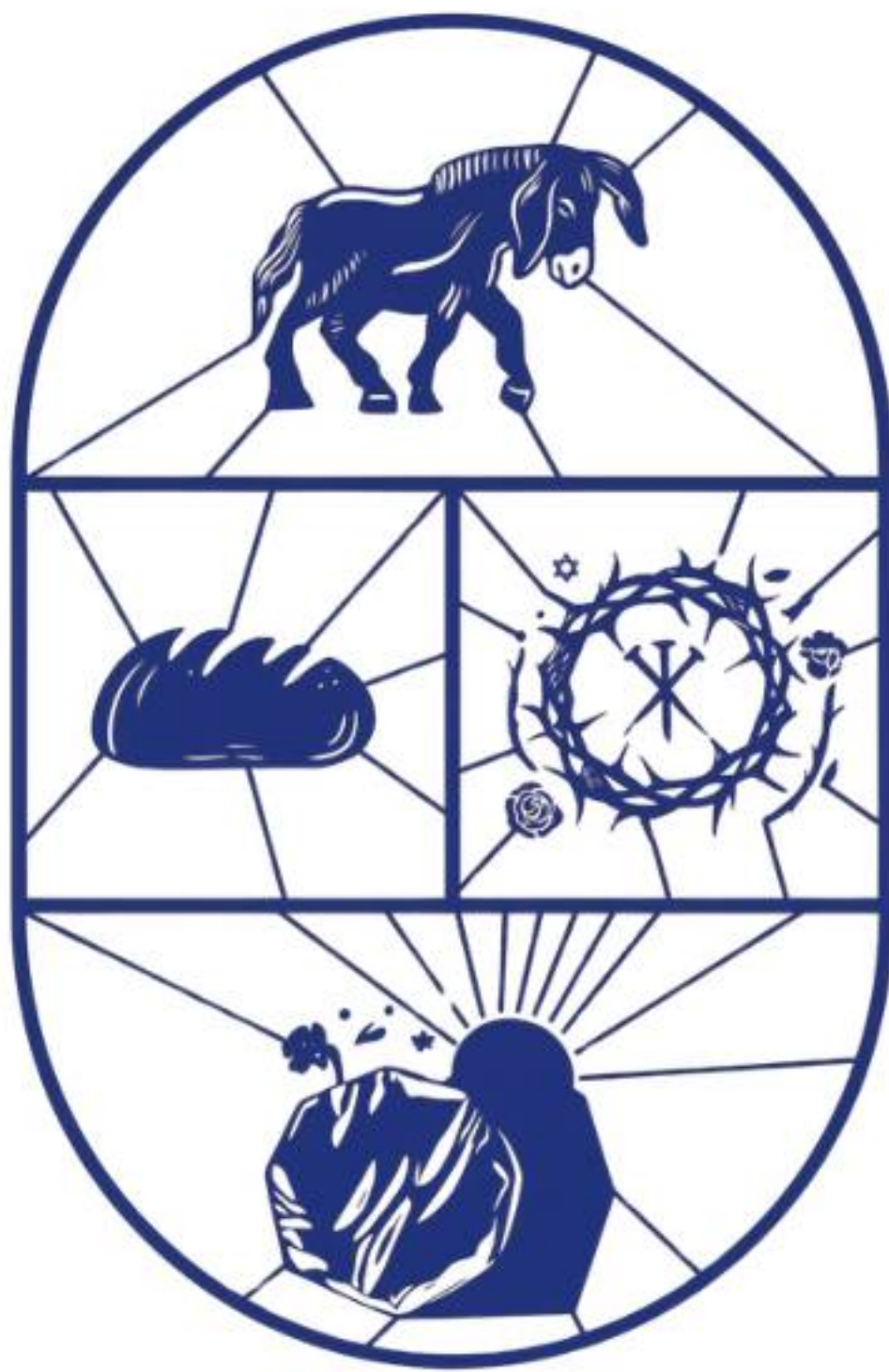


Easter *Devotional*



The Last Days of *Jesus*

- Contents -

Prelude	3
Jesus Enters Jerusalem	4
Sunday, Matthew 21:1-11	
Jesus Cleanses the Temple	6
Monday, Matthew 21:12	
Jesus Teaches in the Temple	8
Tuesday, Matthew 21:28-32	
The Anointing at Bethany.....	10
Wednesday, Matthew 26:6-16	
The Last Supper	12
Thursday, Matthew 26:17-30	
The Trial and Crucifixion	14
Friday. Matthew 27:32-54	
Awaiting the Risen King	16
Saturday, Matthew 27:57-66	
After The Resurrection	18
Sunday, Matthew 28:16-20	
Epilogue	20

How to use this devotional:

Each day of Holy Week, we will go through a scripture passage, followed by a devotional and, lastly, a reflection. We hope this devotional is a blessing to you and your family. Please read the scripture passage before the devotional from your Bible or a Bible App. Any quoted scripture will be from the ESV.

- *Prelude* - Revealing the King

The final week of Jesus's earthly life stands at the very center of the Christian faith. The Gospels devote more space to these few days than to any other period of his ministry because everything moves toward this moment. In these events, the identity of Jesus is revealed with increasing clarity—through his teaching, his actions, his suffering, his death, and finally his resurrection.

Yet as the story unfolds, something else becomes clear: people respond to Jesus in very different ways. Some welcome him with praise as he enters Jerusalem. Others question and challenge him as he teaches in the temple. Some worship him with costly devotion, while others secretly plot his betrayal. At the cross, some mock him, while others mourn. And when the tomb is found empty, some worship the risen Lord while others attempt to suppress the news.

These responses are not merely part of an ancient story. The events of Holy Week confront every reader with the same question: Who is Jesus, and how will we respond to him? This devotional invites you to walk slowly through the final days of Jesus's life as recorded in Matthew 21-28. Each day highlights something about his character and mission, presenting these scenes so that we might behold the revealed Christ and consider our own response to him.

Our prayer is that as you journey through this week, you would see Jesus more clearly—the humble king who entered Jerusalem, the faithful Son who obeyed the Father, the Savior who gave his life upon the cross, and the risen Lord who now reigns with all authority. And as his identity is revealed, may your own response be one of faith, worship, and obedience.

- *Sunday* -
Jesus Enters Jerusalem
Read Matthew 21:1-11

The Humble King

As Jesus approaches Jerusalem during the week of Passover, excitement fills the city. Pilgrims from across the region have come to remember and celebrate God's great act of deliverance through Moses. In the midst of this anticipation, Jesus makes a deliberate and symbolic entrance into the city, signaling a new divine deliverance. Rather than arriving quietly, as he no doubt did countless times in previous years, he prepares to enter in a way that demands attention.

He instructs his disciples to bring him a donkey and its colt. Matthew tells us that this was done to fulfill the words of the prophet Zechariah: "Behold, your king is coming to you, humble and mounted on a donkey" (9:9). From the people's responses, it is clear that his intentions to reveal himself as the promised King were not missed. He is openly declaring himself the long-awaited deliverer that the prophets foretold.

This scene echoes the coronation of Solomon, who rode his father's mule when publicly declared king. In a similar way, Jesus identifies himself as the promised Son of David and rightful king. Yet the character of his reign is strikingly at odds with worldly expectations. He does not enter Jerusalem on a warhorse—a symbol of military power—but on a donkey, signaling a peaceful royal procession.

In this profound choice, the hidden and paradoxical nature of God's kingdom is revealed: true authority is expressed through humility, and ultimate power is displayed in the ultimate sacrifice. Although his kingship ultimately involves unmatched authority, Jesus's actions point to the unexpected nature of God's rescue. As Paul writes, the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

Responses to the King

The crowds recognize that something significant is happening, spreading cloaks and branches while shouting, “Hosanna to the Son of David!” Yet, not everyone grasps his mission. The city stirs, asking, “Who is this?” Still others, especially the religious leaders, view his growing influence with deep concern. We all wish to be those who would lay down our coats in praise, but the truth is that none of us begin there. Our own continued disobedience and moral failures convict us that we all still exhibit traces of that enemy-heart within us, making every encounter with Jesus an invitation to a new response.

Reflect

The Triumphal Entry reminds us that Jesus is not merely a teacher or prophet. He is the promised King who fulfills God's promises and brings salvation to his people. Yet his kingdom comes through humility and sacrifice, not as many expect. As we begin this journey through the final week of Jesus's life, we are invited to consider our own response to him.

- Reflect on your walk with Jesus today. In what ways do you exhibit joyful praise, uncertainty, and opposition?
- Jesus is the humble, yet triumphant King of the world. How should this truth change our lives? What needs to change in your life today?
- How is the nature of God's King and Kingdom both hidden and revealed?

This joyful entrance into Jerusalem marks the beginning of a week that will lead to suffering, death, and ultimately resurrection. The King has come—but his path to victory will look very different from what many expect.

Mark 11:11 tells us that after entering Jerusalem, Jesus visits the Jewish temple. His first visit there sets the stage for a remarkable event the next day.

- Monday -

Jesus Cleanses the Temple

Read Matthew 21:12-17

The Lord of the Temple

The temple stood at the very center of Israel's life with God, meant to be a place where all nations could worship. Instead, Jesus finds it filled with money changers and merchants. Indignant, he overturns their tables, declaring, "My house shall be called a house of prayer, but you make it a den of robbers."

Jesus acts here not only as the awaited Son of David but as the architect of true worship. It was David who planned the temple and his heir, Solomon, who built it. The kings of Israel were intended to be spiritual leaders, overseeing pure worship and protecting the marginalized. Jesus fulfills this perfectly. More than just a political figure, he is the Son of God, affirming that this is his house. The Lord whom they sought had suddenly come to his temple.

Yet, no sooner had he driven out corruption than he opened the doors for the outcast, healing the blind and lame right there in the temple courts. He reveals that the true meeting place between God and humanity is found in him. In his presence, worship is restored, mercy is given, and God's kingdom begins to take visible form.

Responses in the Temple

Once again, the presence of Jesus produces very different responses. Those in need come to him. The blind and the lame approach Jesus and receive healing. Children in the temple courts cry out, "Hosanna to the Son of David," continuing the praise that began the day before.

But the religious leaders respond differently. When they see the healings and hear the praise given to Jesus, they become indignant. Rather than rejoicing at what God is doing, they challenge Jesus and question the voices celebrating him.

The same actions that draw worship from some provoke anger and resistance from others.

Response To The King

Those who come to him in need respond with faith, and even the children cry out in praise. The chief priests and scribes, however, are indignant at the wonderful things he does. Jesus's presence exposes the human heart: those who recognize their brokenness run to him for grace, while those who guard their own pride and preferences resist him and grow increasingly hostile.

Reflect

Matthew describes these events as “wonderful things”. Do you marvel in wonder at them? Or have they become stale with familiarity?

The cleansing of the temple reminds us that Jesus came to restore true worship and to bring people back into right relationship with God. He does not merely correct outward practices; he calls for hearts that truly seek the Lord.

As you reflect on this passage, consider the following questions:

- What does this passage reveal about who Jesus is? Are these things “wonderful” to you?
- What priorities of your life crowd out your own true worship of God?
- While the proud grew indignant, the broken ran to him. Consider your own deep, personal, and abiding needs. How can these fuel your drive to Jesus?

Jesus leaves the temple that evening, but the confrontation between him and the religious leaders has only begun. The following day, Jesus will return to the temple courts to teach, where his authority will again be demonstrated.

- Tuesday -

Jesus Teaches in the Temple

Read Matthew 21:28-32

Jesus, the Kingdom's Prophet

Returning to the temple, Jesus teaches publicly through parables, forewarning that God's judgment and mercy are coming—but not to those most would expect. Outward righteousness and the faith of your parents are insufficient; God searches the intentions of the heart.

In the Parable of the Two Sons, the first son openly refuses his father's command but later changes his mind and obeys. The second son gives his father lip service, but it's a lie. Jesus uses this to address the religious elites who call themselves God's champions but are disingenuous. He reminds them that while they opposed John the Baptist's call to repentance, the tax collectors and prostitutes believed him.

To make such a monumental turn in our lives and admit our deepest failures is no easy thing. Repentance puts us in a deeply vulnerable place before the throne of a righteous judge and a watching world. That is why we need more than just repentance—we need faith that our Father is as merciful and kind as he is just, a faith that becomes ever clearer as we approach the cross.

Two Sons, Two Responses

The response of the religious leaders reveals the danger of a hardened heart. Matthew tells us that when the chief priests and Pharisees heard Jesus's parables, "they perceived that he was speaking about them" (Matt 21:45). Yet rather than humbling themselves, they sought a way to arrest him. The warning was clear, but they refused to receive it. Like Pharaoh before them, they had repeated encounters with God's message, which did not soften their hearts but hardened them all the more. Knowing the truth is not the same as submitting to it.

While in the short term, it can often seem that the strategy of the religious leaders prevails in this world, Jesus's final words on Tuesday are sobering (see Matt 25:31-46). Regardless of what we choose to do in this life, there will be a day when we will all be made to stand in that place of total vulnerability before God's throne. At that time, Jesus himself will separate us out, and there will be nothing to cover us if we have refused him.

Yet, for now, Jesus's teaching encourages us that there is still time to save ourselves. The prostitutes and tax collectors were the moral outcasts of their society, but in Jesus, they will run into the kingdom ahead of these "religious" men. The message of the gospel is a divine invitation. An invitation to "cease and desist" and follow Jesus. In him you will find forgiveness and a place at his table, made available by his own blood, shed for you!

Reflection

Jesus is the prophet of God's kingdom, giving us both warnings and invitations. Reflection questions:

- Repentance puts us in a vulnerable place. How do we gain the courage to overcome that obstacle? How does looking to the cross strengthen us?
- Are there ways I rely on outward agreement with God rather than genuine obedience?
- Jesus warns that there will be a day when every person stands before him. How does that future reality hit you today? How should it shape the way we live now?

Tuesday ends with the religious leaders more hostile than ever, plotting some way they might arrest him secretly and kill him. Jesus, on the other hand, leaves the temple, knowing he will not be returning, aware that the Passover is only two days away and that this year, he would become his people's Passover Lamb.

- Wednesday -
The Anointing at Bethany
Read Matthew 26:6-16

Jesus the Worthy One

At the home of Simon the leper, a woman approaches Jesus with an alabaster flask of pure, extremely expensive nard—worth upwards of a year's salary. Breaking it open, she pours it over his head and feet, wiping them with her hair. Jesus receives it all, knowing this was his preparation for burial.

John's gospel identifies this woman as Mary, the sister of Martha and Lazarus. This is the same Mary who soaked up every word at Jesus's feet, and whose mourning moved him to tears at her brother's grave. She comes prepared to interrupt the gathering with an intense, shocking display that is simply the continuation of her long-held devotion. She knew he was the Savior of the world, and he was worth all that she had.

The disciples, led by Judas, are indignant, using the poor as a screen for their unfeeling hearts to call the act a "waste." Judas, having calculated another way to profit off Jesus, goes to the high priest to negotiate his betrayal. The price? 30 pieces of silver—less than half the value of Mary's oil, and the exact price of a slave in the Law.

Two Assessments of Jesus' Worth

In both scenes, the author intends to shock his readers with examples from two opposing extremes. For Mary, we should be surprised that she would so freely pour out so much for what would seem like a momentary extravagance. Consider a parallel in your own life: what would it mean to empty your bank account, to sacrifice your treasures, or to give of your most valuable commodity—not for any "practical" purpose, but purely out of an expression of your love for Jesus? This is no simple act of worship, but a sacrifice driven only by powerful and profound love.

Even the casual reader is taken aback by Judas's actions. We wonder what kind of man could sell out his friend to the cruelties he no doubt guessed would befall him, and for so little. Ultimately, though shocking, Judas's sin is not unique. It is merely the outgrowth of the sin that lies within each of us. We are foolish to read this or any story, placing ourselves only in the hero's seat rather than the villain's. Maturity requires acknowledging the monster in yourself and, from that awareness, taking guard lest that monster grows and devours you.

As much as the perversity of Judas's actions is meant to drive us away from our sin, Mary's "beautiful" outpouring bids us to run unflinching into Jesus's arms. Her example is extreme, but it is an extreme born from seeing Jesus clearly. When Christ is seen for who he truly is, extravagant love and absolute surrender no longer seem unreasonable. Jesus is the Worthy One—worthy to receive all the glory, all the wealth, and all the honor we can bring him.

Reflection

This passage invites us to consider how we respond to Jesus and what he is truly worth to us.

- What does this passage reveal about the worthiness of Jesus?
- Mary's profound love for Jesus led her to extravagant worship. What might wholehearted devotion to Jesus look like in your life today?
- Are there ways I might be tempted to value other things more highly than Christ?

Tomorrow, Judas will be revealed as the betrayer as Jesus shares his last meal with his disciples. The one who is worthy of everything is about to give everything. Within days, the body Mary anointed will be broken, and the blood that purchased our redemption will be poured out.

- Thursday -
The Last Supper
Read Matthew 26:17-30

Jesus the Covenant Maker

On the night before his crucifixion, Jesus gathers with his disciples for the Passover. Generations prior, God heard the cries of the Israelites in bondage and remembered his covenant. When Pharaoh refused to repent, God sent the plague of death, but provided a remedy: the blood of a lamb painted upon the doorposts. That night defined Israel's identity, proving God redeems his people by providing a substitute—a life for a life.

As they eat, Jesus reveals that Israel's historic deliverance was always pointing forward to a greater redemption. Tonight, Jesus is revealed as the true Passover Lamb. It is his body that will be torn, and his blood that will be shed. He is not bringing a temporary political escape; he is freeing his people from the ancient enemies of sin and death.

He pours out a cup of the new covenant, offering his own life in exchange for ours. To partake of Christ is to invite him to live within you, allowing a full takeover of your heart and renovation of your soul. The cross, which appears to be the triumph of darkness, will become the instrument of its defeat.

Responses at the Table

Everyone must decide how to respond to Jesus and his offer to give his own life in exchange for our own. In this great covenantal exchange, no one remains neutral. Total surrender is demanded for our full freedom. Preceding the table, Jesus gives an unnerving revelation: "One of you is going to betray me." One by one, the disciples begin to ask the same uneasy question: "Is it I, Lord?" recognizing the weakness in their own hearts. Yet their responses reveal something else that is equally concerning: no one suspected Judas. Sin often remains concealed, escaping both the notice of others and even the scrutiny of our own hearts. In the moment, Judas feigns innocence, "Is it I, Rabbi?" But the piercing eyes of the Son of God are never so easily deceived.

Judas had made a calculation, yet Jesus knew far better that he had grossly misjudged: “Woe to that man... It would have been better for that man if he had not been born!” Though Judas assumed that Jesus would bear the only cost of his trade, he would soon discover that, in the final analysis, it is himself who would be at a loss. Tomorrow, both men will bear the curse of sin, but only one will have the victory. At the table of the cross, the sinless Jesus offered to bear our sin, even Judas’s—but Judas refuses. While Jesus hung upon the cross, Judas attempted in vain to bear his own, hanging himself from a tree.

Even in this tragic moment, the hope of the gospel is on full display. Judas went to his end in the agony of an inescapable curse—even while his Master was going to take that curse for him. Unlike Judas, Jesus faced death on his own accord so that he might conquer it, saying, “I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again” (John 10:18). Jesus died that we might not face Judas’s dreadful fate. In the ugliness of Judas’s story, the invitation to the table becomes all the more powerful. Let us not leave before we have taken hold of him, our Bread of Life and Well of Living Water.

Reflection

This passage invites us to consider how we respond to the gift that Jesus offers through his death.

- Jesus describes the cup as “the blood of the covenant.” What does it mean to belong to God through this new covenant?
- When the disciples heard Jesus say that there was a betrayer among them, they questioned their own hearts. In what ways does a heart like Judas’s hide itself in you? What hidden sins does Christ want to uncover in you today, knowing that he wants to heal you from them?
- Consider the profound offer Lamb of God has made to you personally at the table. Thank God for his Son, given to you, and pray that you would take hold of him more fully.

When the meal ends, Jesus leads his disciples out toward the Mount of Olives to pray and prepare his heart for the cross. In the night, Jesus is arrested and brought to face his corrupt accusers.

- Friday -
The Trial and Crucifixion
Read Matthew 27:32-54

Jesus the Crucified King

On Friday, the one who entered Jerusalem as its King now hangs condemned as a criminal. Yet, the cross that seems to expose Jesus's weakness actually reveals the depth of his mission. Here, God's seemingly foolish wisdom is on full display: healing brought through ugly death, an instrument of cruelty transformed into a symbol of love, and power shown through ultimate weakness.

The suffering Christ endures is profoundly multifaceted. Physically, his body is torn by whips, thorns, and nails. Psychologically, he wrestled in the garden while his friends slept, was betrayed with a kiss, denied, and abandoned. Spiritually, he bears the crushing weight of the world's sin. The Holy One stands in the place of sinners, crying out, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" as he carries the judgment that justice demands.

At his final breath, the temple curtain tears from top to bottom, proving the veil hiding God's face has been removed. Creation itself cannot remain still; the earth shakes, and tombs are opened, as if the world itself were bearing witness to the fact that the true temple is now the broken body of the Son.

Responses at the Cross

Nowhere are the responses to Jesus displayed with greater clarity than at the cross. Around the dying Christ stand soldiers, religious leaders, and mockers who declare with unprecedented arrogance, "He saved others; he cannot save himself." To them, it is unthinkable that God would allow his Son to remain on the cross; a true king would display power and escape suffering. Ironically, their words reveal more truth than they realize—to save others, he must not save himself. Even today, people reject God because he does not satisfy their predetermined expectations for what he should look like. But God is not measured by us; we do not get to shape God into our own image.

Amid the noises of disbelief, an astounding confession emerges from the least likely place: a Roman centurion. Confronted with the events surrounding Jesus's death, his own executioner recognizes him as the true King, proving that Christ comes even for the farthest off. Meanwhile, from a distance, faithful women offer another picture of faith. Though they likely understood no more than the fleeing disciples about why their Messiah was dying, their presence reveals the quiet perseverance of genuine devotion. Love keeps them near even when understanding fails, as they seek some small solace in remaining steadfast to the end.

Reflection

The cross reveals both the depth of Christ's sacrifice and the varied ways people respond to him.

- When you reflect on Jesus's suffering for you, what thoughts and emotions are stirred in you—gratitude, sorrow, conviction, courage, worship?
- The cross is filled with paradox: a King enthroned through suffering, power revealed through weakness, life brought through death. What do these paradoxes teach you about the character of God and our walk with him?

Take time to thank the Father for giving us the Lamb of God. Make it your aim not to let the reality of the cross pass by you today. Let the great love of Jesus sink deeply into your heart. Pray that his example moves you not only to gratitude, but also to a willingness to follow him, even in the midst of your own trials, trusting that the same God who sacrificed his Son is faithful to lead you in life and in love.

- Saturday -
Awaiting the Risen King
Read Matthew 27:57-66

Jesus the Buried Savior

Amid the grief, Joseph of Arimathea—a respected council member and hidden disciple—takes his boldest step. Beneath his public role was a hidden truth: he believed Jesus was the promised King. Risking his reputation and safety, he asks Pilate for Jesus's body. He wraps Jesus in linen and lays him in his own new tomb, unknowingly fulfilling the prophecy that the Messiah would be "with the rich in his death" (Isaiah 53).

What appears to be a simple act of burial is, in reality, part of God's quiet providence. The world believes the story of Jesus has come to its end, but the one who has descended to the depths of humiliation is already being prepared for exaltation. Meanwhile, faithful women note the tomb's location. Through their persistent love, Jesus is preparing his first evangelists, showing that faithfulness in small, overlooked forms is what God uses to change the world.

Continued Plotting

As the Sabbath begins, an unusual stillness settles over the story. The body of Jesus lies in the tomb while the world enters its day of rest. Just as God rested on the seventh day after completing the work of creation, the Son now rests as well, having completed the work the Father had given him to do. Yet the religious leaders cannot share in that rest. Though known for their devotion to the Sabbath, they spend it in anxious activity. Ironically, they understood Jesus's words about rising again better than his disciples did. They go to Pilate, ask that the tomb be secured, place a guard, and seal the stone, making every effort to ensure the story of Jesus ends there.

But their efforts only deepen the irony. The sealed stone and the watchful soldiers stand as human attempts to control what God has already determined. Unwittingly, they only strengthen the testimony that will soon confront them when the tomb is found empty. Throughout this story, we see how every detail unfolds under the careful providence of God, weaving even the actions men intend for evil into his purposes. What is perhaps most striking is that even Jesus's own disciples likely spent this Sabbath in anxious reflection, unaware that their Master had secured their rest. Like them, we often lack the eyes to see what God is doing. Yet faith does not require that we see everything—only that we trust the One who does, allowing us to rest with him.

Reflection

In the quiet tension of this Sabbath, we are invited to reflect on how we respond to God's hidden work.

- Why do you think it was at this moment that Joseph took the courageous step to reveal himself as Jesus's disciple? How can you imitate that courage?
- In what ways do people sometimes try to resist or control God's plans in their lives? When have you felt that temptation in your own heart?
- How do you respond when God's plans are difficult to see or understand? How can the stories of the cross encourage you in seasons of anxiety, confusion, or waiting?

The Sabbath ends with the tomb guarded and the grave secured. In a very real sense, God's work is finished. Yet with a new week comes a new and marvelous work in God's plan.

- Sunday -

The Resurrected King

Read Matthew 28:1-15

The Vindication of Christ

As Sunday dawns, an earthquake shakes the ground, and an angel rolls back the stone. The resurrection is more than just a return to life; it is the Father's public vindication of Jesus. The prophets wrote of a day when the sun of righteousness would rise—bringing God's declaration that Jesus was in the right. If his claims were false, Jesus was a blasphemer. But raising him from the dead is the Father's testimony: this is truly my beloved Son!

Why is this so important? Because every person must reckon with the claims of Jesus. He did not merely speak about God—he spoke as one with divine authority. The religious leaders did not crucify him because they misunderstood him, but because they understood him all too well. If his claims were false, then he was the worst of blasphemers. But if they were true, then he is nothing less than the revelation of God himself, and everything in our lives must change. In the resurrection, the Father gives his definitive answer.

Because Jesus was sinless, death had no rightful claim on him. He alone was able to bear the sins of others. His resurrection is the absolute assurance of our own cleansing—a sure testimony that our sins have been fully dealt with. No longer are we the guilty; we have become the righteous. As certainly as he has been raised, so certain is our forgiveness. In his death, we die to sin; in his life, we too live.

Encountering the Risen Lord

The women arrive at the tomb to find an angel whose appearance was like lightning. The soldiers tremble and become like dead men. As the women run to tell the disciples, Jesus meets them with a simple, startling "Greetings!" They fall to their knees and worship. Jesus comforts them, "Do not be afraid," revealing that behind his unimaginable power is a God who is infinitely gentle, kind, and personal.

As they take hold of his feet, they would feel the holes left by the massive nails that had pierced them only days before. Once the injuries of his torture, these scars remain as enduring tokens of his victory and his unfathomable love. They are right to fear him, for they stand before the most powerful being in all existence—the holy and risen Lord standing before broken, sinful people. Yet, Jesus gently comforts them because behind that unimaginable power is a deeply personal God whose character is infinitely good, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love.

Not all receive this reassurance. The guards, paralyzed by dread, flee and choose a fabricated lie over yielding to the truth. The resurrection does not merely present us with a truth to consider—it confronts us with a reality to which we must respond. The risen Christ stands at the center of history, and there is no neutral ground.

Reflection

The resurrection does not leave us as observers only—it calls us to examine our own response to the risen Christ.

- What does the resurrection reveal about who Jesus truly is?
- The women respond with worship, while others respond with fear and resistance. How do you see elements of both responses in your own life?
- What would it look like for you to take hold of Jesus feet as the women did? Do you feel confident that he would tell you, “Do not be afraid”? Why or why not?

The empty tomb declares that death has not overcome Christ, and the risen Lord now calls the world to believe in him. Take time today to marvel at the Risen Lord. Let that awe draw you to him.

Sunday’s Resurrection is not just the resolution to the tensions introduced by the cross; it is the beginning of a new story. The Risen Lord calls his disciples back to Galilee, where his mission with them had begun. There, the king will give them a new mission.

- Epilogue -
After The Resurrection
Read Matthew 28:16-20

The Gospel concludes with a powerful scene. The disciples gather before the risen Jesus. The one whom they had followed, doubted, and abandoned, they now encounter alive again. Throughout the events of Holy Week, the true identity of Jesus has been steadily revealed— through his teaching, his suffering, his death, and now his resurrection. What once seemed hidden now stands fully in the open.

Jesus begins with a declaration that changes everything: “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.” The one who was mocked, crucified, and buried now stands as the king to whom all authority belongs. His resurrection is not simply a return to life; it is the public vindication of the Son of God and the confirmation that the kingdom he proclaimed truly reigns.

From that authority comes the single command that concludes the Gospel: to go and make disciples of all nations. This is not merely an instruction about activity. It is an invitation to participate in the mission of the risen King himself. The story of redemption does not end with the resurrection; it now moves outward through those who follow Christ.

Holy Week reveals the pattern of that mission. At the cross, Jesus gave everything to accomplish the will of the Father and to redeem a fallen world. Now the risen Lord calls his followers to give themselves as well, not to bear the wrath of God, but to make their lives a living sacrifice for this gospel. It asks everything from us because he gave everything for us. But those who follow him into his mission can trust that they will also one day share in his glory.

The question of response remains: How will you respond to the risen Lord? Will you be like those who laid down their coats to honor him? Or like the children who shouted out his praise in the temple? Or like the son who, despite at first rejecting his father, changed his mind and sought his father's will? Or like the woman who poured out her best in worship of Jesus? Or like those disciples at the table who ate of his body for their forgiveness and drank of his blood to bind themselves to him in a new covenant? Or like the women who stood by their beloved Jesus at the cross? Or like Joseph, who faced danger and disgrace for the sake of honoring the Son of God in his death? Or like the women who took hold of the feet of their risen Lord and worshiped him? Or like the eleven disciples, who would go on, every one of them, to follow in the footsteps of their Savior and give their lives for the sake of the gospel?

The call to respond remains with each of us, as does his promise: "Behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

- Notes -

[illegible]

- Notes -

[illegible]



Cave Spring
Baptist *Church*