

### *These Are Written . . .*

Matthew 21-28. Mark 11-16. Luke 19-24. John 12-20. Most of those 29 chapters describe what we now call Holy Week, the week that begins on Palm Sunday and ends on Easter Sunday. About one third of the eighty-nine chapters of the Gospels are devoted to these eight days in the life and ministry of Jesus.

How well do you know what happened in that first Holy Week? Do you know what Jesus said? Do you know what Jesus did?

A lot of people seem to be content with a bare-bones-basic knowledge of that week, but they shouldn't be. If "Jesus died and rose for me" was all we needed to know, then the Gospels would have been a whole lot shorter. But Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John had much more to say than that. Their words give us a much greater knowledge and understanding of who Jesus is and what he has done for us. More than that, their words create faith in us, the faith that leads to everlasting life.

As St John wrote, *Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name* (John 20:30-31).

That's the purpose of his book, of all four Gospels, of all sixty-six books in the Bible: that you may believe and have life in the name of Jesus. As Paul wrote, *So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ* (Romans 10:17). Paul also wrote of *the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work* (2 Timothy 3:15-27).

So how well do you know what's in these *sacred writings*, in this book we call the Holy Bible?

"But I don't have time for that." It's so easy to get buried under a schedule of work and activities that create that excuse, isn't it? Yet in the grand scheme of things, it isn't much of an excuse. For it's not a matter of not having time, but how you choose to spend your time. What comes first? [And before you answer that, remember that Jesus said, *Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you* (Matthew 6:33).]

As we come into Holy Week once again and rejoice in the glorious festival of Easter, let it not be an obligation or an afterthought. Let this be an occasion for personal repentance and change of life, an opportunity to begin anew and begin something new. As we confess our sins and receive forgiveness from Jesus, let us do so in a fuller knowledge of and firmer faith in what Jesus actually did for us during that Week, on that cross, and out of that tomb. And, empowered by that Gospel, let each of us begin and continue to read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest the Word, the sacred writings that create and sustain saving faith in Jesus Christ.

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John didn't write these things for themselves. These things are written for you!

Maundy Thursday Service (March 24<sup>th</sup>) will be at St John's at 7:00pm

Good Friday Services will be at St Paul's at 1:30pm and at St John's at 7:00pm

Easter Sunday Services (March 27<sup>th</sup>) will be at St John's at 7:00am at St Paul's at 9:30am

See you there!