

Cry

March 24 - 27

What makes you cry? When is the last time you cried? We can cry with joy and gratitude when something happens that changes our life for good. We might cry with frustration when things don't go our way, or when life is unfair. We cry with empathy as we feel the pain of another and are moved to respond with comfort and concern. Of course, we cry in pain when we are wounded, perhaps in the hope that someone might hear and come to our aid. We cry from grief when loss is overwhelming.

Jesus cried. He cried as he grieved the death of his beloved friend Lazarus, just as we cry at the death of our loved ones. He cried even knowing that he could and would raise Lazarus from the dead, because even though things might turn out all right in the end, that does not mean we don't grieve the sad moments along the way. Jesus cried out in the garden as he prayed that God might spare him from his own death, and Jesus cried out on the cross, once for forgiveness for those who crucified him, and once because he felt forsaken in that moment.

This is the measure of God's love in Christ. God will suffer with us, cry with us, share our pains, our griefs, our fears, our heartaches. But God shares our tears with this purpose, that we might endure our pains and find healing, that we might last the long nights of grief and troubles and find joy in the morning. May this be comfort for our cries, that God is with us. God not only hears our cries but cries with us, and God will wipe away our tears and bring us new hope and fresh joy.

#REthinkILC Lent Photo for this week: Inspired by the word "*CRY*", take a photo and either put it on your social media with #REthinkILC or email it to kelly@immanuel.us by noon on Saturday, March 27.

REnew52 action for this week: TALK. Talk about what makes us cry, or cry out, with family or friends and share how you find comfort and extend support to one another.