

THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

Prayer for The New Testament Church the Saturday of Easter Weekend

Father God, your Word declares that when Christ died on the cross, *“all His acquaintances, and the women who followed Him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching.”* Only the women, out of devotion, watched Joseph and Nicodemus prepare the body of Jesus and place him in the tomb. And then, *“they rested on the Sabbath according to the commandment.”* We can't imagine the loneliness, isolation and despair they must have experienced, not fully grasping the victory that would come the next day. That day between Good Friday and Resurrection Sunday, is called Holy or Silent Saturday.

We come to you Lord God, Creator of all, and to you Lord Jesus Christ, on behalf of those members and faithful attenders of The New Testament Church on *this* silent Saturday, April the 11th, prior to our celebration of the resurrection tomorrow. We are isolated from one another and unable to share in the memory of the most powerful weekend in our history. Though no longer in shock at the crucifixion for we look back now at the fact of the resurrection, we lift up all those who may have lost hope or are in despair during this coronavirus pandemic; *“praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.”*

We are “resting” in homes or elsewhere yet concerned for limited hours of work and the economic well-being of our families, relatives and neighbors. Please turn this time of waiting to the hope of expectation that you are in control as you were on that first weekend. For just as Jesus *“rested in hope”* that God would not allow Him to remain in the grave, so we trust that you are actively working during this time as well. Just as you turned a despairing Peter into a bold witness to declare your resurrection, so you are preparing your global church in every nation to *“shine as lights in the world.”*

We know that the enemy of our souls would like to crush your Church and silence its witness. We are concerned, Lord, that in our nation and around the world, some leaders are taking advantage of this crisis to exercise unwarranted control over people, disregarding their sacred liberties. But had your enemies known what you had prepared for them then, *“they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.”* Jewish and Roman leaders conspired to “seal” your tomb so disciples could not say *“He has risen from the dead.”* While the disciples hid in fear, you prepared to triumph over the grave! We pray that each believer in our fellowship and around the world would rejoice in your prepared victory today as well!

We pray for all who are suffering in illness, loneliness or despair. We thank you for those who are sacrificing their time to sew masks, deliver food, make calls and pray for their brothers and sisters. We thank you for the faithful intercession in prayer for our local public officials who continue to serve us in many ways at this time and are noting answers to these prayers. We are grateful for their desire to help others and we ask that you, Oh Lord, would draw near to them and bring the help that they need.

May we as a church ponder today your silent work, for though the disciples did not see you working that first weekend, you were working then and you are now. Tomorrow may we rejoice in the fulfillment of your display of power and victory, for *“to Him who is able to do exceedingly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Jesus Christ to all generations, forever and ever.”* In the mighty name of Jesus the Christ, Amen!

Scripture references: Ephesians 6:18; Luke 23:49,56; Psalm 16:9-10; Acts 2:25-28; Philippians 2:15; 1st Corinthians 2:8; Matthew 27:62-66; Ephesians 3:20-21. Compiled by *Paul and Charlene Jehle.*