem, Jesus visits the village of Bethany where he is offered a dinner. John tells us that Martha was serving. Then according to Luke 10:38-42, at a different time Martha is serving again and she complains to Jesus, asking him why her sister Mary doesn't help her. But now in this passage we see Martha serving again with joy, and without complaining. Martha has learned how valuable it is to have the privilege of serving our Lord.

What is my attitude when I serve Jesus?

John describes Lazarus, who Jesus had risen from the dead, sitting at the table with Jesus, enjoying communion with his Lord. The Apostle Paul tells us that Jesus gave us life, because we were dead in our sins (Ephesians 2:5, 6). It is our greatest blessing to use this new life that the Lord has given us in order to have communion with our Lord Jesus too.

Has that been my experience?

We see the attitude of Mary is to be at the feet of Jesus.

In Luke 10:38-42, we see Mary at the feet of Jesus learning from Him, her Teacher. Meanwhile Jesus praises her, telling her that she has chosen the best position. But in John 11:28-37 we see her at the feet of Jesus crying and very sad for the death of her brother Lazarus. When we have lost our loved ones, in our suffering, solitude and pain; we can learn from Mary who teaches us that comfort and strength can be found kneeling at the feet of Jesus in total worship. And now in John 12:1-8 we find she unreservedly spills valuable perfume at the feet of Jesus. Mary teaches us that Jesus deserves the best and the most valuable from us in life. Finally, we see the attitude of one of the disciples, Judas, criticizing the offering of Mary, accusing her of wastefulness.

But Jesus approved of the offering of Mary.

It is very sad to see that the attitude of Judas is still prevalent in many of our Christian communities. But what is my attitude before Jesus?

Thank you Lord for giving me life. Help me to find the real delight of communion with you, and help me to serve in silence and joy even when others do not appreciate it. Please give me the strength to offer you the best things of my life, although others criticize me. Save me from the spirit of Judas. Amen.



March 24th

Maranda Paz—Kaleo Academy Student

Text: Mark 11:1-11

We are all sent by the Lord
To do His will
Some big, some small
One even died for us all

So we shout, Hosanna!
Lay down your coats
Lay down your burdens
For the one who comes
shall forgive you your sins

May we forever sing, Hosanna in the heights
Listen for your calling
Live as an apostle all you days
Always giving the Lord praise

So we shout, Hosanna!
Lay down your coats
Lay down your burdens
For the one who comes
shall forgive you your sins
by Maranda Paz

March 25th

Palm Sunday



RETURN
to the
LORD
YOUR
GOD



March 26th

Derek Brown—Kaleo Academy Staff

Text: Luke 23:34

I believe that one of the foundations of the Christian faith is forgiveness. The greatest example of this is God's forgiveness of us. However, that is not the only aspect of forgiveness in Christ. Because, in Christ, we are a new creation, and our sins are washed away, we have the opportunity to forgive ourselves, and let go of the guilt and shame of our past. Additionally, our faith requires us to forgive others, as God has forgiven us. It is interesting to note that when Jesus says, "Be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Mt 5:48), it is the conclusion to Jesus' command to love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us. Thus, our "perfection" in Christ-likeness seems to be linked to our ability to love and forgive others – even our enemies.

The best example of this, of course, is found in the passage above. Jesus, as he was suffering on the cross, prayed that those who nailed him there would be forgiven. Not only that, he asked this while they were stealing his clothes – even while they continued to sin against him. In the midst of unimaginable pain – torture that he did not deserve – his response was to forgive and pray for the "enemies" that caused his suffering. It is the epitome of love and grace. And we are called to do likewise: to look past anger, revenge, and hatred and see your enemies as God sees them. This is not easy – in fact, it may be one of the most difficult parts of following Christ. However, what would the world look like if we truly followed Jesus' example?



During the Civil War, Quakers underwent persecution from both the North and the South because of their refusal to fight on either side (because of their obedience to Jesus' command to love one's enemies and to "turn the other cheek"). One Quaker, Seth Laughlin was sentenced by the Confederate Army to be executed by firing squad for refusing to fight. As he faced the firing squad, he asked for an opportunity to pray. He prayed out loud, not for himself, but for his executioners (quoting Jesus): "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Hearing this prayer, the soldiers dropped their weapons, refusing to carry out the execution. Seth Laughlin prayed this prayer completely expecting to be executed (he must have been quite surprised that he was spared). I am not sure, if I was in the same situation, that I could pray this prayer – could you? However, it is my goal to grow in Christ daily – allowing Christ to shine through me in ever greater ways – until I reach the point that I could forgive and pray for my enemies.

This Lenten season, let us be reminded of the amazing power of Christ's forgiveness, and let us be convicted and encouraged to forgive others as Christ forgave us.



March 27th

Leah Newton—Kaleo Academy Mentor

Text: Luke 23:43



“You will be with me in paradise” this the promise we hold on to. We are not promised a life of ease. We are not promised we won’t endure the very same hardships that Christ himself endured. We are, however, promised that one day we will rest with Christ in paradise.

James 1:12 tells us “Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him.”

When life is busy and you’re overwhelmed, hold on to this promise. When you can’t find rest and you’re hit with one challenge after another, hold on to this promise. When you are weak and feel as if you can’t go on, hold on to this promise.

We must fight the good fight. Press on toward the goal. Renew our minds. Serve Him faithfully. Fix His Word on our hearts. Proclaim the good news. Persevere under trial. Because one day we will be with our Lord in paradise. This promise is what empowers us to keep going. This hope is what we hold on to.





March 28th

Text: John 19:26-27

²⁶ When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to her, “Woman, here is your son,” ²⁷ and to the disciple, “Here is your mother.” From that time on, this disciple took her into his home.

Personal Reflection



March 29th

Mac McDonald—Kaleo Academy Mentor

Text: Matthew 27:46

Last Sunday was ‘Palm Sunday’... Today is Thursday... Tomorrow is **“Good Friday”...and then it is Sunday!**
“He is Risen”... (“He is Risen, Indeed!”)

Many Friends Churches do not typically practice the physical sacrament of communion but believe that life, when lived in the example of Jesus Christ, is a sacrament, in itself. We believe that Spiritual Communion with God, is experienced during our time of Open Worship, silent prayer & meditation. Each time I participate in communion, I think to myself, “once more... once less”. Once more, I have remembered Christ’s death... Once less, I have done so until His return. When I have an opportunity to partake in the sacrament of communion, I often wonder...“Is this the last one???” It helps me live in anticipation!!! My hope & prayer for you, this Lenten Season, that you have begun to live in anticipation.

With today’s passage, my first thoughts turns to; with so many uncertainties and so much vagueness in the Bible, this particular scripture is very specific. The previous verse says: “From noon until three in the afternoon darkness came over all the land. About three in the afternoon...”

*Are there other places in scripture that are so very specific?
My second thoughts turns to; **“Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?”**
 (“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”).

*This statement by Christ, for me, makes Him so very ‘human’. A human being has been hanging on a cross for several hours. At noon, the skies turn dark. After 3 hours of darkness & extreme physical pain, Jesus, a human being, asks:

“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”

I can’t imagine the threshold of pain He must have been going through. I can’t imagine being in the dark, left to hang on a cross... to die. I know for a fact, all the physical & emotional pain that I have ever gone through, at the time, I have thought to myself, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” That is the human side of me and in every one of you. However, in hindsight, I know now, that He was with me, every step of the way. He walked with me, beside me and carried me through every level pain and every shade of darkness in my life. He was with me, walking and/or carrying me to prepare me for what His grand plan was/is for my life.



March 30th

Christa Follette—Kaleo Academy Staff

Text: John 19: 28, 30

Have you ever been thirsty? We all know the feeling of a hot summer day when we've been outside for about an hour and our mouth begins to water because we need water. We might even begin to feel sick in our stomach as the early effects of dehydration are kicking in. Then, the first drop of cold water to our lips becomes the most refreshing feeling of the day. After the first big gulp, we just continue to drink and we realize we were even thirstier than we thought. Jesus, to fulfill the scriptures, declares that he is thirsty. Instead of the cool, refreshing taste of water he is given wine vinegar. Disgusting!

Yet, I wonder how many people around us are thirsty. They are thirsty for people to listen to them, to care for them, to journey life's joy and sorrows with them. They are longing for the refreshing feeling of someone who is selfless and loving. These people are thirsty and too often instead of water they get wine vinegar. Are we just another person that is too busy to truly listen to them, too impatient with them, or unwilling to love their messy life? We have the greatest, most refreshing gift for those who are thirsting for more in life—Jesus! As Christians, the way that we live is an example of Jesus, and my prayer is that it would be one that is refreshing for those who are thirsty.

In today's verses, our Savior declares that "It is finished," as he gives up his Spirit. That sounds like wine vinegar to me, that does not sound refreshing. Yet, we know the rest of the story; we know what happens in three days! Today, I want us to reflect on the ways that we can be attentive to those around us who need the hope and joy that can be found in Jesus. How can you provide for those who are thirsty around you? Maybe it means putting your phone down and truly listening to someone's hurt, maybe it means sitting by someone new at lunch, maybe it means sending a hand-written note to someone who is in a hard place. Whatever it is you feel called to do—do it! You know the rest of the story, you know the hope and joy of Jesus, you know that Jesus' death is not the end!

Now go out in the world and show the love of Jesus to those who are thirsty!



March 31st

Brecken VandenHoek—Kaleo Academy Student

Text: Luke 23:46

At the first reading of this passage, I found it interesting that Jesus has to commit his life to God right before he died. I mean he is Jesus after all, the son of God, the only perfect man to ever walk this earth. Out of all people, I should think that he wouldn't need to, at the very last possible moment, commit his life to God. It almost seems like a bit of a last minute assurance. Almost like a "just-in-case" kind of moment you know? Like, "Just in case there was any confusion, if my actions somehow contradicted the faith that I express, if somewhere along the way I got lost, just in case, let's clear things up." And if it were any other human being, this could possibly be the case, but it's not. It's Jesus we're talking about, so obviously that interpretation of the situation isn't accurate. So I looked again, setting aside all imperfect humanly instinct. His last words were not a floundering grasp for God. And I decided that what at first glance might seem to be desperate collateral of a dying man was actually true confirmation of a faithful one. Here is a man beaten, broken, dying, and in his last moments he still declares his love for God. Even to the very end, down to the last seconds, Jesus was living (and dying) for God, trusting him with his life and through his death. Jesus was committed to God from beginning to end.

*What stands out to you in the passage?

*The definition of the word "commit" is:

-to give in trust

-to consign for preservation

-to entrust, especially for safekeeping

Have you, or are you willing to, truly commit your life to God?

*What does it look like for you to commit your life, or spirit, as it says in the passage, to God?

April 1st

Easter Sunday

