

✚ The Passion Week Experience is a spiritual journey with the disciples during the Week of Passion: the last eight days of Jesus' earthly ministry beginning with the Triumphal Entry. Follow the steps of Jesus and those who were not only eyewitnesses to the numerous miracles, but who also sat at His feet and heard the literal words of God.

✚ Renew your heart and mind through the loneliness, passion, and hope of the cross.

✚ If you've ever wondered what separates Easter from all other holidays, this is your opportunity to have your questions answered. The Truth is found in God's Word.

Day 1 - Sunday (Palm Sunday)

We begin our journey in Mark 11:1-11. Known as the "Triumphal Entry," this is the day Jesus enters Jerusalem. The crowds spread robes and palm leaves before Him and cry out "Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!" Afterward, Jesus briefly visits the temple and then returns to Bethany to pray. Only Jesus knows at this time the long week that lies ahead. He prays for the disciples, knowing they would be scattered and unsure of their future. And we are greatly encouraged to know that He prayed for all believers; you and your family. (John 17:20-21)

Truth: Your life in eternity was foremost on His mind before one lash was felt upon his back; and that message is the one we still share as the Good News.

Share: What faith issues and truths that your parents or grandparents passed on to you were established before your birth? Do you desire to continue that legacy?

Prayer Emphasis: *Bless the Lord for those who remained faithful to preserve the truth for our generation and the strength to model the legacy of faith.*

Day 2 - (Mon.) Mark 11:12-19

In this brief encounter, we read of Jesus' humanity (He was hungry), Jesus' divine nature (His power over creation; cursing the fig tree), and Jesus' Messianic authority (He cleanses the temple of money changers). Considering these events, we understand the truth that, although many are hearers of God's word, there are few who obey. Those who become too familiar with "church" are in danger of coming into His presence unmoved by the authority of the One we worship. The question arises then; would Jesus be pleased with our attitude and motivation for service and worship? Or would we be in jeopardy of being driven out because of our lack of faith or reverence. May we always be mindful of the Audience of our worship and service.

Truth: In any crisis, in every event, Christ is Lord of all, period.

Share: How has Jesus revealed Himself to you during moments of uncertainty?

Prayer Emphasis: *Ask the Lord to reveal how you can best serve and worship Him daily through each of life's precious moments.*

Day 3 - (Tue.) Mark 11:20-13:37

After noticing the dead fig tree from the day before, the disciples follow Jesus as He ministers and listens as He teaches in the temple complex. Notice the interaction of Jesus and the religious leaders. Jesus knew their heart and uses their questions to redirect those listening to the intended truth of God's word. Jesus

shares parables as well as teaches the disciples eternal truths regarding loyalty, faith, and His word. In Chapter 13 Jesus moves His teaching from the temple to the Mt of Olives. There He answers questions from the disciples concerning end times. Consider your own heart's trust and faith in God as you read. Will your faith see you through? Are you prepared and alert? As this chapter closes, we are reminded the urgency of sharing the Gospel.

Truth: In every circumstance, be alert and faithfully follow the teachings of Jesus; for in Him is abundant life found.

Share: What concerns do you face today that are similar to the issues Jesus addressed?

Prayer Emphasis: *Ask the Lord to reveal what areas in your life you should strengthen and become more alert in your daily walk with Him.*

Day 4 - (Wed.) Mark 14:1-11

This passage reveals opposite ends of the spectrum regarding how mankind responds to Jesus. On one end a heart-felt devotion in worship. On the other end the treacherous means man will go to rid themselves and society of Jesus. The fact is not everyone loves Jesus. And of those who do not, many are hostile, not merely indifferent. Mary offers us a wonderful picture of sacrificial worship as she anoints Jesus with an expensive jar of fragrant oil. In that same day, Judas plots with the chief priests for an opportunity to have Jesus arrested and killed. Remember however, that Jesus was not unaware. His life's ministry and work from the Father would come to fruition within several hours. Scholars agree that this was perhaps one of the only days during the passion week when Jesus remained

secluded with close friends at Bethany.

Truth: No gift, sacrificed as an offering unto the Lord for His glory, is too extravagant.

Share: Discuss the most recent time you were able to offer to the Lord and extravagant gift or sacrifice of worship.

Prayer Emphasis: *Invite the Lord to reveal His desire regarding your offering of worship. Pray that your heart will believe in His provision and you would worship in spirit and truth.*

Day 5 - (Thu.) Mark 14:12-72

Preparation for the Passover supper is made that morning while Jesus and the disciples make their way to Jerusalem. Here we read of the first Lord's Supper, prophetic words of Jesus regarding Peter's denial, and the betrayal of Judas. Jesus is taken before the religious leaders where He is questioned throughout the night until early the next morning. He is led before the Roman officials who eventually hand Him over to be crucified. Consider reading the prayer of Jesus as recorded for us in John 17. Jesus knew the sorrow He would face, yet for the love He has for you, He was steadfast in obeying the Father. This great gift of salvation was given at the cost of the Son's life. Jesus prays for Himself, the disciples, and you.

Truth: When our flesh is weakest, God makes all things possible.

Share: Share a memorable time when you observed the Lord's Supper. (Where, circumstance, who was with you, etc.)

Prayer Emphasis: *Your circumstances are His concern too. He is aware of your pain; allow Him to speak to those concerns.*

Day 6 (Fri.) Mark 14:32-15:41

Jesus is handed over to Pilate early in the morning. It is here Jesus is questioned again and the same crowd who were shouting “Hosanna” just days before, cry out “Crucify Him!” The same question Pilate asked the crowd resonates to mankind even now: “What will you do with this One, King of the Jews?” Is He merely a teacher or religious figure? He is Lord, He is Savior.

Jesus would be nailed to the cross later that morning between two criminals. By the time most families will have had supper this evening, Jesus would have been placed in a borrowed tomb after six grueling hours upon the cross where He died. No doubt the disciples, fearful and scattered, had lost any appetite for food.

Just moments before Jesus died, He cried out, “It is finished!” Although some may hold the view that these are words of finality, to the believer they are words of victory: revealing the debt for sin was “Paid in Full!”

Truth: *Forgiveness, although offered to mankind as a free gift, was not free. Jesus satisfied our sin debt.*

Share: *Let those in your family know your answer to Pilate’s question. Have you made your decision regarding Jesus?*

Prayer Emphasis: *Thank Jesus for the extreme sacrifice He paid for your sins and thank Him for His forgiveness.*

Day 7 (Sat.) Mark 15:42-47

The day after Jesus is crucified: perhaps one of the most silent days ever in Scripture. Followers of Christ spend the day mourning His death. The tomb is sealed, guards stand watch: the disciples are fearful and hiding. They are in despair from such

a terrible ending to what seemed to be the start of a wonderful week: a few days earlier they had entered Jerusalem with Jesus as shouts of “Hosanna” filled the air. They have become the sheep scattered as the Old Testament prophesied. Without Christ, the world is indeed a very dark and hopeless place. Two thousand years ago this particular Saturday was a day of confusion and mourning. Today it is a day of Hope in waiting. We know this tragic ending will bring forth an even more glorious beginning.

Jesus remains in the tomb Friday, Saturday, and early into Sunday morning. But as we read in Psalm 30, “weeping may spend the night, but there is joy in the morning.”

Truth: *For those who truly believe, joy comes in the morning.*

Share: *Reflect on a past event when all hope seemed lost, and Christ met your need.*

Prayer Emphasis: *Rejoice that you have a Savior who knows your pain and sorrow; a Savior who heals the broken heart.*

Day 8 (Sunday) Mark 16:1-20

Are you prepared to worship today? Society continues to offer what it feels is the best “warm-fuzzy” way to celebrate Easter Sunday. Be aware of the many distractions you and your family will face prior to arriving at church. The Passion Week Experience isn’t over yet. We worship a Risen Savior!

Sunday Morning: Jesus is Risen!

Just before daylight Jesus is risen from the grave! Early Sunday morning Mary Magdalene, Mary, and Salome arrive at an empty tomb! If confusion was any emotion Friday and Saturday for the disciples, surely

early Sunday morning that emotion is heightened. They had sat at the feet of Jesus and listened. They were aware of His teaching and prophecy concerning His death and resurrection. Now, early on That Sunday Morning, though astonished at what was happening, their eyes and hearts began to see clearly what those words actually meant. Through all of the immediate events early that morning the disciples began getting word to one another to gather together and discuss what had happened.

Two thousand years later we see clearly what the religious leaders had missed. We see the cowardice of Herod and Pilate and how even the men who knew Jesus best would be confused and anxious about the events of the Passion Week. We realize the urgency of the Gospel because of our own sinfulness. The men who sat at the feet of Jesus ran away; yet they were welcomed back by a loving Christ who would empower them to go into all the world and share the message that He is Risen!

Truth: *Because Christ lives, I too can live!*

Share: *How does your life today reflect the change Christ has made in you?*

Prayer Emphasis: *Thank Jesus for paving the way for eternal life.*

“Go into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.”
Mark 16:15-16

THE PASSION WEEK EXPERIENCE

How Eight Days Changed History