

# PREPARING FOR EASTER

*An 8-Day Passion Week Devotional  
for Families and Individuals*



# What is this devotional book for?

Passion Week (the week leading up to Easter) is particularly special in the life of the believer. It's a time we get to slow down, and more intentionally reflect on Jesus' sacrifice He made for us.

Your Connection Point staff has put together an eight-day devotional that takes you through some of the events of Passion Week, from the Triumphal Entry all the way to the Resurrection. Each day is centered on Scripture and written with one simple goal—to help you fix your eyes on Jesus and what He did for us.

Easter Sunday's devotional is especially meaningful! Since our normal First & Fast prayer gathering day falls on Easter Sunday this year, we've written a special First & Fast devotional to do together at home.

We want to encourage you to do these together, as a family. Pull the kids in, find a good time—maybe before school or before bed—and just be present together. Put the phones down, take a breath, and let God's Word do what it does.

Here's what you'll find each day:

- A passage of Scripture to read
- A summary to help with the context and meaning
- A reflection on how it applies to our lives today
- A few questions to spark conversation and deeper thought
- A prayer guide to help you respond together

Our prayer is that this week draws you closer to Jesus—that you'd feel the weight of what He did, and the joy of why He did it. Let's walk through Passion Week together.

God bless,

Your Connection Point Staff

## Digital Devo

Looking for a convenient digital option to follow along with our Passion Week devotional. You can access the devotional through the CPC blog, where you'll find all the same content and conveniently linked Bible verses. Visit [connectionpoint.tv](http://connectionpoint.tv) or scan the QR code to get started.



Sunday, March 29, 2026

## **More Than A King: Jesus' Triumphal Entry**

### **READ**

Matthew 21:1-11

Scan for Scripture



### **SUMMARY**

On the Sunday before Easter—what we now call Palm Sunday—Jesus entered Jerusalem riding on a donkey, fulfilling the prophecy of Zechariah 9:9 and revealing Himself as the rightful King of Israel. This moment served as a public declaration that Jesus is the long-awaited Jewish Messiah. As He traveled the road into Jerusalem, the people laid down their cloaks and spread palm branches before Him as the donkey carried the King of Kings. Crowds gathered both in front of Him and behind Him, shouting, “Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!”

### **APPLICATION**

In that exciting moment as Jesus entered Jerusalem, the people were caught up in a historic event they did not yet fully understand. Only after His death, burial, and resurrection would the meaning of that day become clear.

Some in the crowd did not even know who Jesus was and asked those around them. Others believed He was simply a prophet and miracle worker from Nazareth. Still others hoped that this moment might signal the overthrow of Roman rule and the restoration of a political kingdom under a new king from the line of David.

But Jesus did not enter Jerusalem to claim an earthly throne. Instead, He made His way to the Temple—not a palace—because His kingdom is ultimately a spiritual one. Jesus came not only to be King of Israel, but to be the Savior of the world.

### **QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER**

1. How do you truly view Jesus? Is He the King of the universe and Savior of the world in your life, or do you tend to see Him mainly as a provider of health, wealth, and personal blessings? Why?
2. How do you respond in worship to King Jesus? Are you holding something back from Him, or are you offering Him everything—your heart, soul, mind, and strength (Mark 12:30)?

### **PRAYER**

Father, thank You for Jesus. Thank You that He came to earth as a humble servant to be the Messiah and Savior of the world. Guard my heart from a self-centered faith that focuses only on my own needs and desires. Instead, help me seek Your kingdom and Your purposes above all else. May Your kingdom come and Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Amen.

*Written by: Larry Jones, Executive Pastor*

Monday, March 30, 2026

## **Once and For All: The Last Supper**

### **READ**

Mark 14:22-26; Hebrews 9:1-14, 23-28



### **SUMMARY**

On the night Jesus was observing Passover with the disciples (Passover is a yearly reminder of God's provision to save the Hebrew people from their captivity in Egypt. See Exodus 12.), at the conclusion of the meal, Jesus mentioned something new with an explanation: the bread, representing Jesus' body that would be broken for His people, and the wine, representing the blood Jesus would spill on the cross. These elements were to serve as a reminder of what Jesus did for us on the cross.

In Hebrews, we see a clear picture of the old sacrificial system and its shortcomings (the blood of animals, repeated year after year, imperfect priests, a man-made temple), and then a picture of all that Jesus' blood accomplished for us (perfect, righteous blood of the Son of God, completed once and for all, done by our perfect High Priest, all presented before God, and not in a temple made by human hands).

### **APPLICATION**

Hebrews 9:22 says that without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness of sins (which is a look back at the God's command to Moses in Leviticus 17:11). As Jesus said in His ministry, He did not come to abolish the Law, but to fulfill, or complete it (Matthew 5:17). While the blood of animals covered our sins under the Mosaic Law of the Old Testament, the blood of Jesus removes our sin.

The symbolism behind the elements of the Lord's Supper, or communion, are everything to the believer in Jesus Christ. They are that reminder that our sins are not just covered over, but that they are removed. Because of Christ's sacrifice for us, we're able to come before God our Father in full assurance that we know we have been washed clean (Hebrews 10:19-25). Our response is not one of begrudging submission, but one of full gratitude for what's been done for us, though we were undeserving of such grace (Ephesians 2:8).

### **QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER**

1. How should today's reminder evoke a reverent, holy attitude when we observe the Lord's Supper?
2. Why would living as if we're defined by our past mistakes be an insult to the blood of Christ that was spilt for us?

### **PRAYER**

Jesus, thank You being the perfect sacrifice I needed for the forgiveness of my sins. I know I don't deserve it, but because of Your great love for me, You have made me worthy. Thank You for Your broken body and spilt blood given as payment for my failures so that I could be redeemed, spend eternity with You, and that You receive all the glory for. Help me to live in a manner worthy of the sacrifice You made for me. In Your name I pray and am able to come to you, Amen.

*Written by: Steven Scifers, Student and Family Pastor*

Tuesday, March 31, 2026

## **Not My Will: *Prayer in the Garden***

**READ**

Matthew 26:36-46



### **SUMMARY**

It is not surprising that on the eve of the crucifixion we find Jesus baring His soul in prayer. When you study His life, you discover He is our example of faithful praying. We find Him praying at His baptism, withdrawing from the crowds to pray before choosing His disciples, at the Mount of Transfiguration, and in the upper room before taking bread and the cup; however, this prayer in Gethsemane is one like no other, as He is wrestling and agonizing with His fate of imminent crucifixion.

His cry was, "if this cup can pass from me, let it be, but not my will but Thine be done." It's this prayer that settles His soul.

It's in this prayer, we see the humanity of Jesus. Jesus was tempted as we are, but His pursuit of accomplishing the Father's will in this mission of redemption could and would not fail. The victory would be won at Calvary; however, the victory at Calvary was preceded by His victory in Gethsemane.

Three truths we can glean from this passage:

1. In Jesus' personal agony of the burden He was bearing, He resorted to prayer. The antidote for anxiety and fear is prayer. Our prayer-promise (1 Peter 5:7), says we can cast all our cares upon Him for He cares for us.
2. While Jesus is fully aware of the mission before Him, He still needs His inner circle of friends with Him, though ultimately, He would die alone. His desire on this night of agony was to be with His closest friends. We all need friends in our darkest hours.
3. Prayer can prepare us to face our fears. The ultimate victory was won at Calvary as Jesus sacrificed His lifeblood atoning for our sins, it was still prayer that paved the way for this ignominious act of love.

### **APPLICATION**

1. This Holy Week, let's pray every day with humility, gratitude, and in faith as we've experienced the greatest gift ever given to mankind.
2. As we pray, let's adopt the phrase Jesus used, "not my will but thine be done." The prayers that God answers are the prayers in line with His perfect will (1 John 5:14-15).

### **PRAYER**

Jesus, thank You for taking on my sins on the cross. Your Word makes it obvious that You didn't want to endure the cross, but You also knew it to be the only way to redeem us. So thank You for enduring the punishment I deserved. Help me to live with Your mission in mind and to also place my own agendas to the side. In Your name I pray, Amen.

*Written by: Steve Dighton, Interim Pastor*

Wednesday, April 1, 2026

## **Living for the Bigger Picture: *The Trials***

### **READ**

Matthew 26:57-68; 27:11-14; Philippians 2:3-11

Scan for Scripture



### **SUMMARY**

When Jesus is arrested, He is questioned by the high priest and then by Pilate. Jesus stays silent except to affirm who He is. He didn't fight back or try to defend Himself. He didn't even acknowledge the false accusations against Him.

Jesus could have used these trials as moments to display His greatness and His glory, but He chose to remain silent to (1) fulfill Old Testament prophecy, and (2) accomplish the greater mission of going to the cross to serve as payment for our sins.

Paul encourages the church in Philippi to have the same mindset as Christ. That mindset being to consider others more important than ourselves, and to keep the bigger picture of God's story in mind as we go through life.

### **APPLICATION**

As followers of Jesus, we are to be witnesses to the world, especially when things don't seem to be going our way. We can choose to follow Jesus' example, and show the world we're living for the King of kings and His mission... or we can live for ourselves, for our own comforts, and our own agendas.

### **QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER**

1. How do you handle situations or accusations that are not in your favor?
2. If you were on trial, would the evidence of your life convict you of living more for yourself and your own agendas, or living for Christ and His kingdom?
3. There are always areas we can improve and submit to Jesus. Rather than living in an attitude of shame and failure, what steps can you take to submit an area of your life over to Jesus and how He would want you to live for Him and in His victory?

### **PRAYER**

Lord, I am sorry for the times that my reactions have not brought You glory. Please help me to rely on You to strengthen me in times of trial. Help me to remember that everything here fails in comparison to what's in store when we enter into Your glory. I pray that my life would be a reflection of Your grace and mercy and in that, others will be drawn to You. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Thursday, April 2, 2026

## He Took Our Place: *Our Substitute*

READ

Matthew 27:27-32

Scan for Scripture



### SUMMARY

This passage gives us a clear picture of the suffering and humiliation Jesus endured on His way to the cross. Jesus, the Lamb of God, was stripped, dressed in a scarlet robe, and given a reed to hold as a mock scepter. The soldiers taunted Him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" with cruel sarcasm. Then they struck Him and led Him away to be crucified.

### APPLICATION

Jesus took upon Himself the punishment and humiliation that we rightly deserved. Every wound, every moment of suffering, and every act of shame He endured was done with us in mind. As Hebrews 12:2 says, *"keeping our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith. For the joy that lay before him, he endured the cross, despising the shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."*

Because Jesus bore the consequences of sin owed to us, those who place their trust in Him can receive forgiveness, be made right with God, and experience a restored relationship with Him.

### QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. What does it mean to be forgiven and "made right with God" through Jesus?
2. How does reflecting on Jesus' suffering shape the way we view His love for us?

### PRAYER

God, as we reflect on the suffering Jesus endured for us, help us to live in a way that brings honor to Your great name. Help us remember the deep and immeasurable love You have shown us by sending Your Son to die in our place. Though we do not deserve Your love, we are incredibly grateful to be welcomed into Your family. We place our trust in You and declare our love for You, Jesus. Amen.

Friday, April 3, 2026

## He Gave His Life Willingly: *The Crucifixion*

### READ

Matthew 27:45-54; John 10:14-18



### SUMMARY

Put yourself at this scene for a moment: On the day that Jesus died, from around noon to 3:00 in the afternoon, the sky went dark. Not a storm or passing cloud, but a heavy unsettling darkness that covered the earth. The same voices that shouted for Jesus' crucifixion before, still lingered. Many misunderstood this moment as it was thought that the calling of Elijah would initiate the coming of the Messiah. So there was even some anticipation here to see what would happen. But the crowd was mistaken, because this was the Messiah, slowly suffocating on the cross in front of them. To followers and family, this seemed like the end. Jesus cried out one last time, and at that, He gave up His spirit and His body went limp. Creation responded: the earth shook, the dead rose from their graves, and the temple veil, that was the barrier between us and our holy perfect God, was torn in two.

However, we know this moment was not defeat. This was the perfect picture of God's love poured out for us so that we could be redeemed. Every step in Jesus' ministry and up to the cross, every word spoken and sick healed, every lash across His back, every nail through His limbs. They were all culminating in this moment—the payment for our sins and the redemption of our souls. What may have felt like the end to many would become the greatest beginning the world has ever known.

### APPLICATION

The cross shows us the truth that Jesus was never a victim. Jesus stated in John 10, before the cross even happened, that He is the Good Shepherd, who laid down His life willingly for His sheep. No one took it from Him, He gave it for us—for you. If the world tells us suffering is meaningless or that loss is final, the cross proves otherwise. God can redeem even the darkest moments, whether we always understand or see how. If Jesus can face death for us, we can step into obedience, mercy and love—even when it's costly or misunderstood by the world.

### QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. Do I live in the love and freedom that comes from knowing Jesus willingly and purposefully gave Himself for me so that I could be saved?
2. What areas in my life am I holding back from God that I need to lay down in trust, knowing He is in control, just like He was on the cross?

### PRAYER

Father God, thank You for the cross. For giving Your life willingly, for loving me even when I know I don't deserve it. Help me to trust You with every part of my life, to surrender what I hold tightly, and to live in the freedom and hope Your sacrifice made possible. May my heart never forget the depth of Your love and may my life reflect the obedience, courage, and mercy You showed on the cross. In Jesus' name, Amen.

*Written by: Lacey Barrett, Director of Administration and Assimilation*

Saturday, April 4, 2026

## **Dead to Sin, Alive in Christ: *The Grave***

### **READ**

John 19:38-42; Romans 6:1-11; Galatians 2:20-21



### **SUMMARY**

Joseph, a disciple of Jesus gained permission from Pilate to take away Jesus' body to prepare it for the grave. As per burial custom of the Jews with high status or royalty, Jesus' body was bound in a mixture of myrrh, aloes, and spices weighing about seventy-five pounds. His body was taken to a tomb in a garden in which no dead body had laid. Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection showed that our old self was to be crucified with him in order that the body may die, and that our soul and spirit would no longer be enslaved to sin, for who has died to sin has been set free and given newness in Christ and new life.

### **APPLICATION**

Jesus came to earth to (1) be an example to us in how to live, and (2) serve as the perfect sacrifice as payment for our sins. To receive this free gift, we're called to acknowledge our sinfulness, accept Christ's sacrifice for us, and repent of sin as we pursue a life acknowledging Jesus as the Ruler of it. Romans 6:11 reminds us to consider ourselves dead to sin and alive to God.

Today, as we remember why Christ had to come to earth, live the perfect life He did, and die for us because of our sinfulness, we focus specifically on the cost of our sin and the price Jesus paid so that we could live. In response, we are to live as new creations in Christ, and not continue in our old, sinful ways. Galatians 2:20 emphasizes that we have been crucified with Christ and it is no longer us who live, but Christ who lives in us. The life we live now, we live in faith in our God who gave Himself for us to redeem our brokenness.

### **QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER**

1. Have you been living a life that reflects what Jesus did for you?
2. What does it mean to be dead to sin and alive to God in Jesus Christ?
3. Does your life reflect this Galatians 2:20 attitude? That you die, put away, seek to remove the fleshly desires of sin, and instead seek to pursue a life that pleases and honors Christ and His sacrifice for you?

### **PRAYER**

Lord, we praise You, and we thank You for Your goodness and mercies that are new each day. We thank You for what You did on the cross, and that we get to partake in Your resurrection work as You have made us new creations. Thank You for being faithful and never giving up on us. God, we honor and glorify all that You are. Help us turn against temptation and wicked ways and follow You daily. Help us to always be on guard and prepare for the enemy. Help us to have courage to share Your Word and to love others. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Sunday, April 5, 2026

## He Is Risen: *Resurrection Sunday*

### READ

Luke 24:1-12; 1 Corinthians 15:20-26



### SUMMARY

The women at the tomb were expecting to encounter death when they went to finish preparing the body of Jesus for burial. He was their Lord, and their devotion to Him was evident—not only had they accompanied Jesus from Galilee during His ministry before His crucifixion, but they were still compelled by their faithfulness to Him, even in His death.

Surprisingly, they could enter the tomb because the large stone at its door was rolled away, but inside, it was empty! Obviously there would be some confusion. The angel then had to remind them of what Jesus had told them about His coming betrayal, death, and resurrection on the third day.

So while the women did come expecting death, they instead encountered life! Confusion led to joy, and the women were given a message to tell the disciples: He is risen! The gospel of Mark tells us that when the women left the tomb, they trembled and were amazed.

### APPLICATION

As we meditate on the resurrection of Jesus today, are you amazed? Are you astonished by what God has done in raising Jesus from the dead?

It may increase your awe to consider that you were dead in sin and separated from God, yet Jesus' resurrection secures the hope of eternal life and future bodily resurrection for the believer (1 Corinthians 15:20-23). It may increase your awe to meditate on the truth that the life of Christ in you is your hope of glory. (Colossians 1:27)

Like the women at the tomb needed to remember what Jesus had spoken to them, we need to always be reminded of these truths from His Word, not just on Resurrection Sunday, but every day of the year. Let us not forget that the reality of Jesus' resurrection is the basis of our faith, our eternal hope and our joy today!

### QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. In what ways might you seek to grow in your understanding and appreciation of the resurrection of Jesus and in turn, the hope of eternal life He offers?
2. How does the reality of Christ's life in you as a believer make a difference in how you live today?

### PRAYER

Father, thank You for Jesus Christ and Your plan of salvation offered by way of His death, burial, and resurrection. Thank You that because of Christ, we no longer have to remain in sin and death and separation from You. Please help us to live in dependence upon the life of Christ in us as we rest in the future hope of glory Christ has secured for His people. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

*Written by: Brandon Ferguson, Associate Discipleship Pastor*

# First & Fast

*If you're unfamiliar with our monthly First & Fast observance, on the first Sunday of every month, we encourage our church family to join us at the church for a time of prayer and worship. Then, as we depart from that service, we want to encourage our congregation to join us in fasting as we (1) continue to pray through the things we presented at the service, (2) try to align our hearts and wills with His, (3) pray for our church, and (4) ask God to send us the right man for the vacant Lead Pastor position at Connection Point.*

*Since Easter falls on the first Sunday of this month, we encourage you to use this prayer guide in place of our typical in-person First & Fast service. We pray this is a meaningful and impactful time for you and your family as you seek the Lord together.*

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## READ

Romans 6:1-14; Ephesians 2

## FAST AND PRAY FOR...

**Holiness as God's people:** Pray that as those united with Christ in His resurrection, we would walk in newness of life, not letting sin rule over us, but we would instead offer ourselves to God, as those who are alive from the dead.

**Humility as God's people:** Pray that as a church our eyes would never be upon ourselves or our own efforts, but we would always recognize and depend on God and His gift of grace through faith.

**Unity as God's people:** Pray that the Lord would build unity in our church as we recognize Jesus' costly sacrifice to make us one body.

**Obedience as God's people:** Pray that we would always be reminded that we exist for God. As His people indwelt by His Spirit may we always be led by the Spirit to accomplish His purposes for His church.

### **Wisdom, strength, unity and God's guidance for:**

- The pastoral leadership and staff
- The Transition Team
- The Lead Pastor Search Team

### **Looking for additional prayer resources? Visit:**

- [connectionpoint.tv/fast](http://connectionpoint.tv/fast)
- [connectionpoint.tv/pastorsearch](http://connectionpoint.tv/pastorsearch)

Scan for Scripture



## *The Journey Isn't Over...*

The Resurrection is not the end of the story—it's the beginning of a new life, a new mission, and a new journey of faith (Matthew 28:18-20). The same power that raised Jesus from the dead is available to you today as you take your next step. Whether that's choosing to follow Jesus for the first time, starting a daily quiet time, leading Faith Talks at home, or getting connected in a Life Group, you don't have to walk alone. We're here to walk with you as you take your next steps. Reach out to us anytime at 816-353-1994 or [contact@connectionpoint.tv](mailto:contact@connectionpoint.tv).

