

YOU ARE INVITED!

We all love an invitation--to a special party, a birthday, a celebration, or to stay with a special relative or friend. We have a special invite for YOU.

Right now our city and our nation are facing two major historical crises. Even at your young age, you are affected deeply by these crises. These crises are no surprise to Jesus Christ. He did not leave us here without giving us what we need to face these.

EYES FIXED ON JESUS AND

WALKING ON WATER

A Special Message for Youth

LIFECUB DISCIPLESHIP

MONDAY

A SPECIAL INVITATION!

JESUS CHRIST HAS **ALL POWER** AND **ALL VICTORY!**

HE INVITES YOU TO JOIN HIM!

HE INVITES YOU TO A PLACE OF BEING

IMMENSELY VALUED

HAVING NO FEAR

BEING PERFECTLY LOVED

HIS FATHER - OUR FATHER GOD - CREATED YOU AND HE THINKS YOU ARE AWESOME!

The Lord says about you in His Word that “**you are fearfully and wonderfully made**” (Psalm 139:14). He says that He has “**loved you with an everlasting love.**” He says He has **invited you into that love** and “**drawn you with unfailing kindness**” (Jeremiah 31:3)

Our nation and community are facing two crises right now. You are living in the midst of two very historical crises—the **Covid-19 pandemic**—and the horrible **death of George Floyd** that is rocking our communities and nation with hurt and anger and the cry for justice.

Before we look at the awful death of George Floyd, let’s look at something God’s Word has to say to us as we face the Covid pandemic.

The Covid-19 disease is a terrible disease that can make us a bit fearful. What is really strange and terrible is that if we get it, we have to shut ourselves away from others, alone. Perhaps this has happened to someone you know. Even preventing ourselves from getting it calls for us to stay away from other people as much as possible. It’s a terrible disease. There have been many terrible plagues in the history of man and the Lord offers His sure help and hope to face them.

You see from very long ago at the very creation of man until now, the Lord God has offered men His presence and His guidance and His truth. The Lord’s desire has been to be with us as a loving Heavenly Father and to guide us and care for us in every trouble and difficulty and to rescue us from all evil. Since Christ came and died for us so that we can be forgiven and made new, we can all enjoy God’s presence with us continually through receiving the Holy Spirit into our hearts. And each and every one of us can know God’s truth and guidance through the Bible that was written by selected men of God to whom God revealed His truth, and men who knew Christ when He lived on earth. These Words of God are available to us every day.

If you found yourself all alone and struggling, do you have the daily comfort of God’s spirit and presence with you? Do you truly know your heavenly Father personally? Do you know His truth and have his Word hidden in your heart from reading the Bible to give you hope and strength and peace in any situation? When we pass from this world into eternity, we will go alone, all by ourselves. The Lord wants us to be prepared. You can allow the Covid pandemic to help you face this important decision of being ready. **Now then, does the Bible say anything to help us with the awful anguish and anger we feel at the death of George Floyd?**

JESUS' BELOVED COUSIN JOHN IS BEHEADED!

IN THE BOOK OF MATTHEW in CHAPTER 14, WE READ THAT JESUS' FIRST COUSIN, AND MOST IMPORTANT PARTNER IN MINISTRY, WAS BEHEADED—and not for anything He had done wrong. John was beheaded cruelly and unjustly by a Roman ruler.

Jesus, who was fully God and fully man, came to this earth, was born a Jew at a time when the Jewish people were under very oppressive Roman rule. We are not at all suggesting in this lesson that America today is like Rome. America is very different from ancient Rome. But our world is broken and throughout life we may encounter evil and fall prey to the mistakes and transgressions of others. Some people or groups can ruin the peace and love and justice for ALL people that America is so committed to, that America stands for, and that most Americans of all races work so hard to live out. A few can cause a lot of hurt and harm and Satan the destroyer and deceiver wants us to be focused on these doings and defeated by them, instead of living in all the goodness and peace and love and joy and truth and hope and fulfillment the Lord offers us in the midst of a broken world. So as we grieve the death of George Floyd, we remember that Jesus also suffered the cruel death of His beloved cousin, John.

John the Baptist was beheaded by a Roman King named Herod. And why? Because the King's wife did not like John and did not like the good, right, loving, moral commands from God that John taught. So she asked the King, albeit by sending her daughter to dance for the King and give the King a request to have the head of John. Though reluctant, King Herod gave in to his wife and daughter and fulfilled their request and delivered the head of John the Baptist to his wife on a platter.

CAN YOU IMAGINE JESUS' GRIEF AND ANGUISH over the cruel death of His beloved cousin? This really happened. Surely Jesus our Lord faced the worst kind of injustices imaginable. Surely He understands our griefs and sorrows.

How did Jesus respond? How did He act? What did He do? This is the example He sets for us to follow: The scripture tells us that when He heard the news about John, He left in a boat to go to a place alone all by himself. We know from scriptures about Christ that He was in the habit of going away to a solitary place when He needed to be with His Heavenly Father. We also know from many scriptures about Christ that He had feelings and emotions and sufferings just like us. Though He was God, He was fully human. Various scriptures describe situations where He wept, was angry, was disappointed, felt abandoned, was in anguish-- yet He never sinned, never rebelled, never disobeyed God in the midst of his hurt and grief and pain and anger.

So, surely when hearing about the heinous death of John the Baptist, Jesus experienced the deepest of grief and anguish. **He needed His Heavenly Father's love and comfort.** He needed understanding. His heart had been stabbed! So He went away by Himself--to receive His Father's love and comfort and understanding. **He knew His Heavenly Father had the ability to do the IMPOSSIBLE** – to heal his hurting heart—to give Him strength to go on and enable Him to fulfill His life's purpose

**Maybe you would like to pour your heart out
to God right now and tell Him how you feel.
Maybe you would like to cry in His loving arms
and ask Him for His love and comfort, His help.**

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After you pause to talk with God, the lesson continues below

JESUS WAS SO POPULAR THAT PEOPLE FOLLOWED HIM TO HIS GETAWAY PLACE. He had compassion on them and healed many sick people. It came time for a meal and He fed them. He was not afraid. He did not let His anger get in the way. He continued to give, to love, to serve unselfishly, even in the midst of His own deep pain and anguish. Late in the evening He sent the people away and sent the disciples off in a boat so that He could finally have some very needed time alone with His Heavenly Father.

MEANWHILE CAN YOU IMAGINE THE DISCIPLES OUT IN THAT BOAT? They would also be reeling from the death of John the Baptist. Here they have placed their trust in this Jesus to follow Him--and Jesus' cousin and the one who paved the way for Jesus' ministry is beheaded! Can you imagine their bewilderment?! Their anguish?! Their anger?! Their fear?! Now Jesus has sent them off. Why didn't He come with them? A storm has blown up and they are out there all alone! Where is Jesus? Has He abandoned them? What dangers may be yet ahead?

Then, about 3:00 a.m. in the wee hours of the night, Jesus suddenly appears – out across the waves—coming to them--walking on the water! They are afraid and think it is a ghost--until He speaks to them and tells them to have courage and not fear. Then a very interesting thing happens! Jesus invites Peter to step out of the boat and walk to Him. So Peter steps out. He starts walking over the water to Jesus! But then Peter notices the strong wind and becomes afraid and starts to sink. Peter cries out “Save me Lord!” Jesus reaches out his hand and grabs hold of Peter saying “What little faith you have! Why did you doubt?” Jesus and Peter both got into the boat and the wind died down. The scriptures then tell us the disciples began to worship Jesus, saying “Truly you are the Son of God!”

WHAT'S IN THIS STORY FOR US? Was Christ raising up a band of followers to go around practicing magic acts like walking on water to WOW and entertain the people? Is this what it means to follow Jesus? Clearly this was not the case, since we never hear of Jesus walking on water again or training the disciples in this practice.

Jesus was showing the disciples unmistakably, undeniably, **WHO HE WAS.**

He was **THE CHRIST, THE SON OF GOD**, the long awaited **MESSIAH!**

He had **ALL POWER.** He **HAD NOT LEFT THEM ALONE.** He **HAD NOT ABANDONED THEM** on the lake in the midst of the windstorm.

He **CARED GREATLY ABOUT THEM.** He was **WITH THEM.** They **NEED NOT FEAR.** He **WAS NOT POWERLESS** in the face of storms, or the worst evils and suffering and loss.

And Jesus was giving them an unmistakable lesson that **HIS POWER WAS AVAILABLE TO THEM;** that if they **FOLLOWED HIM**, and kept their **EYES FIXED ON HIM** instead of the wind and waves and turmoil around them, if they had **TRUST and FAITH IN HIM**, they **WOULD NOT SINK**, they **WOULD NOT BE ALONE**, they **NEED NOT FEAR**, He **WOULD SAVE THEM FROM ALL THEIR TROUBLE AND ENEMIES**, He would **HEAL THEIR HEARTS**, He would **TOUCH THEM** and **SHOW THEM THE WAY** to the **TRUEST MOST FULFILLING LIFE.**

AS JESUS CONTINUED TO LIVE OUT HIS LIFE ON EARTH before the disciples and continued to teach them, He had great lessons to reveal to them. He taught them to fully understand WHO they were, and WHO their REAL ENEMIES were, and WHO to really LISTEN TO, and HOW TO DEFEAT THEIR ENEMIES. It perplexed many, and especially Peter, that Jesus never retaliated. He didn't retaliate when John the Baptist was imprisoned, when John the Baptist was killed, when His own life was threatened or when He was arrested. To solve evil by joining evil and becoming evil will only place us in the grip of the evil kingdom of darkness, agony, aloneness forever. **JESUS CAME to RESCUE US FROM THE GRIP OF EVIL. JESUS HAD A POWER THAT WAS GREATER.**

HE OFFERS THAT POWER TO US—TO FOLLOW HIM IN THE SEEMING IMPOSSIBLE, just as He showed Peter when He invited him out of the boat. THIS IS HIS INVITATION TO YOU.

John 10:10

**[Jesus said] The thief comes only to steal, kill and destroy.
I have come that they might have life, and have it to the full.**

John 16:33

**These things I [Jesus] have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace
.In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."**

Psalm 11

**⁴ The Lord is in his holy temple;
He has his throne in heaven.
He watches people everywhere
and knows what they are doing.**

**⁵ He examines the good and the wicked alike;
the lawless He hates with all his heart.**

**⁶ He sends down flaming coals and burning sulfur on the wicked;
He punishes them with scorching winds.**

**⁷ The Lord is righteous and loves good deeds;
those who do them will live in his presence.**

Romans 12:17-21

If someone has done you wrong, do not repay him with a wrong. Try to do what everyone considers to be good. ¹⁸ Do everything possible on your part to live in peace with everybody.

¹⁹ Never take revenge, my friends, but instead let God's anger do it. For the scripture says, "I will take revenge, I will pay back, says the Lord." ²⁰ Instead, as the scripture says: "If your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them a drink; for by doing this you will make them burn with shame." ²¹ Do not let evil defeat you; instead, conquer evil with good.

FRIDAY

WILL YOU ACCEPT HIS INVITATION?

Will you keep your eyes fixed on Jesus, even in these difficult times, take His hand, trust Him and listen to Him to show you the way, learn from the truth He left recorded for you in His Word--the Bible, receive His healing, follow Him, know Him, obey Him? GOD IS JUST. HE IS PERFECTLY FAIR TO EVERYONE. He offers you this invitation. He loves you so much. He has not left you alone.

You can pray and talk to God about this right now if you want to.

If you already have His Spirit living in you, you can ask the Lord to help you rely on it moment by moment and then fill your mind and heart by reading God's Word, the Bible. If you realize you don't have His Spirit, life and power in you, you can get right with God right now by asking His forgiveness and receiving new life and receiving His Spirit to dwell within you (see last page).

BIG D and Pastor Ricky would like to invite you to keep learning about following Jesus, every day, in every situation, by joining them

Sundays at 1:00 PM

LIVE on FACEBOOK

Go to Calvary Chapel Oak City, Raleigh

As soon as the church starts meeting again in their building on New Bern Avenue we will send an invite to join them there!

We hope to resume the Saturday Clubs at Treasuring Christ on Hargett Street when school starts back in August.

FOLLOWING JESUS THIS WEEK

The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear?

The Lord is the strength of my life. Of whom shall I be afraid? **Psalm 27:1**

For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but a spirit of power of love and a sound mind
II Tim. 1:7

If God be for us, who can be against us? **Romans 8:31**

The Lord commands us to obey His Word. His spirit inside us gives us the power we need to obey.

John 14:23 [Jesus said], "Anyone who loves me will **obey** my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them.

I John 3:10 This is how we know who the children of God are and who the children of the devil are: Anyone who does not do what is right is not God's child, nor is anyone who does not love their brother and sister.

Matthew 22:38-40 [Jesus said] "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' **38** This is the first and greatest commandment. **39** And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'

Deuteronomy 5

The Ten Commandments

6 "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.

7 "You shall have no other gods before me.

8 "You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. **9** You shall not bow down to them or worship them...

11 "You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name.

12 "Observe the Sabbath day by keeping it holy,

16 "Honor your father and your mother, as the Lord your God has commanded you, so that you may live long and that it may go well with you in the land the Lord your God is giving you.

17 "You shall not murder.

18 "You shall not commit adultery.

19 "You shall not steal.

20 "You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.

21 "You shall not covet

SUNDAY

HOW CAN I BE SURE I AM GOD'S CHILD?

Romans 3:23

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Romans 6:23

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

John 1:12

Yet to all who did receive Him...He gave the right to become children of God—

II Corinthians 5:17

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation: The old has gone, the new is here!

You can pray now to be saved if you have not done this: “Dear Lord Jesus, I need to ask for your forgiveness for all the ways I have ignored your commands, disobeyed you, hurt and harmed others, and messed up. I am sorry Lord and I thank you that you died on the cross for my sins to save me and to make me a part of your family forever! Would You forgive me and come into my life right now to be Lord of my life and give me a new heart? Would you place your spirit in me and help me to obey you? Thank you for all you have done for me! Amen.”

Don't forget to join Big D and Pastor Ricky on Sundays!

1:00 PM

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Go to Calvary Chapel Oak City, Raleigh