



**HOLY
WEEK**
AT CALVARY

DEVOTIONAL

Hello Calvary Families!

As a community, we have the opportunity to participate in Holy Week together. Holy Week is the collection of eight days that allow us an opportunity to reflect upon the shift in humanity from Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. It starts with Palm Sunday when Jesus enters the city of Jerusalem. The week leads us through the Last Supper, His crucifixion, and ends on Easter Sunday with His resurrection. This is the foundation of Christianity, His sacrifice fulfilled the New Covenant God promised and many had prophesied throughout the Old Testament. Each day of Holy Week allows us to peek into the heart of our Savior at intently close proximity. His deep love for us is reflected throughout Holy Week in every significant step toward the cross, every breath up to the last, and His resurrection.

We learn that we are invited to commune with Jesus in keeping ourselves spiritually connected through prayer, reading the Bible, gratitude, sabbath, and many more spiritual formation practices. We can use these practices to allow Jesus to bring peace in our lives amidst the season we find ourselves in.

As you go about his week, we pray that you can use this reading plan to prepare your hearts for Easter. It is so cool that as we read the Gospel, we see that the writers have provided us with many details of Jesus' final days. Our hope is that you can reflect on these passages, and intentionally focus your heart on Holy Week and how it relates to you in the present. You can read the passage and reflection, and then write down our thoughts and prayers in your journal as you go throughout the week.

The Calvary Church Team

Monday

Verses to Read: Matthew 22:34–40

On the Monday leading up to Jesus' death and resurrection, Jesus went to the temple to teach the gathered crowds and to encourage his disciples. He was teaching to prepare his followers for ministry following his death and resurrection. It is in these teachings that he reminds his followers of the GREATEST Commandment. We read that when the Pharisees wanted to test Jesus by asking what the greatest commandment was, Jesus told them that it was to love the Lord your God with ALL your heart, mind, soul, and strength. And to LOVE your neighbor as yourself.

The God who created the entire universe- every person, every blade of grass, every star in the sky, every molecule and atom, everything in ALL of creation- knows you fully and loves you fully. In fact, He loves you so much that He sent His son down to pay the ultimate sacrifice- to die for your sins so that you are able to have eternal life. What does this mean? It means that God wants ALL of you. Not just the bits and pieces, He wants you to love Him with your whole self. And then Jesus takes it a step further and says that we are called to LOVE our neighbors in the same way we love ourselves. Seems like a hard task, right? But we should remember that we are to show others the LOVE God has for them through our actions. That God's love is for ALL people, and we are called to show His love to them.

Find a time today to show the Love of God to someone today. Maybe that means sending a meaningful text or note, baking cookies for your neighbor, paying for the person's coffee behind you, or comforting a friend in need. Whatever it is, take a moment to practice what it looks like to love our neighbors and friends well.

On Monday of Holy week, we remember Jesus' teachings to his disciples, including the greatest command: to love God and our Neighbors. Take a moment to write down what this passage means to you. Take a moment to look at your heart, mind, and soul individually. How are we able to love God with all our heart, mind, and soul? Is it easy to love our neighbors? How are we able to love our neighbors well?

Tuesday

Verses to Read: Isaiah 40:29–31, Matthew 11:28–30

There are not many details or recorded events of Jesus' Tuesday. It is most likely that after two days of teaching in the temple, Jesus and His disciples continued to surround themselves with people and took some time to rest. Even Jesus needed some time for rest here and there. Sometimes we look at rest as a bad thing, like we are being lazy or wasting our day. But the Bible clearly shows us that we need to create space in our weeks for rest and renewal. If we find rest in Jesus, we will be renewed and refreshed.

Find some pockets of rest today. Ask yourself- what refreshes my soul? Maybe it is going for a walk, or praying, or really tangibly taking a nap! Give yourself grace to rest and to invite God into that restoration.

What does rest look like to you? Spend some time journaling about ways that you are able to find rest. Maybe that means taking a moment to meditate and pray, going on a walk, drawing or doodling, or reading. Take a moment to thank God for providing us with peace and rest and being our source of strength when we are tired.

Wednesday

Verses to Read: Matthew 26:6–16, Mark 14:1–11

Jesus spent the Wednesday evening of Holy Week eating dinner at the home of Simon the Leper in Bethany. While Jesus was having dinner, a woman brought an expensive jar of perfume and poured it on Jesus' head. When the guests rebuked her, claiming it was a waste of money, Jesus honored her saying, "She has done a beautiful thing" (v 6). Witnessing this, Judas was angry at the extravagant act of worship and left the meal to plot to betray Jesus.

The disciples say the woman's act of pouring her expensive perfume on Jesus was a waste, but Jesus sees this act as an act of honor, worship, and praise. To the woman, the sacrificial act of giving Jesus the most expensive thing she owned was worth it, because she knew that Jesus was worth it. Sometimes the decision to give up the valuable things we have and offer them to Jesus is a difficult one to make, but this act of worship filled and blessed the woman as well. When we give things that are precious to us like our time, our money, our (fill in the blank), we can receive and see the blessing that comes out of it.

Take some time to reflect in your journal. What are the things in your life that are most valuable? Would you be willing to offer those things to Jesus as a form of worship? (Example: Something that consumes my time is my phone, today I want to practice the act of sacrifice by putting my phone away for 30 minutes to read scripture and to pray to Jesus).

On Wednesday of Holy Week, we remember the beautiful example of sacrificial worship demonstrated by the woman who anointed Jesus. Can we offer something as a beautiful sacrifice to Jesus today?

Thursday

Verses to Read: Matthew 26:17–75, Mark 14:12–72, Luke 22:7–65, John 13–18:27

Holy Week takes a somber turn on Thursday. On Maundy Thursday (Maundy meaning “command” because Jesus gave his disciples new commands this night), Jesus shares a final Passover meal with his disciples- you may have heard of this meal being called The Last Supper. Jesus begins this meal by kneeling down to wash the feet of his 12 disciples. By performing this humble act of service, Jesus demonstrated by example how believers should love one another. Then Jesus shared the feast of the Passover with his disciples saying “I have been very eager to eat this Passover meal with you before my suffering begins. For I tell you now that I won’t eat this meal again until its meaning is fulfilled in the Kingdom of God” (Luke 22:15-16).

As the Lamb of God, Jesus was about to fulfill the meaning of the Passover by giving his body to be broken and his blood to be shed in sacrifice, freeing us from sin and death. During this Last Supper, Jesus established the act of Communion, instructing his followers to continually remember this sacrifice by sharing in the elements of bread (representing his body) and wine (representing his blood), you can read that in Luke 22:19-20.

Following this meal and Jesus praying over his disciples, they went to the Garden of Gethsemane on the Mount of Olives to pray. Jesus prayed in deep pain and agony for God to take this cup from Him- a request to avoid crucifixion (Matthew 26:36-44). Jesus ultimately surrendered to the will of his Father and knowing all that was going to happen, went to meet Judas. Jesus was arrested and taken in chains to the high priest’s

house where the council had gathered to begin making their case against Jesus.

Take a moment to write what these passages mean to you. Think of the Last supper and the acts performed there. Have you ever washed the feet of your closest friends or family? Have you ever partaken in Communion? When Jesus went to the Mount of Olives to pray, he asked God to take this task away from him. Sometimes we find ourselves asking God to take hard situations or circumstances away from our lives. But as we can see in the passage, if Jesus had not died on the cross for our sins and surrendered to God's will, we would not have the relationship with God we have now. Jesus knew that going through this hard time was what he was called to do, and that through it God would bring new life to all who believe in him. Be encouraged in knowing that God sees you and loves you, that he will never leave nor abandon you even in hard times, but that he will walk you through it and you will learn something from it. What situation is God walking with you in? How do you see God revealing himself to you during this season?

On Maundy Thursday, we remember the Last Supper and the ultimate sacrifice that Jesus made for us. Take. Moment to read Luke 22:15-20 with your family and ask to partake in communion with one another.

Good Friday

Verses to Read: Matthew 27:1–66, Mark 15:1–47, Luke 22:66–23:56, John 18:28–19:42

Good Friday is the most difficult day of Holy Week. Christ's journey turned treacherous and painful in these final hours leading to his death. Before the third hour (which would have been 9am) Jesus had endured the shame of false accusations, condemnation, mockery, beatings, and abandonment. After multiple unlawful trials, he was sentenced to death by crucifixion- one of the most horrible and disgraceful methods of punishment known at the time. Before Christ was led away, soldiers spit on him, tormented and mocked him, and pierced him with a crown of thorns. Then Jesus carried his own cross to Calvary where he was mocked and nailed to a wooden cross.

Jesus spoke seven final statements from the cross. His first words were "Father forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing" (Luke 23:34). His last words were "Father into your hands I commit my spirit" (Luke 23:46). And about the ninth hour (3pm), Jesus died. By 6pm on Friday, Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea took Jesus' body down from the cross and laid it in a tomb.

These passages and telling of events may be hard to hear. Take a moment to write in your journal how reading this makes you feel. Did Jesus deserve these punishments? What do you think Jesus meant by his statements on the cross? How does that make you feel?

*On Good Friday, we remember the sacrifice of Jesus to endure torture and death on a cross on **our** behalf. How might we express gratitude?*

Saturday

Verses to Read: Matthew 27:62-66

Knowing Jesus' prophecy that he would rise again after three days, the chief priests and Pharisees went to Pilate to warn him that the disciples might try to steal Jesus' body to make it look like Jesus had been resurrected. Pilate authorized a seal to be placed on the tomb and posted a guard at the entrance.

The Disciples locked themselves in a home fearful of the Jewish leaders (John 20:19). The disciples were uncertain of what was to come, even though they were taught that the Lord was always with them, even during fearful times. Take a moment to write in your journal and ask yourself: when I am afraid or dealing with hurt, do I remember that the Lord draws near to me?

On Saturday of Holy Week, we remember the disciples as they experienced what they considered to be the silence of God in the midst of their fear. Consider our own need for faith to believe that God is at work even when we can't see it.

Easter Sunday

Verses to Read: Matthew 28:1–15, Mark 16, Luke 24,
John 20:1–29

On Resurrection Sunday or Easter, we reach the end of Holy Week: the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Early Sunday morning, Mary Magdalene and Mary went to the tomb to properly care for Jesus' body. As they approached, a violent earthquake shook the ground and an angel rolled back the rock in front of the tomb and sat on it. The angel announced to the women that Jesus was not there. As they hurried away, Jesus met them, and the women fell at his feet and worshiped ([Matthew 28:1-10](#)). Then the women went and told the disciples. Peter and John ran to the tomb and found it empty, they believed. Then they returned to the place where they were staying ([John 20:3-10](#)).

On the road to Emmaus, Jesus appeared to two disciples who did not initially recognize him and explained the Scriptures. After Jesus revealed himself, they returned at once to Jerusalem and told the gathered disciples what had happened ([Luke 24:13-35](#)). While they were talking, Jesus appeared in the room and proclaimed, "Peace be with you!" ([John 20:21](#)).

On Easter Sunday, we celebrate Jesus' resurrection. Take a moment to write down what this day means to you. Why do we celebrate today? What does this mean for your life?

Pray for God's peace that is now freely available to rule in our hearts all year, no matter what we're facing. He is our hope!