

# HE'S ALIVE! An Easter Week Guide for Families

Every spring, the world takes a break and celebrates the Easter season together with family and friends. As Christians, we are privileged to understand that Easter is actually not about eggs and bunnies and candy, but rather it is about the incredible sacrifice that Jesus made on the cross for each of us! The week before Easter Sunday is called Holy Week, or Passion Week. For 2000 years, believers have celebrated this as the most important week in history.

This devotional guide is intended to help parents lead their families through each day of this wonderful week. Beginning with Palm Sunday, when Christ entered Jerusalem for his final days, and ending with his resurrection on Easter, this guide will help your family walk with Christ on his way to the cross. What a blessing to know the great story of God's love for us as we read Scripture together and give him all praise and glory for sending his son to die in our place. Blessings on your family as you proclaim together that HE'S ALIVE and with us!

## Palm Sunday

Read Mark 11:1-11

Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

Crowds gather to watch the KING enter on a lowly donkey.

BIG IDEA: Jesus humbled himself, he was a Servant King

ACTIVITY - Share examples of ways you have recently seen people humble themselves and serve others. Celebrate these, especially if it is about someone else in your family. (Philippians 2:1-11 for additional reading)

## Monday

Read Mark 11:15-19, 27-33

Jesus clears the temple in Jerusalem.

Jesus reminds us that he is our authority, and he knows what is best for his people.

BIG IDEA: Jesus is our authority

ACTIVITY - Discuss the specific and unique roles that each member plays in your family. Why is it important that we all contribute to the family in our unique way? Who is the authority in your home? (parents) Who is our ultimate authority? (God) How do we know this? (Bible tells us, Authority of Scripture)

## Tuesday

Read Mark 14:1-9

Mary anoints Jesus at Bethany with expensive perfume.

She wipes his feet with her tears and her hair.

BIG IDEA: Jesus is more important than things in this world. In fact, all things are already his anyway. (Psalm 24:1 for additional reading).

ACTIVITY - Buy a really fragrant bottle of perfume (doesn't have to be expensive) and pour a good bit of it out into a bowl. Place it where it will fill the room (feel free to do this on a porch or patio), and gather around for this discussion. What "precious" things could you sacrifice and give away to someone else? Come up with a plan to execute this and give yourselves away...could be stuff or could be time.

## Wednesday

Read Matthew 26:14-16

Judas meets with the religious leaders and agrees to betray Jesus...for money!

BIG IDEA: We are all sinners in need of God's grace and forgiveness (see also Romans 3:21-26)

ACTIVITY - Discuss the reality of sin in our lives and our constant need for God's grace and mercy. Encourage everyone to confess a sin or a need that they have to the family. Dad (or Mom) should lead the way and go first. Close your time with prayer and thank Jesus for his forgiveness and grace!

## Thursday

Read Mark 14:12-26, 32-42

Jesus and his disciples share their Last Supper together.

He prays in agony at Gethsemane while his best friends fall asleep.

BIG IDEA: Everything in all of history has pointed forward to this moment. This is why Jesus came.

ACTIVITY - Jesus knew he was headed to the cross to die for each of us, and he chose to do it willingly. Discuss this, then have everyone in your family, including parents take a responsibility from someone else in the household such as trash, dishes, feed pets, or yard work, etc.

## Good Friday

Read Mark 14:43-72, 15:1-47 (this is a lot, prepare beforehand and read as much as your family can handle)

Jesus is betrayed in the garden and arrested. He is beaten, mocked, crucified, and buried.

The disciples scatter, and even struggle with deserting and disowning Jesus.

BIG IDEA: The Gospel. Jesus suffered and died for our sins because we could not save ourselves.

ACTIVITY - What is the most pain you have ever felt? Have you ever hurt because someone else was feeling pain? This is a small picture of the way Jesus felt about each of us as he prepared to die on the cross...for us! Take some time to pray as a family for people around you who have needs and are hurting, and be sure to thank God for sending his son to take our place and redeem us.

## Saturday

Read Luke 23:44-49

Darkness had covered the land, and now Jesus was gone.

The disciples and Jesus' family must have been confused and terrified.

BIG IDEA: Jesus allows us to share in his suffering so that we will need him and choose to trust him.

ACTIVITY - Have everyone share something that they struggle to trust God with. Make a list and pray together about these doubts and fears. It's ok if these are simple and seem trivial.

## Easter Sunday

Luke 24:1-12

He has risen! He is not here! He's alive!

Because he is more powerful than death and sin.

BIG IDEA: Jesus sends us out to love and serve others the way he has loved and served us.

ACTIVITY - (Read John 13:1-17) Wash each other's feet. Prepare a basin with warm water and soap, and have several towels on hand, some for washing and some for drying. Head of household should go first. Consider playing some of your family's favorite worship music while you wash.

