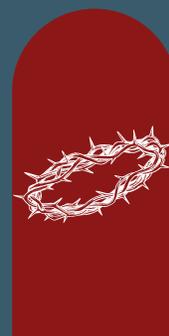


Madison Park
christian church

HOLY WEEK

AN EIGHT-DAY DEVOTIONAL



AN OPENING WORD

Holy Week invites us to slow down.

In the middle of busy schedules, full calendars, and constant noise, these days call us to remember the most important moment in history: the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. For many of us, Easter can easily become another season that passes by too quickly, filled with traditions, family gatherings, and celebrations, yet missing the depth of what God has done for us.

This devotional is an invitation to walk through Holy Week with intention. Whether your faith feels strong right now, uncertain, or somewhere in between, these readings are meant to help you reflect on the final days leading to the cross and the empty tomb. Each day is an opportunity to pause, to listen, and to allow the Lord to prepare your heart again for the hope we celebrate at Easter.

As you move through these pages, our prayer is simple: that you would see Jesus more clearly, that your heart would be drawn closer to Him, and that this Holy Week would not pass by as routine, but as renewal.

Thank you for taking this journey with us.

Blessings,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jacob Wiemelt', written in a cursive style.

Jacob Wiemelt

Madison Park Church

DAY 1 | PALM SUNDAY

SUNDAY, MARCH 29, 2026

JESUS IS OUR KING

READ: Matthew 21:1-11

The air crackled with excitement. The city of Jerusalem, usually loud with merchants and bustling crowds, now seemed to vibrate with an energy unseen before. Whispers had turned to shouts. “He is coming!” they exclaimed. Families rushed to the streets, children tugged on their parents’ sleeves, and strangers turned to neighbors, their faces bright with anticipation. They knew who he was. A King was coming.

But this King rode not on a warhorse or in a chariot fit for royalty. This King came humbly—on a donkey. His robe, though simple, carried a presence unmatched. His eyes, though gentle, pierced through every heart that dared to look. The people erupted into praise, shouting the words foretold in the Scriptures: “Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!” (Matthew 21:9). Their voices joined together like an anthem, echoing off stone walls, as palm branches waved like banners in a royal parade. What must that moment have felt like for the people? The long-awaited King was finally here. For generations, they had clung to prophecies like Zechariah 9:9: “Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion! Shout, Daughter Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and victorious, lowly and riding on a donkey.”

And now, the fulfillment of these words unfolded before their very eyes. Yet, this King defied expectations. This was not a conqueror draped in earthly power. Jesus came as a humble King whose mission was not to overthrow Rome but to overthrow sin. His crown would not be gold but thorns. His throne would not be a jeweled seat but a rugged cross. And yet, he was—and is—the King of Kings.

DAY 1 | CONTINUED

REFLECT

Today, a King is here. Stand among the crowd in your mind's eye, shouting, "Hosanna!" Picture Him looking at you—not with judgment but with love. Your mouth shouts "Hosanna!" But is your heart shouting with the same enthusiasm? Are you ready for King Jesus to humbly enter your life with all power and authority, full of grace and truth?

CHALLENGE

Palm Sunday is a celebration, but it is also a challenge. How do we receive Jesus as King? The people that day laid down palm branches and their very cloaks—a sign of honor and surrender. What about you?

Today, find one thing—a fear, a habit, a doubt—to lay down before Jesus. Surrender it to him as your King, and praise Him for who he is: the humble Savior who came to set you free.

PRAY

Father, no expectation or idea can match your perfect plan. Thank You for Your son, Jesus, humbly stepping into my life. Prepare my heart for this Holy Week, for Jesus to be in His rightful place: the King of Kings and the King of my life. In Jesus' name, Amen.



DAY 2 | HOLY MONDAY

MONDAY, MARCH 30, 2026

PURIFYING OUR LIVES

READ: James 1:2-4, 1 Peter 1:6-7

Consider it pure joy. Pure joy. The moments I can quickly think of in my own life when I've experienced pure joy are the ones I must admit follow great testing. Children dancing in Mexico celebrate the freedom they have found in Jesus after enduring horrific trafficking and abuse for years. The baby who was prayed for over a decade, who now drifts to sleep, healthy and peaceful, in my arms. My sweet little sister-in-law, who, as she faced the reality of her own broken condition, looked at me so sincerely and told me she wanted to follow Jesus. The moments of purest joy in my life are moments that came from great testing.

James says the "testing" of our faith produces endurance. Testing. As in how silver is tested. A silversmith heats the silver up until it's so hot that all the impurities rise to the surface. He then scrapes them off the top and repeats the process until the silver is clean. What a beautiful picture of our Father. What a beautiful picture of how precious He must have created us, that He would spend time and tedious care cleansing us until we're pure and worthy.

James says, "Consider it pure joy". And although it felt impossible even just a few years ago, I find myself rejoicing when I turn myself over to the silversmith of my soul. I find myself rejoicing when trials come, because I am confident that the Lord is only making me more beautiful. More precious. More of who He created me to be. I rejoice because I know that heat produces holiness.

Maybe you're like me in this season. Maybe you find yourself reflecting on areas of your own life that need renewal. Maybe you find yourself in a heap of trouble. A pit of struggle and pain. Maybe you find yourself basking in the blessings the Lord is lavishing on you. Wherever you are, I invite you to take a moment to consider the trials of your life, past or present, and consider how your soul silversmith might be purifying you.

DAY 2 | CONTINUED

REFLECT

Consider how this testing of your faith, this trial, might be restoring you to who your creator created you to be. I invite you to maybe even be so bold as to thank the Lord for the testing of your faith. Thank Him for the trials that have brought you closer to purity and to Him. Invite the Lord to clear out the impurities in your life and make room, as you anticipate our Savior. Your story is a gift. And your testimony of the Lord's faithfulness amidst the valleys may be one of the most powerful gifts of all.

CHALLENGE

What if you chose to see your current struggles as a refining fire rather than a crushing weight? Today, be bold enough to thank God for the trials, trusting that He is making you more like him—more pure, more whole, and more beautiful in his sight.

PRAY

As you close, make this your prayer for today: Lord, I surrender my struggles to You, trusting that You are refining me through every trial. Purify my heart and shape me into the person You created me to be, that my life would reflect your holiness and joy.



DAY 3 | HOLY TUESDAY

TUESDAY, MARCH 31, 2026

FAITH IN GOD'S AUTHORITY

READ: Matthew 21:23-27; Mark 11:12-25

In English class, we were always taught to write papers in a progression: 'tell them what you're going to tell them, tell them, and then tell them what you told them' – introduction, body, and conclusion. As we look at Mark 11:12-25, we see that this is just what Jesus is doing here. We are given several prime examples of Jesus displaying His supreme authority. We begin with a fruitless fig tree. Fig trees are often used in the Bible as metaphors for Israel.

So, Jesus curses the fig tree for not bearing fruit, and immediately afterward, cleanses the temple of the corruption that had set in. The very next day, having experienced all of this, the disciples pass back by the fig tree and, to their surprise, find it completely withered! Jesus is demonstrating His authority in a very real way that would have spoken volumes to his disciples by figuratively and literally making space for Gentile believers. He placed the Jewish leaders on notice that under His God-given authority, their spiritual fruitlessness was intolerable.

A way was coming, and was even now here, that offered Gentiles and Jews alike access to worship the King of kings and the Lord of lords. Now, especially in the Western world, we are used to ads telling us what we deserve. "Have it your way", from Burger King. "Open happiness", from Coca-Cola. And "The one you deserve", from Dr. Pepper. So, if you're like me, when we come to Mark 11:20-25, we immediately begin having visions of God being like a cosmic Santa Claus. After all, it says in verse 24, "...believe that you have received it, and it will be yours". But what a travesty that we spend more time looking for ourselves in scripture, rather than looking for Christ and resting in the power of God's authority.

Possibly the most powerful words of the chapter are found tucked at the end of verse 22, when Jesus instructs His disciples to "Have faith in God". When we begin by having faith in God, the questions about poor, cursed fig trees, overturned tables of money, and being able to move mountains become less and less significant.

DAY 3 | CONTINUED

REFLECT

Trusting in God's authority means that we trust not only in the Mover of mountains but in the tender care and love that He has for the adopted sons and daughters of the King. It means that we can rest in the comfort of His divinity even when the mountains don't get moved.

- Have you or are you submitted to God's authority?
- What does that practically look like in your life?
- When God doesn't move the mountains you want moved, how does that impact your perception of who you are and who God is?

CHALLENGE

Consider your faith. What if it wasn't based on the size of the miracle but on the authority of the One who holds all things? Today, surrender your expectations to God, trusting not just in what He can do, but in who He is—faithful, sovereign, and always working for your good.

PRAY

Lord, help me to trust in Your authority even when my mountains remain unmoved. Teach me to rest in Your wisdom and love, knowing that Your ways are always higher than mine.



DAY 4 | HOLY WEDNESDAY

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 1, 2026

EXAMINING OUR HEARTS

READ: Psalm 139:23-24

Holy Wednesday is heavy. It is the day we remember Judas's decision to betray Jesus (Matthew 26:14–16). And it forces a question most of us would rather avoid. How does someone get that close to Jesus and still walk away? Judas did not wake up one morning and suddenly choose betrayal. Something had been forming in him for a while. His heart slowly shifted; his desires slowly changed, and eventually, he valued something else more than Christ.

That is why Psalm 139:23–24 is such a needed prayer. This verse is not a prayer for “bad people.” It is a prayer for God’s people. David is asking God to search what no one else can see, because we can justify a lot when we do not slow down long enough to be honest. Spiritual drift usually does not feel like rebellion. It feels like life, pressure, exhaustion, disappointment, and small compromises that do not seem like a big deal.

Sometimes the most dangerous place to be is not in outright sin, but a quiet distance. It is when your heart is still going through the motions, but your love for Jesus is cooling off. It is when you stop paying attention to what is shaping you. That is why asking God to search you is not a threat; it is a gift. He is faithful to show us what needs to change, and He is gentle enough to lead us back.

God does not expose things in us to shame us. He exposes them to free us. When the Lord puts His finger on something in your heart, He is not trying to crush you. He is trying to rescue you. The goal today is not to leave feeling condemned, but to leave realigned. A searched heart becomes a softened heart, and a softened heart becomes a responsive heart that can follow Jesus with integrity.

DAY 4 | CONTINUED

REFLECT

Despite being in close proximity to Jesus, Judas failed to truly understand Him, leading to betrayal. This reminds us that we can attend church, call ourselves Christians, and still miss who Jesus is calling us to be.

Regular heart examination keeps us aware of God's work in our lives, softens our hearts, and draws us closer to Him. Let's commit to this practice, inviting God to lead us along the path of everlasting life.

CHALLENGE

Take these next few moments and invite God to truly search your heart—not just in the big moments but in the small, hidden spaces of your everyday life? Today, commit to prayer, allowing God's presence to shape your awareness, soften your heart, and guide you in His everlasting way.

PRAY

As we end this devotional, Lord, I open my heart before You. Search me, reveal what needs to change, and lead me in Your truth. May I not simply be near You, like Judas was, but truly know You and follow where You lead.



DAY 5 | MAUNDY THURSDAY

THURSDAY, APRIL 2, 2026

HUMILITY AND SACRIFICIAL LOVE

READ: John 13:1-17; Luke 22:14-20

It was almost time for the Passover. Jesus had sent Peter and John to make the preparations. Jesus knew that the time had come for Him to leave this world and return to the Father. John records a beautiful but incredibly somber foreshadowing: “Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end” (13:1). In retrospect, we watch to see how he would spend these precious final encounters with his followers. Matthew, Mark, and Luke describe exactly that! Jesus broke bread and shared the cup with his disciples in passages we now routinely hold in our hearts as we share communion each week. He taught them to always remember His broken body and poured-out blood. Now, shift your focus from these familiar words and dwell on John’s unique perspective.

Imagine yourself being among the disciples that day. Having walked for some distance on dirt roads, you look down to see your feet covered in dust. It would be common for a servant or slave to wash your feet as you enter, but not today. There is no slave at the door, so you go on in and recline at the table with the others, to dine with God in the flesh! Having repeatedly witnessed his miracles, you have grown to expect the unexpected.

Now Jesus gets up from the table, wraps a towel around His waist, fills a basin with water, walks over to you, and sits at your feet. The God of the Universe... sitting at your feet! Your sandals are taken off. You feel the water running over your ankles and feet, and then He leans in to dry your feet with the towel that is around His waist. This cannot be. It feels so... indescribable. Breathtaking. Vulnerable. Humbling. Wrong! Shouldn’t you be washing His feet?

Peter must have been feeling the same way. As Jesus made His way around the table, Peter said to Jesus, “You will never wash my feet.” When Jesus responded with, “Peter, unless I wash you, you have no part with me,” he immediately asked Jesus not only to wash his feet - but also his hands and his head!

DAY 5 | CONTINUED

REFLECT

Although Jesus explained that it wasn't necessary, can you relate to Peter? Eventually, Jesus cleansed everyone in this way—including Judas, whom Jesus clearly knew would soon betray Him.

- Jesus, the Master, washed the dusty feet of His disciples. How might we sacrificially and humbly love and serve others?
- Jesus washed the feet of Judas. From whom may we withhold sacrificial love and service?
- Peter nearly declined the blessing of Jesus' sacrificial service. What makes it so hard to be the recipient of the blessing of sacrificial service?
- Heavenly Father, allow our hearts to be humbled by Your mercy and grace. May we glorify You through sacrificial love and service to others as opportunities abound in our broken world.

CHALLENGE

Imagine the King of Kings kneeling before you, washing your feet. How would you respond? Today, allow yourself to both receive and extend sacrificial love—humbly serving others, while also accepting the grace and care God offers through those around you.

PRAY

Lord Jesus, You knelt in love to serve even those who would betray You. Teach me to love with that same humility, both in giving and receiving, that my life may reflect Your grace in a world that so desperately needs it.



DAY 6 | GOOD FRIDAY

FRIDAY, APRIL 3, 2026

REFLECTING ON THE CROSS

READ: John 19; Isaiah 53

The cross—where God’s perfect mercy and justice collide—must be remembered. So, let’s remember that our Savior and King gave His life freely. No one takes it from Him. And He alone has the authority to take His life back again. Our God is not a victim. He allowed Jewish religious leaders, who were jealous and threatened by His existence, to unjustly arrest Him and produce false witnesses. When His chosen people cried out, “Crucify Him!”, he allowed Pilate to cave to political unrest. He allowed arrogant men to flog him within an inch of his life, Roman soldiers to press a crown of thorns into His skull, to mock and strike Him, yelling, “Hail King of the Jews!”, to cast lots for his clothes, stripping Him of His dignity and the last earthly things He owned. He did not defend himself. Instead, Jesus faithfully walked the path to Calvary . . . and along the way, with complete power and control, He finished the work set before Him. When He proclaimed, “It is finished,” He gave up His own spirit. No one took it from Him. Remember.

But why, Lord? Why were you despised and rejected, for us? Why did you bear our grief and carry our sorrow? Why were you pierced for our transgressions and crushed for our iniquities? See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! You knew there was no other way to restore us to the Father. We tried kings, judges, priests, and sacrifices. They all fell short of the glory of God, just as we do.

We can all cry, “Behold the man upon a cross . . . my sin upon His shoulders. Ashamed, I hear my mocking voice call out among the scoffers. It was my sin that held him there . . . until it was accomplished. His dying breath has brought me life. I know that it is finished.” It was the will of the Lord to crush Him. The fullness of God’s wrath toward our sin lay on His one and only Son. Then, and only then, could the righteousness of Jesus be transferred to our sin-stained account. Don’t forget, it was not with perishable things like silver or gold that we were ransomed from the empty ways of this world . . . but with the precious blood of Christ.

DAY 6 | CONTINUED

REFLECT

- When was the last time you marveled at God's plan to forgive and redeem you?
- What would it look like for you to willingly lay down your life in response to His lordship? To crown Him as King of your plans, efforts, emotions, relationships, finances, past, present, and future?

CHALLENGE

Pause. Let the weight of the cross settle in your heart. Jesus did not suffer as a victim—He chose the cross for you, bearing your sin and shame, so you could be made new. Today, marvel at His love and ask yourself: What part of my life am I still holding back from His lordship?

PRAY

Lord, I stand in awe of Your sacrifice. Let me never take for granted the price You paid to redeem me. I surrender every part of my life to you—my plans, my fears, my future—because You alone are worthy to be my King.



DAY 7 | SILENT SATURDAY

SATURDAY, APRIL 4, 2026

TRUSTING IN GOD'S SILENCE

READ: Matthew 27:57-66; Psalm 27:13-14

I wonder what Saturday was like for Jesus' closest friends and followers. This man that they had loved and put all of their trust in was ... dead. I am sure that their lives felt dark, sad, confusing, and silent. If you haven't experienced a day or a season like this before, I pray you never do. However, since our world is broken and unjust, you likely will. I have stood toe-to-toe with at least two dark seasons like this in my adult life, and I am only 33 years old. In these seasons, prayers were for God to show up and do something so I wouldn't have to experience the darkness anymore. And, in both seasons, what I received from God was ... absolute silence.

If you've ever been there, you know that silence from God can truly feel like abandonment ... hopelessness ... meaningless. There are some cases in scripture where God's silence means exactly that. But, for the Christ follower, God's silence might mean something completely different. What if I told you that God's silence isn't necessarily a dealbreaker? In our world of instant gratification, we tend to have a "microwave faith". Ask, press 30 seconds, and receive your warm treat. Isn't it funny that we think the Creator of the universe runs on "my watch"?

Here is a thought for us on this Holy Saturday: God's silence and our waiting might just be exactly what we need for the dark seasons we find ourselves in. The silence might be God's way of telling us that we have our minds fixed on the wrong thing. Maybe, in God's silence, He is redirecting our desires away from getting what we want from Him in that moment to desiring Him and only Him. God sees us as His treasured possession, and I believe that He desires for us to treasure Him just as much ... even in the silence.

What if our lives, in response to God's moments of silence, become a contemplative way of living? Where, through our heavy hearts and teary eyes, we look at Him and He looks at us. And we're happy. And we are content with the silence because we know that God hasn't left us. He is still very near, and He is still very faithful. Maybe God's silence is actually a recipe for resurrection in our relationship with Him?

DAY 7 | CONTINUED

REFLECT

The disciples scattered on Saturday, devastated by the death of their Lord. I want you to know that, in my story, much like the disciples story, God showed up in a much different way and in a much different time frame than I expected. Nevertheless, He proved his faithfulness to me as He always does. And I know He will do the same for you.

“Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence? If I ascend to heaven, you are there! If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there! If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me.”

-Psalm 139:7-10

GUIDED PRAYER

Take a deep breath and settle your heart.

1. Acknowledge His Presence

Lord, even when I don't feel You, I choose to believe You are here. You have never abandoned me. In the silence, help me to trust that You are still working.

2. Bring Your Feelings Honestly

Father, You see my disappointment, my confusion, and my questions. I lay them before You. I won't pretend they don't exist, but I also won't let them define my faith.

3. Embrace the Waiting

God, instead of demanding answers, I choose to rest in You. Teach me to treasure You more than what You can do for me. In the silence, help me love You for who You are.

4. Declare His Faithfulness

Lord, You have been faithful before, and I believe You will be faithful again. Even in the waiting and even in the unknown, I will trust You.

DAY 8 | EASTER SUNDAY

SUNDAY, APRIL 5, 2026

CELEBRATING VICTORY AND NEW BEGINNINGS

READ: John 20:1-18; 1 Corinthians 15:20-22

First-century Jews lived in the hope of a long-anticipated Messiah. But only a handful of people believed that Jesus might be that King. Even for them, Good Friday quashed any glimmer of hope. No Messiah could be hung from a tree since crucifixion indicated a curse from God. And certainly, not even the most hopeful expected the events of Sunday morning.

Reread John 20:1-2, 11-15. Ponder Mary's reaction...not jubilation at the sight of any empty tomb...merely despair. Someone must have stolen Jesus' body. They couldn't even prepare it for a proper burial. Her words reveal the brokenness of her heart and the collapse of any remaining hope.

Reread John 20:18. Note the confidence...the boldness...as Mary "declares" the news. She has experienced the risen Jesus. Her life is transformed. She isn't...and never can be...the same. She has seen Jesus. Paul echoes her confidence in his words to the Corinthians—"In Christ...shall all be made alive."

Mary...and the Corinthians...and all those "in Christ"...didn't receive merely a vague promise of some yet-to-be-received victory over death. They began to experience eternal life in the present as their lives changed in ways they had hardly imagined. It all started with experiencing the living Jesus...raised from the dead.

The same goes for us. We may not have been expecting to encounter the King when we entered this Easter season. But if we take the time to look carefully into the empty tomb, to speak to the stranger in the garden, we may just see Jesus, and our lives can change too. Not in some "pie in the sky by and by" way, but in a life-giving, heart-mending transformation into the person God desires for us to be.

DAY 8 | CONTINUED

REFLECT

It's time to be honest with yourself. Have you seriously considered your life? Is it what you'd like it to be? Have you looked carefully at Jesus? Could He be the One who could change your life? Why wouldn't you say "Yes" to His invitation to a new life?

- Mary is changed from a confused, then grieving, visitor to the tomb of Jesus into a bold advocate that Jesus is alive...and King. Reflect on these past few days of Holy Week experiences. Take a serious look at Jesus.
- Which parts of your life are best described in terms of "death"? That are unfulfilling, destructive, and potentially relationship destroying? What would you be willing to do to turn your life into one characterized by "life"?
- Take the time to pray that God would meet you where you are...and call you to Himself.

CHALLENGE

The resurrection changes everything. If Jesus is truly alive, then new life is not just possible—it's promised. Today, don't just celebrate Easter; step into the transformation He offers. Say "Yes" to His invitation and live in the power of His resurrection.

PRAY

Lord, You have conquered death and offered me new life. Help me to embrace the transformation You bring, leaving behind what is dead and walking boldly in the hope and victory of Your resurrection.

